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# GROWING YOUNG THROUGH SPORT



MOVE IT



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# INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDE

People can connect through sport on levels beyond just communication with words. Sports and physical activity tap into the movement of our bodies and trigger physiological and emotional responses that otherwise may stay dormant when engaging in verbal exchanges. This makes it ideal for connecting people of different backgrounds, cultures, or in this case ages. This dialogue is greatly facilitated through sports activities, which is why we place great importance on intergenerational sports activities. As rightfully stated, intergenerational learning is a

*“learning partnership based on reciprocity and mutuality involving people of different ages where the generations work together to gain skills, values and knowledge”*

Now just add sports as a component to it – fun and enjoyable method to facilitate dialogue between different age groups.

A noticeable element of our experience was that there was not a unified guide on how to conduct effective intergenerational sports activities – something that can take us from step A - Z. This issue is one of the main points of creating this document as an intellectual output that we believe will be truly beneficial. This guide will be able to fill those exact voids – we are going to slowly take you through every step of the process and guide you through different scenarios so that you can find what best fits you and your participants. This adaptive guide will allow you to follow step-by-step methods, to ensure that seniors are socially included and as such foster intergenerational understanding and lifelong learning through sports.

In order to produce this document, we managed to conduct research in three different countries (Greece, North Macedonia, Serbia) to collect data and then reflect on the outcomes through this guide. The ACROSS guide provides a roadmap for all organizations that want to organize intergenerational learning and guides them throughout every step of implementing intergenerational activities through sports.



# Main findings of the ACROSS research

Our project conducted research through three different countries with three different target groups in order to assess intergenerational sport.

These target groups were the following:



Children 12-18 years old



People over 60 years old



Sports clubs/associations



The main aim of this research was to help us define the difficulties and fears of each of the individual samples and figure out a way to overcome them and engage the target groups in this kind of activity. The outcomes of this research helped us build a curriculum that will help youth organizations active in the fields of sport and sports clubs address these challenges in a concrete way.





Through this research, we intended to extract and analyze information about the following important aspects that are relevant to the concept of intergenerational sports and the perception of these specific target groups over this topic:

- ✓ Training frequency of target groups;
- ✓ Most popular sports;
- ✓ Age of engagement in sports;
- ✓ Sport selection influence;
- ✓ Preferences for sports to watch;
- ✓ Important aspects of sports;
- ✓ Interest in sports;
- ✓ Capability in sports;
- ✓ Appropriate sports for a target group;
- ✓ Possibility of joint sport activities of the two target groups;
- ✓ Interest to participate in intergenerational sport activities;
- ✓ Intergeneration sports as a way to bridge the age gap;
- ✓ The balance between target groups in case of win/loss;
- ✓ Main difficulties when participating in sports;
- ✓ Main benefits when taking part in intergenerational activities;
- ✓ Main challenges of including intergenerational activities in clubs' programming;
- ✓ Main benefits of including intergenerational activities in clubs' programming;
- ✓ Areas that intergenerational programs could help children.



Unfortunately, as expected, the results showed that there is not a satisfactory level of intergenerational sports opportunities implemented. The main problems that arose during our research are the physical difficulties, fear of injury and tough recovery, mental difficulties, high cost of activities, lack of seniors' interest for physical activity, and, finally, lack of methodologies and concrete guidelines. However, despite the challenges that are being faced, we should not forget the benefits that come out of these activities, such as physical and mental health advantages, joy and entertainment, creating memories and boosting the imagination, socializing, and feeling rejuvenated - which were all highlighted and significantly supported by the research participants.

Although the research embedded the fact that there is little to no work being done in this field, we were glad to find out that all target groups showed a very positive attitude towards intergenerational sports activities, here including great enthusiasm and motivation to learn more about it. This is a great starting point and can be used to further build upon it by providing the proper methodology to handle the challenges and take out the best of these benefits.

## Main benefits of intergenerational sport

It is important to note that the three target groups responded in a very similar manner when asked on the benefits that they believe arise out of intergenerational sports. We can see that the target group believes that they will benefit the least on the moral aspect of it, but were one-minded on the fact that their mental and physical health benefit from such activities.

The research further shows other aspects that they believe are important when it comes to intergenerational sport:

Benefit	Children	Seniors	Sports organizations
Health enhancement	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Feeling energetic/rejuvenated	HIGH	LOW	MEDIUM
Moral reward	LOW	LOW	LOW
Joy and entertainment	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Socialization	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM
Knowledge and experience	HIGH	N/A	N/A
Self esteem and self-assurance	N/A	MEDIUM	LOW
Feeling of participation in society	N/A	MEDIUM	MEDIUM

## Challenges of intergenerational sports

Organizing intergenerational sports may pose different challenges to different groups. Such challenges vary from physical capability to financial difficulties. Our research has shown that the organizations' biggest challenge is the lack of interest from people over the age of 65, while the reason behind this may be the physical difficulties that this group may encounter, which has been confirmed by this group itself during the research.



