

A Collaborative Discussion on Intergenerational Living



Life Together[®] Workshop

Allegany College
Students, Faculty, and Life Long Learning Members
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Many thanks to our anonymous sponsor who supported our work and believes in intergenerational living as a societal means for solving systematic concerns.

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Preface

Live Together[®] is a nonprofit community provider dedicated to the idea that intergenerational living and person-centered care provide the best environment for residents of all ages to thrive. The [Live Together[®]](#) model is dedicated to the grassroots provision of housing options, access to care, services, and amenities, and programming that supports both residents remaining in their homes as well as providing additional housing and socialization options within their neighborhood and immediate community. To understand needs and gaps within a geographic location, local conversations and dialogue are needed to inform recommendations and decisions for an intergenerational model that fulfills both community need and on-going viability.

The [Live Together[®] Institute](#), the training and educational component of the Live Together model, is dedicated to workforce development and breaking down silos to integrate housing, services, and amenities for all residents living within a Live Together community and surrounding neighborhoods. This unique living model brings together elders, youth, students, and families as part of an intentional 'teaching and research' community, with the goal of encouraging younger adults to pursue careers in aging services that are supportive of quality of life for not only residents, but also caregiver team members and families.

Acknowledgements

The following are recognized as key planners, participants, and facilitators for the workshop. Many thanks to all that made this possible through their open sharing of thoughts, stories, concerns, and hopes for the future for all residents of all ages.

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Introduction

On February 23, 2023, a workshop was held by Live Together, Inc. in collaboration with Allegany College students, faculty, and members of the Live Long Learning group on the Cumberland, Maryland campus. The findings in this report are based on the discussions held during the workshop.

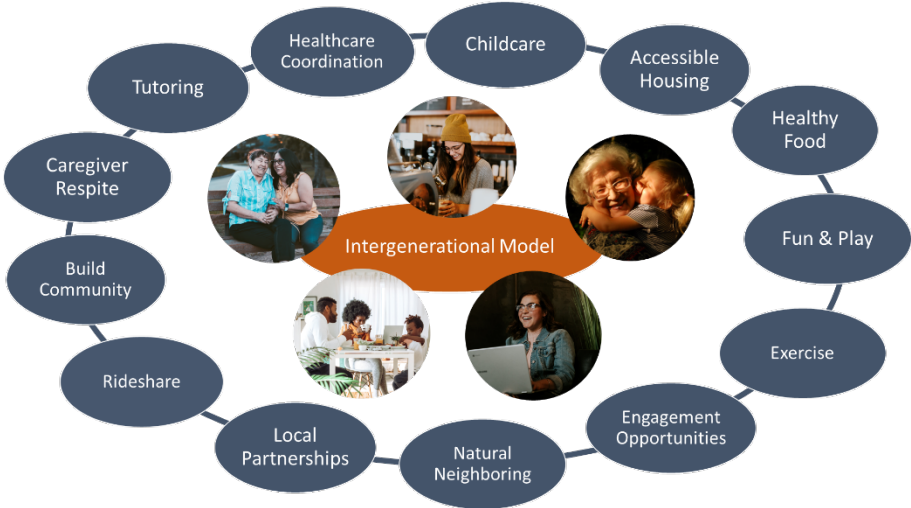
Background

The workshop was a follow-up from the completion of intergenerational community living presentations provided at Allegany College to the Life Long Learning group in May 2022 and subsequently at Frostburg University during the Appalachian Festival in September 2022. The outcomes of the workshop are included in this report and related specifically to the Cumberland region and the Allegany County area. The understanding of the needs and concerns, in addition to initiatives currently underway contributes to the overall framework for the development of potential intergenerational demonstration project(s) in Cumberland, Maryland. The framework for gathering information is replicable and scalable for other geographic areas - urban, rural, and suburban locations - to apply intergenerational modeling and applicable components, cooperatively used to provide residents access to housing, services, amenities, and care on a localized, grassroots level.

Goal of the Collaborative Workshop

The workshop brought together various disciplines related to healthcare and aging services, attendees with a wide range of ages, and diverse backgrounds - all living in the Cumberland area. The goal of the workshop was to better understand the gaps that may be filled using an intergenerational community model to support access to care, services, housing, and amenities for residents of all ages.

An introduction to the Live Together[®] community model was provided to the group. The following diagram demonstrates the combination of workforce, older adults - life long learners, families, and the overlay of engagement center activities as the nexus for bringing all residents together.



