



ACT
Playgroups



INTERGENERATIONAL PLAYGROUPS

“

**The elderly are living history books,
narrating tales of the past that illuminate
the path for future generations.**

- *Unknown*

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Acknowledgment of Country.

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the ACT, the Ngunnawal people. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of Canberra and the region.





Our Intergenerational Playgroups program provides a unique opportunity for young children to learn and play, promote interaction with the older generations and build relationships across generations. Intergenerational Playgroups are open to families with children aged birth to 5 years and are operating across the ACT in a variety of aged care facilities.



What is an Intergenerational Playgroup?

Playgroups are a fun, safe and educational way for children, parents and carers to come together on a weekly basis to engage in play-based learning.

However, an Intergenerational Playgroup is a unique Playgroup model where the young and young at heart, join for a Playgroup session for important social interaction.

Intergenerational Playgroups are a vital opportunity for parents, children and grandfriends to engage in childhood activities together. These Playgroups create opportunities for children to further develop their skills, parents to create a local peer support network and provide isolated seniors with vital community interaction.

Why Intergenerational Playgroups?

Intergenerational Playgroups provide mutual benefits to all generations.

- Encourage friendship across generations.
- Promote early childhood social and physical development.
- Provide a vital opportunity for isolated residents and parents to connect through positive community interactions.
- Foster understanding and build respect between generations.
- Share senior's parenting knowledge and experiences with younger parents
- Increase parental peer support networks.
- Increase in dignity, particularly with seniors who have dementia.
- Increase in longer lasting joy and happiness.



Who is ACT Playgroups Association?

ACT Playgroups Association Incorporated is a not-for-profit organisation founded in 1973 and is the peak association for Playgroups in ACT.

Our Vision is that all children, parents, and families in our region are empowered to thrive.

Our Purpose is to support young children, parents, and families to have quality interaction through Playgroups.



ACT Playgroups Commitment to Intergenerational Playgroups

ACT Playgroups Association is committed to breaking down the barriers between young, older citizens and the community. We recognise the reciprocal benefits for younger and older people participating in activities together, building connections and building on capacity of all generations through these connections.

ACT Playgroups Affiliation

Becoming an affiliated member of ACT Playgroups association provides the Playgroup with many benefits including:

- Insurance – contents, comprehensive public liability, and personal liability. Children and families will be covered by ACT Playgroups Insurance.
- Two support visits from Playgroup Development and Support Officer for the first two Playgroup sessions
- Access to and visits from the Playgroup Development and Support Team
- Activity ideas
- Child Safe Environments Training
- Inclusion on ACT Playgroups database referral listing.

New Affiliated Playgroups will also be provided with a Playgroup Starter kit. The kit contains a variety of resources to get the Playgroup started.

- Ideas and activity starters and;
- ACT Playgroup Association Playgroup Guide.

The easy-to-use Playgroup Guide is an important resource for Affiliated Playgroups. It features Playgroup information including best practices for establishing and maintaining a high quality, sustainable Playgroup, types of play beneficial to children, safety ideas and ways to promote your Playgroup.

There are various options for affiliation available to Intergenerational Playgroups. These can be discussed with ACT Playgroups Development and Support Team.



How to Start an Intergenerational Playgroups

1. Contact ACT Playgroups Association to receive advice from our Playgroup Development and Support Officer and to receive a new Intergenerational Playgroup Starter Pack
2. Affiliate with ACT Playgroups Association to receive specialised and continual support in getting your Intergenerational Playgroup started.
3. Complete a risk assessment for the facility, particularly the rooms and/or areas specified for the Intergenerational Playgroup, and/or assess own site Policies and Procedures
4. Define the purpose of the Intergenerational Playgroup and decide upon a Playgroup time and day
5. Promote the Intergenerational Playgroup and encourage families to become members
6. Agree upon activities to be offered and begin to gather toys and equipment
7. Begin to formulate some ideas on how the group will address any problems or issues that may occur during Playgroup. Devise a Playgroup policy with the group's values and expectations clearly represented. Advise site staff, residents and families that there is a new Playgroup starting.
8. Set the starting date.
9. Run your first Playgroup session! Have fun!