# Overcoming challenges of intergenerational sports

This part of the chapter focuses on the issues and challenges associated with implementing intergenerational practice. These challenges are focused on:



## Recruitment of older people

One of the most frequently identified challenges can be the recruitment of older people, which can be identified as time consuming, due to lack of interest from this group. But do not get discouraged – we have a few tips to share that will help you!

Given the difficulties in engaging older people, those developing intergenerational practice need to be proactive in engaging older people through community groups. We have divided tips on this matter into two categories – where to find seniors and how to engage them.

### Where to find seniors?

It is important to map a few potential places where you can find willing seniors to participate. However, bear in mind that it is recommended to meet the older people beforehand and to select them since not all of them have experience interacting with young people and some are able to integrate more successfully with children than others. Nonetheless, your sports' club might find some active seniors in the following places:

### Retirement homes

This option is a great source for your club because it is very likely that seniors who spend their days in these homes will be eager to break free of their bingo game routines and be around the cheerful energy that kids provide. Make sure to speak with someone in charge of such homes to see whether a partnership is feasible. They will probably be very eager to cooperate because these homes regularly look for ways to engage their elderly residents more. You can arrange an informational meeting in these facilities to see if any senior citizens are willing to participate.

**TIP! – Bring a few of the children with you and maybe let them share a few words on how excited they are to share a new experience with those seniors who will volunteer. After all, who can say no to those angelic faces?**

## Relatives of the young athletes

Sometimes you may not have to look that far away, as your group of seniors can be very close by! This way might actually be one of the easiest ways to attract seniors. We might know from our own experience how grandparents are our favorite human beings, as they never say no to their grandchildren. This can be one of those cases where “no” is simply not an answer.

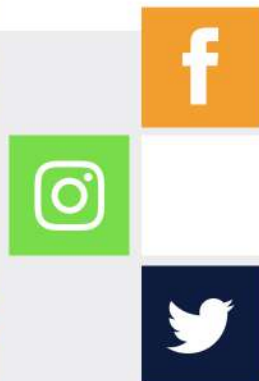
Grandparents love to spoil their grandchildren and spend time with them, so this would just be another benefit for these seniors if they take part. The children in your sports club can use their excitement and love of the sport they're engaged with to convince their grandparents to come and join them.

Since children might not be able to explain every single detail to their grandparents (except for the fun they're going to have together - they will do that even better than you!), then it can be useful to come up with a leaflet or a similar promotional material that will lay out a few details on your idea.

## Retirement clubs

For some seniors, the love and that spark for a specific sport can never leave. This group of seniors can be very easily attracted, as they are not only trying to contribute to the same goals as you might be, they might be even more tempted to join as they can pass on their excitement and experience with children who possess the same love for the sport as they do.

You can reach out to specific retirement clubs of your community and see whether they are interested in joining forces. An info session can also be beneficial here as well, as to give them a better understanding of what is expected of them – don't forget to bring those angelic faces with you as well



## Social media

**Do not overlook the power of social media even when it comes to seniors. Nowadays many seniors use social media to stay connected to their loved ones and remain independent, so you can also grab their attention through some platforms. For example, your club can use Facebook (or any other platform – do not limit yourself to one platform) to share information about your upcoming activity and invite them to take part. In any case, the word-to-mouth method may be initiated through one single post on such a platform and the news may reach your target audience indirectly!**

**A few tips that can help you out to reach more seniors through social media:**

- **Boost your post and select the targeted age group that you want to reach;**
- **Make sure that the post has a picture with a few important information to grab their attention;**
- **Allow them the opportunity to also call your club if need be (put a contact number somewhere visible, so they can reach out), as sometimes seniors are not that comfortable with texting and might want to call you instead;**
- **Use clear language and avoid any jargon or slang that might not be understood by this age group.**



## HOW TO ATTRACT SENIORS?

Now that we know where to look for seniors who might be interested in our activities, we need to figure out the best strategies for getting them to say "YES" to us. When attempting to draw in this audience, it is crucial to lay out an approach or at the very least have a few general pointers in mind.



### Provide all the necessary information

Usually this age group likes to play it safe, so they want to know everything they can beforehand, so that they are prepared for what will happen. It is your job to make sure that they feel comfortable enough to join you!

In order to achieve this, you should lay out the details of their attendance – from their method of transportation to the place of activity to the evaluation forms they will fill out in the end. Help them understand what is expected of them, but use language that will not scare them – ensure them from time to time that you will be with them through the whole process and everything is planned ahead of time, so that there are no surprises.

### Info and preparatory session

Since you may gather seniors from various locations (clubs, relatives, senior homes, etc.), it can be helpful to invite them to an informational session. You can do this ahead of time to ensure that seniors are happy with the plans and to see if they seem to need anything changed. It is strongly advised that you hold this session in a location that is comfortable for the seniors – you are the best person to know which location in your community is more appealing and convenient!

You can use this session as a part of your preparatory work for the activity. Engage these seniors by going over all the necessary details that may need their input because sometimes you may overlook a problem that they may be experiencing. They will feel much more at ease joining you if you include them in these sessions because they have not only been given accurate information about what they are invited to, but they have also helped prepare the activities themselves, giving them the impression that they are an actual part of it.