Components of a Live Together community include the following: **Engagement Center** for meals, activities, and gatherings, **Intergenerational and Inclusive Housing** that includes various types, sizes, and associated price points, and addressing the means for provision of **Extended Care**, which may include coordination of personal care services, healthcare services, access to amenities, and vetted resources based on the service

management model being utilized. See Appendix A for a full copy of the Live Together presentation.

The introductory presentation was used as the basis for four facilitated breakout groups where intergenerational living was discussed and what would be needed to make an intergenerational community successful in the Cumberland area.

Resident Desires and Needs

Intergenerational living is intended to support all ages of residents. If a community includes older adults, young adults, children, and families – at any one time, a person may be vulnerable. The concept of having coordinated services “without walls” extends past the built environment of homes that may be part of a planned community and extend into the community at-large for those folks aging in place or anyone needing to access services and support. With that in mind, different situations were discussed about residents that could benefit from intergenerational living.

There was discussion around the Sandwich Generation, which is the demographic that is taking care of children and aging parents – and from a caregiving perspective, “who is going to take care of the middleman?” – meaning the person in the middle of the “sandwich” or caregiver. Another demographic is Kindred Care, where grandparents are raising grandchildren, who often need additional support to raise active children, as the grandparents age. Often caregiving can become one family member’s responsibility because of geographic proximity to the family member needing care or a single individual without other siblings for support. Regardless of the resident and caregiving situation, there were some commonalities that came out of the facilitated workgroups that all members of a family and/or individual residents wanted to experience and could be provided through the development of an intergenerational community model:

1. Safety and security within their community and home.
2. Vetted and trusted service providers to work in individual homes.
3. Meaningful experiences that support interaction between elder relatives and family members and friends.
4. Environment that fosters the ability to build reliable and compassionate relationships.
5. Clear, consolidated listing of services in one easy to access location and/or provided through an available coordinator.
6. Enjoyable work environment that provides an alternative to the institutional nursing home.
7. Choice of home type: rental/own, apartment, townhouse, single family, etc. in conjunction with opportunities for engagement and various economic levels and price points.
8. Socialization is a choice, indicating a need for a balance of private and public spaces.
9. Opportunities for recreational programs appropriate for all ages that include a sliding scale for better access and affordability.
10. Older adults deserve to be respected and have access to care and services.
11. Living wage for employment opportunities.
12. Access to childcare.

13. Access to services, amenities, and activities applicable to all stages of life and age ranges.
14. Community to be supportive and in being supportive, provides reduction of stress for residents.
15. Everyone needs to have fun and engage!

Types of Services and Workforce Opportunities

The following is a summary of the various types of services supporting social, physical, and intellectual needs, which could be part of a menu. Workshop participants suggested completion of a needs assessment / inventory of services that are actually available in Allegany County and those that are needed / missing to create economic development opportunities. The listing could be derived from vetted service provider listing and/or volunteerism:

1. Housework and handyperson services.
2. Snow removal and grass cutting.
3. Gardening.
4. Home assessment and modification for accessibility and safety.
5. Personal care for those who are sick and hospice for those that are dying.
6. Respiratory and nursing care.
7. Emotional and respite support / counseling for caregivers.
8. Transportation providers and various related mobility transport services.
9. Assistance with Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs).
10. Creation and support of local businesses (e.g., IPA Moonshine as a branded business, maker space and products to sell, such as Allegany Roast for coffee, etc.)
11. Provision of quality dining venues.

Service Approaches

There are different ways of approaching services that evaluate the whole person, versus being viewed as a diagnosis, only. In provision of coordinated care and services, it was recommended to utilize all dimensions of wellness (full circle of practice) as part of the interdisciplinary approach. When working with older adults, it was recommended to slow down and be present in the moment, having patience with older adults that may be cognitively impaired or not as familiar with using various technologies in their lives, as it can be overwhelming for the older adult. Additional opportunities for service approaches include:

1. Consider daycare for both children and older adults as a collaborative effort for provision of care services.
2. Gathering of all residents to come together for community dinners and activities that build relationships between residents of varying ages.
3. Because all ages are integrated within the community, changes for older adults may be more comfortable and required assistance accepted more readily.