Support from ACT Playgroups Association

ACT Playgroups Association is here to help you at every step of the way.

ACT Playgroups Team can provide you with support via phone, email and more importantly via face to face meetings to assist you with commencing your Playgroup.

ACT Playgroups can provide you with advertising, establishing a routine, developing a program, plus sourcing toys, resources and equipment.

The “First 2 weeks” is an intensive support plan implemented by the ACT Playgroups Development and Support Team to ensure your Playgroup becomes a high quality, sustainable Playgroup.

Resources and Equipment

As well as a safe space, the Intergenerational Playgroup will require access to resources and equipment. These may come from donations, garage sales, charity shops, purchased by the facility or ACT Playgroups may be able to source them for the Intergenerational Playgroups.

Ideas for Resources and Materials may Include the Following

- A craft box with paper, pencils, textas, crayons, glue, construction papers, tape, disposable plates, cupcake liners, kids scissors, etc
- Building blocks
- Playdough and playdough tools
- Cars & trucks
- Books-Board books and children story books
- Dolls, prams and blankets
- Ride on or push toys
- Dress ups and role play equipment
- Any other resources which are safe and suitable for the young and the young at heart.

Other equipment required may include First Aid Kit, child size table and chairs, 2 play mats, a change table, tea and coffee and travel mugs for families.

Travel mugs for hot drinks help to keep the children, residents and their families safe during Playgroup. Please speak to the Playgroup Development and Support Team for further information.

Membership & Insurance

Parents or carers must complete an ACT Playgroups Family Membership Form before their first day. This will ensure the Playgroup has child and family details, emergency contact details, and all children, parents and carers are covered by ACT Playgroups association insurance.

Also members will gain access to a range of benefits including insurance, invitations to ACT Playgroups events, access to Playgroups monthly newsletter and access to as many affiliated Playgroups within ACT Playgroups as they wish.

Cost for Families

The Intergenerational Playgroup will also need to decide whether the families will pay a low-cost weekly fee or donation to cover the cost of replenishing art and craft materials, tea, coffee, snacks or other resources and equipment.

Routine

The Intergenerational Playgroup is encouraged to set a routine for the Playgroup session. Routines will assist the session to flow smoothly, attendees will know what is happening next and any behavioral concerns will be reduced. ACT Playgroups recommend including a short welcome activity, snack time and a farewell activity in your routine. These can be as simple as a song or story book.

Snack Time

Children, families and residents should have scheduled time to enjoy a small snack together during the Playgroup session. This could be as simple as a small range of fruit. As some residents have special dietary needs, Intergenerational Playgroups may opt to provide the snacks for the attendees. Families should also be discouraged NOT to bring nuts or eggs into the facility for safety reasons.





Safety

For the health and safety of residents and children, it is advisable for Playgroup to develop a Sickness Policy. The Policy should encourage that children do not attend Playgroup if they have had a temperature, gastro or green, runny nose leading up to the Playgroup session.

Any Injury/Incident that occurs during the Playgroup session will require an Injury/ Incident form to be completed. The form is then sent to ACT Playgroups for insurance purposes.

The Residential Facility will need to complete a risk assessment prior to starting an Intergenerational Playgroup. Risks should be identified, assessed and strategies implemented to ensure the safety of residents, children and families. ACT Playgroups has the expectation that aged care facilities will conduct their own risk assessment for the venue and suitability of attending residents.

All children attending Playgroup will need to be recorded on a weekly attendance form. This will not only help the Playgroup Coordinator to keep track of who has attended, but also for emergency purposes such as evacuations.

The attendance records must be kept on site at the Residential Facility.