### Invite them to watch!

Use the constant rush of adrenaline that comes from watching sports to your advantage. Invite the seniors over to watch a practice or a game to stir up their interest in participating. These seniors will be more likely to participate in your activities and will feel more naturally connected to the kids as a result of the feeling they get from watching the kids play.

When the children finish their game/practice, invite the seniors to talk to the children. This time you do not want to organize anything specific, but just introduce them to each other, so that both groups are a bit familiar with one another. Since the children are already part of a team, it will be easier for them since they have their own friends with them, but this is different for the seniors. This gathering can also be beneficial for the seniors to socialize among themselves, so encouragement on this aspect is also a good idea. Additionally, when they see other people of their age taking part, then they feel more confident as well.

### Make a list of profiles

It can be very interesting to share pictures of your club's children (always ask permission from their parents) and a few words about the child. This will allow the seniors to get familiar with the kids beforehand and see that there is already a group of people who are looking forward to meeting them. You can also add a line that reflects their excitement to play with the seniors. We advise that you go with something simple and short – it can look something like this:





## Preparation of young people

Selecting the right group of young people to be involved in intergenerational work can also be a challenge. This is crucial because there is a danger that the activity can reinforce the stereotypes it is trying to dispel.

For instance, it might be problematic as young people may think older people are boring. Therefore, as with older people, young people's lack of understanding of intergenerational practice can also make it difficult to secure their engagement, therefore it is crucial to properly inform them beforehand.

In order to make sure that your group of young people is ready and can handle such activities, then here are a few tips on how to manage.

### Give them a clear picture of intergenerational sports

Just like with seniors, informing the children of what is expected of them is also very important. Take some time after practice to sit down your young athletes and let them in on a few details on:



**01** What is intergenerational sport?

**02** What are the benefits of intergenerational sport?

**03** What kind of challenges could be encountered?



During this session make sure that children are actively engaged in this discussion, e.g. before telling them more on what intergenerational sport is, you can ask them their opinion on what they think this is – you can use their own words to explain the concept, so that it is easier for them to understand. You can also ask them about the difficulties they anticipate (some of them may be able to mention particular difficulties faced by seniors due to personal experience with elderly relatives), as well as the advantages they anticipate. Simply put, it is crucial to keep your young athletes actively involved throughout the entire program, and this stage is no exception.

## Preparing sessions for your young athletes

It's time to test whether the ideas you exchanged in theory can be managed in practice once your group of young athletes has a solid understanding of the concept, the advantages, and potential challenges. You can simulate a few scenarios in advance to help kids understand what is expected of them and to help them be a little bit more ready when the actual seniors arrive.

You can think of various ways to modify your routine practice sessions into something more senior-friendly to help them get ready for these scenarios. Examples of that can be:

- ✓ **Play for 10 minutes only with one hand/foot (reduced mobility);**
- ✓ **Have kids put on headphones (reduced hearing);**
- ✓ **Have kids put on goggles (making the vision blurry = reduced vision);**
- ✓ **Have kids play 10 minutes with walking sticks.**



The kids will be more sympathetic toward the seniors and make better partners when the actual activity takes place once they are aware of the physical difficulties that the seniors may face during the activities. Nonetheless, these kids will still manage to have fun, as no matter which challenge you choose they will most probably welcome them and enjoy the process. Remember to always hold a type of debriefing session after such an activity. During this session, you can ask the athletes how they felt when they could not play as they usually do and use their senses to their maximum ability. Once this has been established, you can ask them what they would do to help their senior partner who might be struggling (they can be very creative, so use this to your advantage!) and ultimately, these sessions will contribute to their willingness to cooperate with seniors.

Moreover, if you decide to invite the seniors over to watch them practice or play a game, then this will also benefit the children to get more comfortable with them. Let this serve as a pre-ice breaker!



## Activities

Young and older people can have different needs and different motives for attending intergenerational programmes. Therefore, sometimes it can be difficult to find mutual points of interest. Young people may get bored or not enjoy the activities on offer, while seniors who are active are also likely to be more selective about the type of activities they engage in and have psychological restraints or fears for this new challenge. Due to this, they will engage and they will build bonds because it is a shared interest and it is a shared knowledge base.

In order to make sure that your activities are a success then you must - you guessed it - PREPARE! This is the key to any step of a successful delivery, so you might want to pay attention to a few details beforehand. To overcome the activities barrier, then you must make sure that you pay attention to the following details:

When recruiting seniors, make sure that they share the same passion for the sport as the child will – give them reason to bond before even beginning!

Having a mutual or shared interest is a key factor, as this can break down barriers and 'make it work'. By doing so, you have got young people who are passionate about, for example football, who are talking to older people who are passionate about football and that is what breaks down your barriers.

### Evaluate the capabilities of your players

This goes for both seniors and children. You might have a perfectly fit senior who used to be a professional player, but a child who started practice just a while ago, so you have to try and balance your activity, as you want everyone to feel included. During these activities, one thing is important – go easy on your players! Do not challenge them to the point where they begin to feel uncomfortable; you have gathered them to enjoy and have fun. It is your responsibility to ensure that no player puts themselves in danger by breaking the rules you have established before the activity because the players occasionally become overly enthusiastic during it and risk their own and other players' safety.