Benefits of Intergenerational Community

The following are opportunities to be embraced within intergenerational community living:

1. Provide older adult role models for younger children - "could an intergenerational model help our kids?"
2. Shared interests across age groups (e.g., older adults and students working together to accomplish life goals).
3. Older adults can share experiences, wisdom, and life skills with younger residents and vice versa.
4. Sharing of skills and learning a trade or vocation as a result of interaction of older adults and younger residents.
5. Grandparents and grandchildren relationships can be developed without being biologically related.
6. Relationship building over time provides a sense of purpose and meaning.
7. Reducing the isolation of older adults, students, and single adults.
8. Provision of rewarding part-time or full-time work within the engagement center and independently as individual needs arise (e.g., younger residents to complete chores for older adults, run errands, etc.).
9. Opportunities for volunteerism and exchange/barter of services that provides meaningful development of relationships (e.g., older adult tutoring younger adult, student helping with childcare for family, a student teaching an older adult how to use technology, etc.).
10. As volunteer exchange programs are ramped up, provides a type of barter system that can reduce overall costs for residents, while supporting quality of life and engagement within the overall community.
11. Intergenerational living offers opportunities to learn patience, empathy, and generational knowledge.
12. Because of the interdependency formed through relationships, more individual autonomy can be achieved because of the support and service management in place recognizing the importance of individualized needs.

Scenarios

Some stories were shared with the group that illustrated direct examples of how a supportive intergenerational model may fill gaps that are identified within the existing community. The following scenarios are paraphrased from portions of stories that were told during the workshop.

Scenario 1

One scenario could be a work-study student creates an interdependent childcare system for her daughter with her mom, based on working different shifts. Her mom works as a nurse at night and would pick up her granddaughter in the morning and either drop her at school or take her home with her, and the work-study student, after either working or going to school would come by and pick her daughter up either from her mom's home or school depending on the day. However, if there was even one interruption to the system, such as a doctor's appointment or someone was sick, there was not always a back-up plan. It seemed that an intergenerational model that included vetted volunteers and services that were available to residents, who were part of an inclusive community could be available to provide solid back-up plans and options for the family.

Scenario 2

Another scenario was based on the reason that some of the students were pursuing degrees in various disciplines. In multiple situations, the devastating results of the opioid epidemic and addiction in the area, led students to want to help change the trajectory of the health and wellness of their families and neighbors, including older adults. Within an intergenerational setting, there is an opportunity to address the types of services that are missing in the community and could be accommodated and coordinated within an engagement center in an intergenerational community. The discussion on what is needed and identification of gaps included addressing mental health therapies and addiction counseling with the plus that there is a willing workforce available that wants to remain and live in the Cumberland area.

Scenario 3

There are multiple services/agencies within the Cumberland area that provide transportation, however there are strict criteria for the various programs, often leaving residents with trying to figure out which transportation program is available to them, as their options are not clearly laid out in one place. By the fourth phone call or sooner, most will give up and try to find an alternative means for transportation. If there was a coordinator that could help a resident determine eligibility for transportation systems available, and also connect them to a volunteer if none of the systems are applicable, this would be a good start for provision of an integrated, coordinated transportation system. An intergenerational engagement center with staffed coordinators would be a solution to arranging the disparate services, amenities, and care into one resource and point of contact. For those residents using a smart phone or computer, the resource could be made available on-line. For those residents that have minimum technology savvy, they could use the computers with assistance at the engagement center or call / talk to a coordinator. In-person interaction is supportive and reduces isolation that technology can unintentionally create.

Programming and Physical Environment Considerations

When designing an intergeneration community, the following were provided for consideration:

1. Concerns with noise and acoustics for older adults, when living in the same building or spaces with younger people.
 - a. Points to the need of evaluating and including both private and public spaces to provide opportunities for privacy as well as interaction to reduce isolation.
2. Community to be “organically” developed, meaning that an intergenerational setting would not be overly planned and structured, but leaves room for natural friendships and authentic neighboring to occur between residents of various ages.
3. Activity and recreational spaces to be provided that suit activities geared for various ages at different points in time – allowing for residents to be participants but also spectators.
4. Consider travel distances and access to community resources and the distances. Older adults may not want to travel to receive services, therefore evaluating transportation options that are easily accessible.

5. Connection with the interior of a building and the outdoors to encourage activity, views of nature, walkability (e.g., connection to Rails to Trails, and interaction with nature (e.g., gardening, eating meals outdoors, etc.).
6. Private, semi-private, and public spaces included as part of the planning process.
7. Physically accessible spaces and dwelling units, in addition to access to services, care, and amenities.

