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## The Intergenerational Challenge Part Two – The Community

John Roberto

Reaching Out to the Wider Community

*in order to*

Reweave the Intergenerational Fabric  
of Our Communities



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## We're living in the most age-diverse society in human history.

### Will we make the most of it?



There are almost equal numbers of people alive today at every age, from birth to age 70 and beyond. With more people living longer, five-generation workplaces and three-generation households are surging. The opportunity to tap the unique and complementary talents of people of all ages and build a multigenerational force for good is here.

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## Key Finding

### Key Findings

Encore.org commissioned this nationally representative survey of 1,549 Americans aged 18 to 94 to gauge how American adults think about cogenation, a strategy to bring older and younger people together to solve problems and bridge divides.

Generations cited include these ages: Gen Z 18 to 25, Millennial 26 to 41, Gen X 42 to 57, Boomer 58 to 76, and Silent Generation 77 and older.

#### FINDING 1

**People of all ages want to work across generations to help others and improve the world around them.**

**Working across generations can help America better solve its problems.**

60.0%  
STRONGLY AGREE

36.4%  
SOMEWHAT AGREE

**Working across generations can reduce divisions in our society.**

52.4%  
STRONGLY AGREE

41.3%  
SOMEWHAT AGREE



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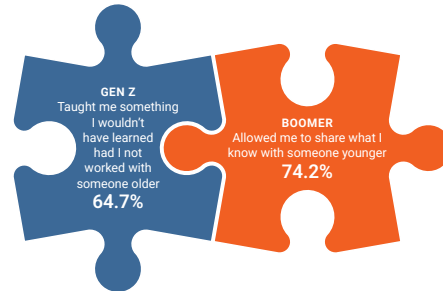
## Key Finding

### FINDING 3

**The fit is a powerful one:  
Young people want to learn  
from older ones; older  
people want to share what  
they know. And vice versa.**

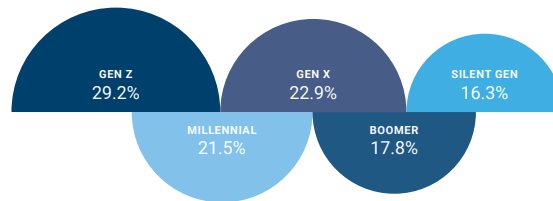
→ SEE MORE ON PAGE 6

### Top reasons respondents found cogeneration positive



### Cogeneration as incentive, by age

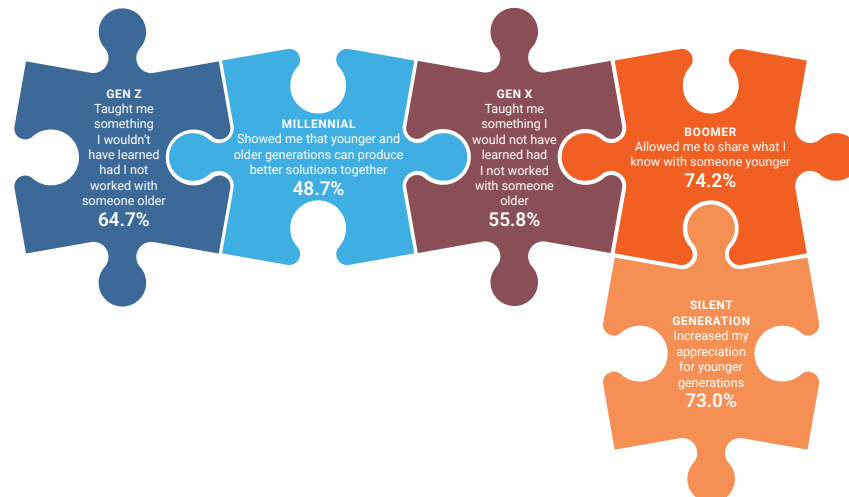
Percentages "much more likely" to step up if opportunities are cogenerational



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## Key Finding

### Top reasons respondents found cogeneration positive



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## Key Finding

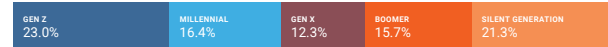
*What's preventing you from cogenerateding?*



I don't know how to get started working with people of different generations.



I can't find opportunities to work with people of other generations.



Concerns about Covid-19



I find it difficult to communicate with people of different generations.



I find my values differ from those of people of different generations.



Nothing.



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## The Intergenerational Challenge: The Community

Our faith communities are rich resources of social capital.

We can partner with other religious congregations and community organizations to reweave the intergenerational fabric of our communities and address a wide range of topics—from literacy to loneliness, housing to health care, education to the environment, and much more.



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## The Intergenerational Challenge: The Community

When it comes to bringing generations together, many believe creativity and storytelling can foster connection faster than conversation alone. Whether through dance, music, art, theater, writing, or cooking, shared creative experiences allow people to drop their guard, build trust, and find common ground, without feeling forced.



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## The Intergenerational Challenge: The Community

Faith communities can be catalysts for connecting the young and the old, fostering communication and understanding across generations, building community in neighborhoods with intergenerational events and activities, activating public spaces with intergenerational programming, advancing early care and education by engaging more adults 50+ with children, improving outcomes for youth and older adults through mentoring, and much more...



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## Community-Wide Opportunities

- ◆ Community service projects
- ◆ Environmental projects
- ◆ Education projects
- ◆ Mental health & life skills programs
- ◆ Mentoring / coaching: parenting, career, life transitions
- ◆ Creative arts: music art, drama
- ◆ Community events: performances, movie nights
- ◆ Dinner Church: meal, sharing stories, building relationships

***And Much More***



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## The Preschool Inside a Nursing Home

For the elderly residents, interacting with the kids is a jolt back to the world of the living.



A still from Evan Dillig's documentary, *Present Perfect* shows an elderly resident doing a puzzle with preschoolers.



## The students living with retirees

31 May 2023

Share Save

Frankie Adkins  
Features correspondent



Getty Images

Ideally, multi-generational living encourages seniors and students to value each other's skills (Credit: Getty Images)

**What happens when students share homes with the elderly? Frankie Adkins investigates a new experiment in multi-generational living.**

When 23-year-old Poppy Jenkinson got home in the evening, she would sit around the dinner table with her two housemates and discuss her day – sharing work news, friendship dramas, and, on occasion, relationship problems.

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**Sages & Seekers'** mission is to develop empathy, combat social isolation and dissolve age-related segregation within our communities, while meeting the universal and compelling need of both young adults and older adults to make sense of their lives.

This is achieved by creating a sense of intergenerational community in our programs, through the art of authentic conversation.



**Dance Generators** is an intergenerational dance company housed at the University of San Francisco that fosters artistic collaboration between University students and Bay Area older adults. Ranging in age from 18 to 91 years old, Dance Generators use dance as a tool for bridging generational divides through workshops, performance, and community building events that catalyze connections across differences.



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