In order to evaluate such capabilities (and lack thereof) it is important to meet with them beforehand. Talk to them and ask them whether there is anything that they might be uncomfortable with or cannot perform at all. If your group of seniors has vision problems, then make sure that your equipment is light and the colors contrast the surroundings; if your players are unable to run, then turn that sport into a walking one – map the difficulties and adapt to the circumstances.

## Organisation and logistics

It might seem quite difficult and frustrating to organize this kind of programs. Activities may have to be scaled down to suit what is realistic and possible within a given timescale, space requirements, the number of your mixed group participants, or their own needs and capacities, and sometimes you may start with a grand idea and it could get paired down because things are not practical. For instance, if we tried to put some of those challenges in real life circumstances, these could be:

### — A suitable time for your players

While for younger people, these activities are probably best undertaken after school, whilst older people prefer them to be during the day. You can talk to seniors beforehand and see whether they would be willing to participate sometime after school hours or you can even switch to weekends, which will give you more space to adjust to the time needs of your participants.

### — Finding a suitable venue

Older people may be unwilling to travel far, or at certain times. It can be unhelpful for activities to take place in community locations that are unknown to young people. Lack of transport can, therefore, be a barrier to intergenerational work and organizing transport, for the older people in particular, can be time consuming and costly. In order to overcome this, you must check (even before your visits to the seniors' places) on ways that they can reach your venue:

- Check if there is easily accessible public transportation from the seniors area to your venue;
- If there is no public transportation, then organize a group pick-up of the seniors, e.g., if you have 5 seniors from a retirement home, then you can go and pick all of them up together and then drop them off when the activity is finished;
- Check with the institutions/homes/clubs whether they have their own transportation or can arrange it for the seniors.





# Intergenerational sport activity principles and goals

Every intergenerational sport activity should be led with a specific set of principles that should be followed through the entire process of its implementation. In order to make your life easier, we have set out a list of principles that we believe should be followed and kept in mind at all times from all of those who take part in such activities:

**Avoid stereotypes**

**Design developmentally appropriate activities**

**Stimulate dialogue**

**Think “sustainability”**

## Avoid stereotypes

Intergenerational programs involve the participation of specific subgroups of a generation, therefore, the program experience may unintentionally reinforce certain age-related stereotypes, such as the notion that all older adults are frail. This might jeopardize the effort you are putting in this initiative and sabotage the goal you are trying to reach.

**TIP! - One strategy for countering this dynamic is to organize additional intergenerational activities that enable participants to interact with a diverse pool of “representatives” of the other age-group. For example, when arranging such activities, make sure you begin with an “ice breaker”, so that everyone gets to know each other, members start feeling more comfortable within the team, the boundaries and limits of each member are revealed and the feeling of safety is built up. Preferably, such games should be of a more fun nature that will allow both seniors and children break some barriers before continuing with any other activity. Such exposure to diverse members of an age-group will counter the human tendency to make the cognitive error of applying characteristics found in a small sample of individuals to an entire group of people.**

## Design developmentally appropriate activities

When planning and conducting activities, take into account participants' strengths as well as their functional limitations (in terms of mobility, experience, and cognitive functioning). The age gap between your target groups (children and seniors) can sometimes be half a century long (!) and this interaction is definitely of specific nature and brings along certain particularities.

**TIP! - Before taking children to such activities with seniors, give them the chance to experiment or “play” with walking sticks, or other support equipment they are likely to see once they begin the activity. In another case, invite them to enter into some experiential learning activities. For instance, organize some role-play where some of the children pretend to have some mobility issues or reduced vision or hearing and let them explore the conditions of interaction with such people and prepare them for their first experience in advance. Young children, in particular, enjoy and learn the most through experiences that allow direct exploration and active involvement of their senses.**

## Stimulate dialogue

One thread that applies through all parts of this guide is “conversation”. Whatever the kind of sport you are performing, the facilitator plays an active role in stimulating dialogue. Despite the age difference, communication is key, be that before the sport activity takes place, during its implementation or even after it is over.

**TIP!** - To stimulate dialogue between the participants themselves and the participants with the facilitators then all you might need is a big piece of paper and a few pens!

Put this paper on the floor and share the pens among your participants. Ask them to think of some rules that they believe should be valid through the entirety of the activity and let them write down those that are agreed among them. Let them come up with around 10 main rules and write them all down. Once the rules have been established, then set up that paper somewhere in the venue, where they can see the rules during the whole time.

**EXTRA TIP!** - Have the participants come up with a 'safe word' and add it to the rules. Remind the participants to shout out this word whenever they feel uncomfortable.

## Think “sustainability”

Although excitement is typically high when implementing such programs, many of them have a transitory nature. It is very important that you do not stop with one activity even if it may not meet your expectations the first time (you can use the parts which were not successful and learn from them for your next session!). Sustainability of your intergenerational practice is of a complex nature, as it does not only include duration of the program, but also the ability to establish strong partnerships, participants' involvement – this is not a one man's job, but rather a web of relationships.