Demonstration Project Ideas

In discussions with the various participants, most were interested in the intergenerational model, including opportunities for workforce development. And some were interested in moving into an inclusive, supportive community, if it was accessible, accommodated people who were ready to move out of their larger homes, background checks were provided prior to move-in, and provides everyone in the community an opportunity to share their passion, skills, and education with others. The following were discussed in relationship to creation of a demonstration project:

1. On the Allegany College campus, it was recommended to have a demonstration smart apartment for occupational and physical therapy programs to assist with training and real-life circumstances.
2. The various practicums available on the Allegany College campus (e.g., dental services) connected to residents needing care and services.
3. Include “free stuff” as part of living within the intergenerational community - this could be provision of vouchers for transportation (e.g., relationship with Lyft or Uber), access to an engagement space and planned events, coffee bar, etc.
4. Provide opportunities for donations and collaborative initiatives for completing projects within the community (e.g., community gardens and sharing bounty with residents, etc.).
5. Evaluation of existing student housing to be expanded into intergenerational living, extended care provision, and an engagement center with dining venue.

Recommendations and Next Steps

Specific actionable recommendations include:

1. Per workshop participants suggestion, complete a needs assessment / inventory of services that are actually available in Allegany County and those that are needed.
 - a. Utilize this information for economic development and creation of businesses that fulfill the identified gaps in services, care, and amenities.
2. Assemble a survey that can be distributed to workshop participants and others interested in continuing to support the initiatives to create a Live Together community model that can be replicable.
 - a. The survey results to be used to further the creation of framework for developing and operating intergenerational communities.

Next steps for community development include the coordination of care model @HomeAnyWhere from the Community of Inclusion and Belonging (CIB) to be part of the operational model proposed for a Live Together Community in Cumberland. Proformas and evaluation of potential collaborations will continue to be evaluated for creation of housing and service coordination on both the west and east side of Cumberland. The workshop

results support workforce development and confirm the interest of students, faculty, and older adults that an intergenerational community model be considered in Allegany County.

Conclusion

Many thanks to everyone that made this workshop possible and the willingness of participants to share their experiences, knowledge, stories, and collaborative acknowledgement and desire for change that provides life long learning coupled with housing and services as a means for all ages to thrive while living in community.

Disclaimer

None of the volunteer parties involved in the creation of content for this publication assume any liability or responsibility to the user or any third parties for the accuracy, completeness, or use of or reliance on any information contained in the report. There are no expressed warranties of accuracy or completeness of information.



Intergenerational Concept for Community Model

Live Together® is a nonprofit community provider and think tank dedicated to the idea that intergenerational living and person-centered care support the best quality environment for residents of all ages to thrive. The Live Together® Institute is dedicated to workforce development that is based on the principles and mission of the organization.

Benefits of Intergenerational Living

- Purposeful living and provision of care and services for all residents
- Mentoring and learning opportunities for older adults, families, and youth
- Creating supportive relationships and opportunity to share life experiences
- Productive career development for youth and families



Benefits of Intergenerational Living

- Workforce development specifically within environments for aging
- Safe, consistent housing for older adults, students, and families
- Removes isolation and connects various generations with community
- Residents as part of volunteer contingent to create relationships and provide support
- Coordination staff available for all residents of all ages



Components of a Live Together® Community Model

Informed by community – residents, families, workforce, local businesses, and available services

- **Engagement Center** – may include a dining venue, meeting and office, recreation, classroom and outdoor space - all integrated with technology.
- **Intergenerational and Inclusive Housing** – may include a variety of housing types, price points, and integrated with existing neighborhoods.
- **Extended Care** – may include services coming to an existing home, a small house (residential assisted living (RAL) or Greenhouse Project), outpatient services (PT/OT/ST), home healthcare, or other coordinated service.

