



Crossway Community

Using the Montessori Approach for Intergenerational Learning

Presented by Kathleen Guinan, Amsterdam 2019

Photos courtesy of Kristen Franklin, Storybox Photography

Key Success Factors of an Intergenerational Community

- Children, families, elders at the center
- Embracing and collaborating with all cultures, genders, ages and classes
- Montessori philosophy alignment
- Leverage and integrate what works
- Cross-system, cross-funding streams
- Social capital building across generations
- Changing the narrative



Key Principles

- Measure and account for outcomes for children, families and elders
- Engage and listen to the voices of families
- Have a wisdom circle of elders
- Ensure equity
- Foster innovation and evidence together
- Align and link systems and funding streams



Building the foundations.
"The child is the maker of the man"
-Maria Montessori



Intergenerational community



Mental, physical, behavioral health, access to preventive services



Asset building, housing, transportation



Peer and family networks, coaching, and cohort strategies

Training and certification, workforce partnerships, industry partnerships, scaffolding

The model integrates Montessori philosophy across three learning centers .



Crossway Community Montessori School

Inspiring peaceful citizens

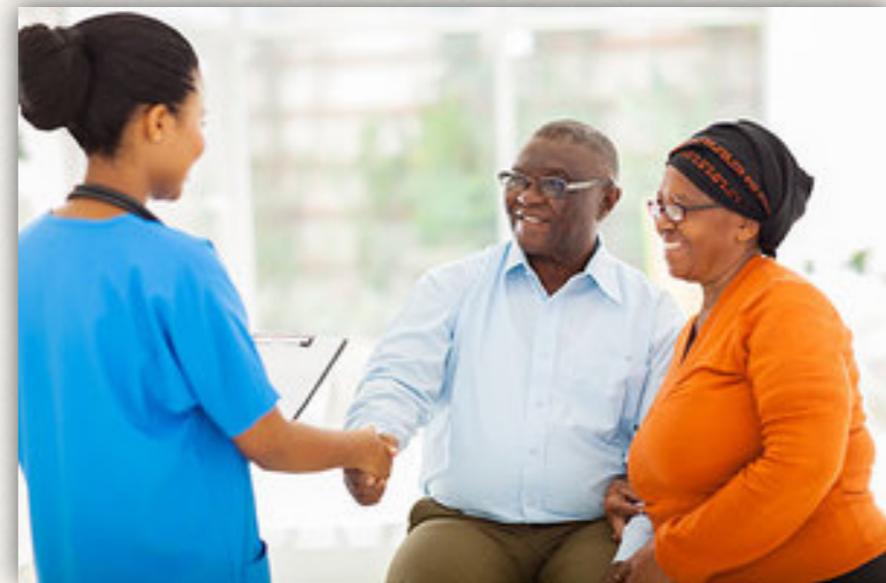
- Driven by child readiness
- Teachers as guides
- Beauty, order, and calm
- Communities of purpose
- Mixed ages
- Socioeconomically integrated



The Family Leadership Academy

Promoting the tools for success.

- Two-generation approach
- Safe, secure homes
- Training opportunities
- Workforce housing
- Social entrepreneurship



The Intergenerational Learning Center

A laboratory for creative connections / a maker space

- Prepared environments for adult learning
- Engagement in service
- Professional development
- Seniors mobilizing social capital



We are building a *modern village*...

for each child, elder, & family...



What is a modern village?

Someone to turn to when you think you can't handle one. more. thing going wrong.

Someone who shows up to say, "Here's dinner I made for your family tonight."

Building a village isn't easy, but it can make all the difference.

— adapted from ericalayne.co The Life On Purpose Movement



Qualities of our village

When you walk through our door, you know you've come home.

- Environment of calm, beauty, preparedness
- Warm, personal, long-term relationships
- Attention to well-being
- A community commitment to continuous learning
- A belief in every individual's capacity to contribute



Maria Montessori

“Imagination does not become great until human beings, given the courage and the strength, use it to create.”

“Our care of the child should not be the desire to make him learn things...but to always keep burning within him that light which is called intelligence.”

It is with courage, passion, conviction and curiosity that we drive change, make a significant impact and build a living, breathing community!



The spirit of discovery



Professional Development



Workforce Development



The Benefits to Children, Families and Elders

- Peace, quiet and simplicity
- Appreciation of nature
- Healthy, connected lifestyles
- Deep relationships, over time



Current research on brain development supports **COURAGEOUS CURIOSITY** across the lifespan





Barriers: Why it's not so easy...

- Age
- Work/life imbalance
- Finding the courage to reach out
- Feeling that everyone else already has a village
- Fragmentation



What inspires us?

- We are always learning
- Children and families thriving across generations
- Staying true to our mission while remaining flexible
- Partners who enrich our work
- The ability to laugh
- Being collaboration ready!
- Always COURAGEOUSLY CURIOUS



Villages at scale: How do we build for sustainability?

It matters how we frame the issues:

- outside traditional categories of early education, education, housing, medicine, and community development.
- big and positive
- long-term and multi-generational



BIOPHILIA

The human tendency to connect with nature and all forms of life

What will your village look like?



Courageous Dream - NUSHEMA





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“I slept and dreamt
that life was joy.

I awoke and saw
that life was
service.

I acted and behold,
service was joy!”

Rabindanath Tagore