It will be much more difficult to organize an activity for the first time, but you can learn a lot from it so it will be much easier for you to do it the next time. If you invest a lot of time and resources in the activity and do not plan on continuing it, then you might not reach your full potential and risk the work you have done, as other generations and groups will not be able to benefit from it.





## Establish partnerships

To counter this tendency, try to establish formal partnerships between other organizations or another institution. Strong community partnerships will enable sharing and acquiring diverse resources. Each partner brings different resources and can solicit through different networks.

Identify the organizations, groups, clubs, or people, who can help create or deliver a program that meets the needs of the community. After you identify potential partners:

- ✓ Approach different groups;
- ✓ Organize and attend meetings
- ✓ Visit individual groups and agencies
- ✓ Make presentations
- ✓ Look for existing or similar initiatives that could benefit from your intergenerational approach.



A great place to begin your lookout for partnerships are the very institutions that you can attract seniors from, such as retirement homes or a specific seniors' club. This will allow you to always have a place where you can go and have seniors join you for your activities. Additionally, since these institutions deal on a daily basis with seniors, then they can be very helpful in providing you with tips and tricks on how to give them a great experience.

## Establish a knowledge scheme

On another level, if things are left to informal understandings between individual staff members of your organization/sports clubs, when people change jobs there is often not enough institutional memory or commitment to keep the program going. For that reason, it is important to establish a knowledge sustainability scheme, to avoid the risk of your initiative fading away in case some of the people in charge exit your organization/sports club. A very practical idea is to also create ancillary materials and resources that future staff members can use to keep the program going. These materials should be accessible, flexible, and easy to use.



## OBJECTIVES OF INTERGENERATIONAL SPORTS

The goal for intergenerational opportunities is to support mutual benefit for both target groups involved through interactions and relationships. These intergenerational opportunities delivered through sports offer a unique opportunity for children and seniors to eradicate ageing stereotypes by having fun altogether. These activities are built upon the strengths of younger and older generations, while allowing both generations to nurture understanding and mutual respect. Objectives that can support this goal are:

### Be Generative/Nurturing/ Helpful/Caring

Your team must encourage participants to demonstrate concern for their intergenerational partner, either self-motivated or with prompting by a facilitator, by taking time to carefully meet the other's needs. Your participants need to be reminded in your preparatory session that they should care for feelings, physical well-being, or take extra care to include the other person. Overt demonstration of the intergenerational partner's empathy and desire to serve and include should be highly encouraged.

### Take Initiative

Participants should engage in an activity willfully and without prompting; demonstrating a desire to participate through overt action or verbal request, taking it upon themselves to engage in a certain task or work with a certain individual without prompting is very important. This might be more present in the group of young athletes and such initiatives should only be encouraged.

### Interact/Communicate (verbal/non-verbal)

Participants (older adults or children) should be encouraged to communicate with other participants (verbal, eye contact, overt body language such as hugging, hand holding, stroking).

### Reminisce/Reflect

Sometimes a simple memory can be a great bonding element as well. Therefore, you can encourage the participants to engage in storytelling about their past, answer questions about their past, bring up objects/events from the past; incorporate memories associated with personal life history and life experience.



## Enhance Self-Esteem/Pride in Accomplishment

Encourage participants and your facilitators to make comments on a meaningful contribution that someone can make during the process. This way, the participant can demonstrate considerable pride in their work or relationship with the intergenerational partner. Additionally, these participants can show this to other participants as well, which may work as an indirect encouragement ("I made them feel good", or "It is our role to act as teachers/mentors to these children").

## Be creative

In order to reach this objective, you should include your participants in stages before the actual implementation of the activity – this can benefit both you and the participants. Allow the participants to take creative approaches toward the activities and do not shut down their ideas immediately, rather let them circulate around the group and maybe build upon it. This way, the participant is able to individualize his/her own intergenerational opportunity by making individual or partnered decisions about what, where, and how an opportunity is implemented or completed; moreover, the participant takes their own approach to the outcome of the activity by making it unique from others.

## Have Personal Choice/Make Decisions

As much as possible, try to allow your participants to exhibit some sort of autonomy during the entire process. This stands even for the smallest decisions they might be able to make, such as which place in the field they want to take, which ball they want to use, and so on.

## Motor skills

This objective will be easily reached as your intergenerational activities concern sports, which will inevitably help your participants to activate this function.

## Stay on Task/Complete an Activity

This cognitive objective will be achieved with the ability of your participants to stay engaged in the activity at hand in order to engage meaningfully in the task. This will allow them to enjoy the moment and the time that they spend with their intergenerational partners.

## Work as a Team/Cooperate

Intergenerational sports is a great way to help these different age groups work as partners. Having them gather in teams can help them feel closer (ice breakers will make a real difference on making your participants bond before the activity).

## Learn New Terms/Skills

This objective is seen through the ability of your participants to learn the name of a participant/facilitator, learn a new skill, etc.

# CHALLENGES IN ENGAGING DIFFERENT GENERATIONS

One of the most important things that your organization/sports club should keep in mind is that the specific intergenerational sport activity you will select to implement should evoke interest from all participants of all represented generations.