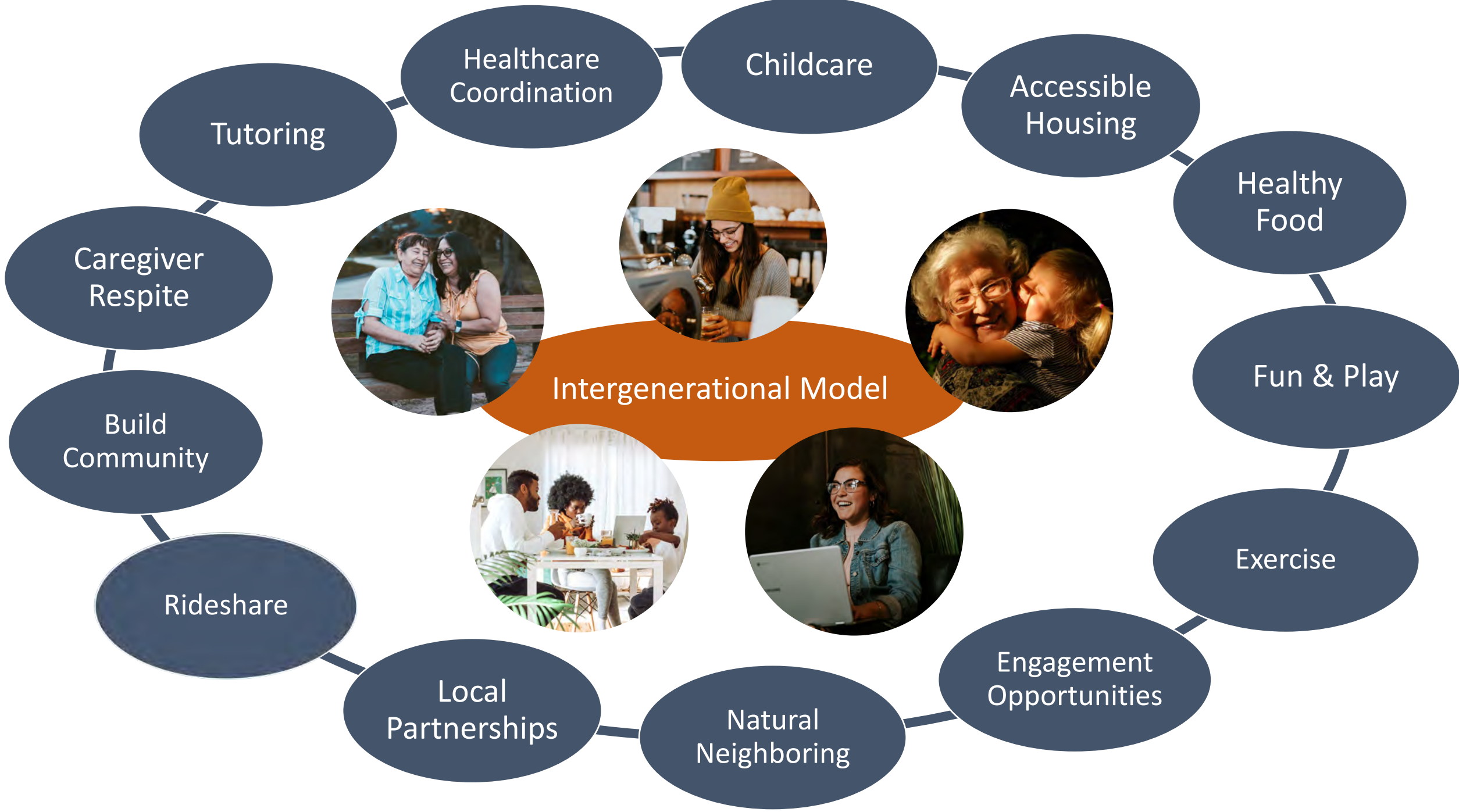
Person-centered – Workforce





Person-centered – Families







Tutoring

Healthcare
Coordination

Childcare

Accessible
Housing

Healthy
Food

Fun & Play

Exercise

Engagement
Opportunities

Natural
Neighboring

Local
Partnerships

Rideshare

Build
Community

Caregiver
Respite

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM + INTERGENERATIONAL APPROACH

COMMUNITY



INCLUSIVITY



HUMAN INTERACTION



SERVICE ACCESS



COLLABORATION



Workshop Outline

Learning through Collaboration



Agenda

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 1:30 – 2:30 pm | Facilitated Breakout Groups – interdisciplinary and all ages
Note Taker Volunteer
Report Out Volunteer |
| 2:30 – 2:45 pm | Break with Refreshments |
| 2:45 – 3:15 pm | Sharing Summaries from Breakout Groups
Report Out to Group |
| 3:15 – 3:45 pm | Open Discussion / Questions + Answers |
| 3:45 – 4:00 pm | Summary and Next Steps |



Identify student expectations of providing care and services to older adults and what they are hoping to achieve working in the aging field.



Identify service, housing, and amenity gaps for older adults in the geographic region.



Identify trends from faculty on training and education – what resources would be helpful approaches to universal worker strategies and identification of alternative person-centered care models.



Understand the implications and desires of creating an intergenerational model – where all ages live in an intentional community integrated with the community at-large.



Q + A