On one hand, the children should be old enough to understand the concepts of "diverse teamwork" and cooperative play. The seniors, on the other hand, should have a level of health that allows them to safely play, but should also be willing enough to engage with children in an active recreation experience. However, we should note that most sports activities can be modified to accommodate different levels of physical ability, regardless of whether it is a team sport or an individual sport.



To generate more notable and sustainable changes in health and fitness, consider developing a concrete intergenerational sports plan with regular participation opportunities, by integrating such initiatives in the annual programming of your sports club. Of course, this does not mean that such activities should happen everyday or multiple times a week - in fact the physical condition of half of your group members might not even allow this! However, a few times per month, multiple times per year would be a great opportunity for everyone to enjoy the benefits of intergenerational sports and for your club itself to practice in organizing such activities and improve their results!

In these terms, provided that your senior target groups requires more effort to be engaged, since the young athletes and children are already participating in certain activities of your organization/club and -in any case- are closer to the concept of sports and the habit of engaging in sports activities- it is important to keep in mind some of the major factors that push older people to abstain from sports activities:

- **Fear of injury.** A number of older people feel anxious when they are getting involved in sports activities, since they think that an injury will probably have bad consequences for their quality of life, and also think that their rehabilitation may be long and uncertain. They feel that due to their age, the probability of an injury during their involvement in sports is higher than younger people.
- **Stereotypes regarding ageing.** Stereotypes by young and older people affect the participation of the latter in sports activities, given that both groups consider that ageing equals inability.
- **Lack of fun during sports activities.** Surveys show that older people don't participate in sports activities because they lack fun or are too complicated for their needs or appear extremely challenging for their capacities. Therefore they cannot enjoy the process, rather they are concerned about how they should deal with it.



- **Lack of knowledge regarding the provision of proper sport activities at local level.** A lot of people do not know about sport activities that meet their needs organized in their area. In fact, this is the reality in the majority of cases, as there are not a lot of opportunities for organized physical activities of older people, who would hardly take their own initiative to start something individually. This is a real problem, but...your idea of implementing intergenerational sports activities within your organization will be the solution! :)
- **Embarrassment regarding their performance.** Older people frequently believe that they will not be able to participate successfully, and they are dissatisfied with their performance.
- **Rapport with instructors.** The older people wish to have a strong bond with their instructors, who need to be kind, compassionate, and encouraging. The fear of not having that bond with the person in charge when they appear in such an activity for the first time, is a challenge that should be overcome from an early stage.
- **Lack of interest.** Isolation, depression, and other negative feelings that might arise with ageing, especially after retirement, result in a low interest in sports and generally any other activity that requires social group interaction.
- **Lack of time.** Indeed, utilization of time has a totally different meaning in different age groups, while the older the person, the less the daily beneficial time, let alone the restraints set by practical issues: taking medicine at a certain timeline, need to rest multiple times per day etc. This could also be a barrier against the willingness of older people to participate in any sports activity.

Don't worry, though! Take a breath! Most of these limitation factors can be overcome by adjusting your sports program, and this is why we are here! In the following chapter we have set out specific steps that can be adjusted through each phase of preparation and implementation of your activity. Take a look!





# Develop your own intergenerational activities

Intergenerational programming is successful when it is properly planned and thought through. The goal of an activity is not to win but instead is to maximize interactions between the senior and the child while they play together. Therefore, you should focus on creating an interactive process rather than getting lost in the excitement of the game with the goal to win.

Any exercise aimed for the above purpose should be built up in a way that the participants connect on a non-verbal basis and the physical activity aims to raise awareness around the importance of social inclusion and connection between groups and individuals.



## Step

# 1

### Preparation

The first step in organizing the implementation may take up quite a lot of your time. It is recommended to take sufficient time to fully plan the whole process of an activity's implementation – to prepare concrete sessions (contents and activities), to define your assessment process, to map the needs and specificities of your participants (children and seniors) and to proactively plan every detail of the process.

In line with this, two aspects should definitely be taken into account:

#### ■ Participants should be "sensitized"

Your team should make sure that your participants are aware of the reason they are taking part in this activity and how they should react to certain issues. This process is better conducted with the two age groups separately, however, sensitization on a few general matters (such as the importance of intergenerational activities, sports in general, or simply being physically active) can be done once you have both groups together. Certain reactions should be discussed with the groups separately beforehand. To have a better overview, you can check the chapter on challenges and follow the tips we have provided for each matter. This process will help your participants feel part of the project, increase their motivation and reduce passivity.





■ Your team should be prepared for everything!

Regular meetings must be held with your team in order to prepare them to run the sessions, get to know each other (if you have volunteers or new members) and to have the chance to feed in their contribution into the content of the sessions. Provided that these activities can be quite fragile and harder to manage as you have different aspects to look at, then you must prepare for different scenarios in advance (even if those might never happen). Better safe than sorry!

When developing your activities with your team, then you must ensure that **ALL PARTICIPANTS ARE INCLUDED!** This is very important and should be strictly followed through the entire process, as there is no point in this activity if your young athletes play only with each other and completely disregard the seniors. It is important that if you are going to play a collective sport, then you should divide members equally to allow both groups to be included. The facilitators should also keep an eye out for the members who are not that active (note that you should see whether the inactivity is due to physical restraint or lack of motivation) and use the tips we have provided through the guide to encourage those participants to overcome the challenges faced.

The facilitators should be ready to adapt to different scenarios during the activity, but in a way that does not completely disrupt the process. For example, if you see that your seniors are breathing a bit louder than usual, then this might be a sign to take a break – slowly let them finish if the team is closing a step and smoothly invite them over for water or call for a simple break. On the other hand, if you see that your athletes are simply lacking motivation or they are not communicating that well between each other, then you might want to take out the list of your icebreakers now. Try to look out for some icebreakers between sessions that do not include that much physical activity but rather focus on communication between the team or individuals.

**EXTRA TIP!** Depending on the size of the activity and your vision on its sustainability, it might be beneficial to establish a Planning Group, which may include other organizations that may help in organizing, or other public or private stakeholders.





### ■ The specifics of your activity

First, it is important to make an estimate of the scale of your edition. For example, to have a first idea of the number of participants you are aiming for. Depending on scale and ambition, you will probably need some kind of formal support and 'green light' by some officials.

Your sports club/organization may decide on the scale and ambition. Any scale is fine! Is your target around 50 participants? Sounds good! Can you manage 500? Great as well! You probably know best the capacities of your club/organization, as well as the engagement level of participants, to decide which ambition is realistic, and what you can handle.

In any case, it's good to inform and involve the local authorities. Like the sports department or events department - you know best who to involve. Especially, in case you decide to use some public space in your local community, you would probably need some permission, so that you can carry out your activity.

We have already mentioned safety several times now, but your participants' safety is your priority and responsibility. Having said that, your team should have people who are trained on basic first aid in case of minor injuries. It is crucial that first aid should be administered only by individuals who have the skills, knowledge, and competence to ensure that procedures are done correctly. People who lack the skills can end up inflicting more harm than good, especially in sports injuries.





### ■ Location of the activity

If you are lucky enough to have your own venue - this is a real success! You know your own space, you feel comfortable with it - and so do your young athletes/children. The only thing you need to do is to ensure there is suitable infrastructure for the senior team members you are planning to host and arrange the activity space accordingly, taking into consideration seniors with mobility issues or other health related limitations (sight, hearing etc.).

On the other hand, if you don't have your own space and are in search of some public space to host your event/activity, then probably the following directions could be quite useful for you! Your intergenerational sports activity should preferably take place in some central place/venue for many reasons. A fun location in the center of your community is definitely a popular spot for locals.

Having the event in the heart of the community, in a vibrant area, is great fun for the participants themselves and also for spectators - and who knows? Maybe it is a way to attract even more participants for your next similar event! Make sure you have enough room for the sports activities and for the number of people taking part in the event, as for some activities you may need more space than for others.

The location should not be too small (too crowded) or too large (a huge square with a small group of participants is not good ambiance). This also relates to the number of sports you offer, the space between each activity.

As shared previously, for some locations, you will need formal authorization, so please involve the local officials. School editions or those activities that may take place at your private premises probably do not need formal authorization, therefore such permission is not necessary.

The surface should be suitable for sports activities: flat and smooth, not too many obstacles around. Some sports you can do at any underground, while for others, you might prefer grass. Depending on your planning and preferences, you can also think of a mix of surfaces.

The location should ideally be accessible for people with mobility issues and this is an important aspect to keep in mind, in order to ensure that your initiative is inclusive and inviting for all!



### ■ Time of the activity

The event date is up to you, so you should choose wisely the time when you want to make this activity happen. In order to have enough time to prepare everything, we strongly advise to set a preliminary date as soon as possible. Additionally, depending on the scale of the activity you should calculate the necessary time that you might need to plan ahead. If the event will take place outdoors, then you can plan ahead the period of time that you want the activity to take place, as weather conditions can play a crucial role in the successful implementation of it.

**TIP!** - It would be super attractive to hold your activity during a day that is important, such as for example the 23rd of June (International Olympic Day) or the 1st of October (International Day of Older Persons) or any other date that is important for your sports club/organization (some anniversary for instance), or for your local community (some special local date of celebration).

## Developing a plan

It is important to develop and write out a plan for the activities in order to maximize the interactions. Rather than start the planning process with an activity idea, start by choosing the objective(s) you would hope the group will achieve. For instance, if your group of older adults and children has not spent much time together, you may start with the objective: interact/communicate. When the two generations are brought together you want them to engage each other through verbal or non-verbal means in order for them to begin to get to know each other. Your plan should include all three aspects: preparation, implementation and follow-up. Be as detailed as possible, and also try to list the risks that might occur and how you would try to mitigate them, or the challenges you might face and how to manage them on the spot. It is important to involve all facilitators/trainers of your event in this process, so that everyone is familiar with your plan and can participate actively in its creation.

## Profiling the participants

Your next planning step would be to think about who will be joining you. What are their ages and genders? What were their prior occupations or hobbies? What are they currently learning about and what are they interested in? Do they have any sport experience whatsoever? Is it their first time in such mixed activity or do they have past experience? Knowing something about the people you are bringing together improves your ability to plan something that they will want to do or try. For example, if you plan a volleyball activity, but none of the seniors are interested in volleyball or have past experiences related to it, it is likely that you will end up with an activity that may lack energy.

A very important part of knowing about the people who will join you is understanding their ability levels. Depending on the developmental age of the child and the functional ability of the seniors, alterations to the activities presented in this guide - or any other that you are planning to develop from scratch - can and should be made to fit your participants accordingly. For instance, if a participant has a disability that impedes their capability to lift their arms, it may be difficult for them to do certain activities which involve only arm movement (ex. Hitting the ball with hands, scoring on a basket etc.), but they may be comfortable with a sport that may involve feet only. Rather than excluding this person from an intergenerational interaction, facilitators may develop some activities that do not require such motions so this individual may still join the intergenerational sessions. Also, preplanned modifications can be made to the materials or another role can be given to the participant so that they can still be active in the group.

The number of participants is another key factor in planning your activity. Most activities are best with a small to medium size group of children and seniors in order to minimize noise and distraction and maximize child/elder partnerships. Programs that involve an entire group of children and an entire group of adults may want to consider how they can split the groups up or how they can effectively use the physical space to support child/elder partnerships and reduce distractions. However, the number of persons that you can successfully involve will be influenced, in part, by the physical space and level of staffing available. Try programming with different group sizes to see what works well for your staff and participants.

**TIP!** In order to be able to collect this information it is a good idea to ask your participants to fill out a participation form in advance, meaning a few days before your event takes place!



**ATTENTION!**

Do not forget that both of your target groups are quite sensitive and require adequate attention. When it comes to children, don't forget to request parental approval for their participation in such an initiative, as well as medical approval for physical exercise. The latter is extremely important for your senior participants as well, since a doctor should certify whether they should participate, what kind of activities are appropriate, to what level of intensity and for how long. In any case, the person in charge (trainer/facilitator, etc.) must have a clear idea of any medical issues or concerns related to the participants.

**Determining the sport activity**

After all of these steps have been thought of, now it's time to choose the core activity – the sport. If your organization/club is specialized in one sport, then you will probably want to continue with that one, however, if you do not necessarily align with one specific sport, then you have a wide variety of sports that you can choose from. Nonetheless, you should keep in mind that you can choose any sport you wish as long as the activity is fun and suitable for people of all ages, regardless of fitness level and how experienced they might be. During the planning phase, it is important not only to ensure an activity meets your objectives, but also that the time participants spend together will be mutually beneficial.

Being able to adapt as you facilitate an activity is a positive skill to develop. By adapting activities to meet the participant's interests and abilities you can be sure that the people in your intergenerational programs feel as a part of the activity. Below, we will share some examples about the kind of sports activities and the number of sports you can include.

At the end of the day...it's your party: you choose the kind of sports, and the number of sports. It can be tennis, soccer, volleyball, archery, rowing, basketball, judo, chess, and so forth. It's your field – You decide!

It is important to remember that the sports activities you finally choose should underline the intergenerational goals: collaboration, learning, and passing on. It is crucial that all the team players are involved, so that regardless of fitness and abilities they should feel comfortable in participating and enjoy this amazing process.

However, due to participants' fitness, it is not advisable that a sports activity last too long. Therefore, if you intend to include some intensive exercise parts in your activity, this should not last more than 10 minutes, on average. After this reasonable time, you should give some time to your team to rest, catch their breath and prepare for their next tasks. In any case, you should keep in mind that there should be breaks between parts of the game - even if the exercise is not as intense, so that the participants have a chance to rest. This also contributes to the fact that a lengthy activity may be too challenging, so breaks between sessions can decrease the chances for an activity to be too challenging or dangerous, as we do not want any injuries to happen.

## Promotion of your event

You should not underestimate the power of a good promotion, as if it is up to a good level, then this is vital to the success of your activities. As the general public is not always familiar with the idea of intergenerational sports activities, you need a good and effective communication plan to draw attention and get them to participate, especially if this will be your first time to implement such an initiative.

You know best how to connect with the locals and your target groups, but you can use as many communication channels as possible, such as social media, articles in the local newspaper, promotional flyers at schools, and so on. However, in order not to lose track of the number of people and groups that will be present, you can use an online subscription page, such as Google Forms (try to use one that is more popular, so that it is easier for people to navigate through it).

In order to have a successful promotion, make sure to:

- ✓ **Share adequate information in a fun and attractive way**
- ✓ **Use language that is friendly and matches the profile of your participants**
- ✓ **Approach places where you can find participants who match the profile of your target group**
- ✓ **Use both modern and traditional promotional means, as it is most probable that your seniors won't have access or skills to use online tools**
- ✓ **Ask for the support of relevant stakeholders and your local authorities to promote your event**
- ✓ **Don't forget to invite spectators to enjoy their time as well and create a good atmosphere**

**TIP!** - In order to maximize visibility of your event, you can ask schools or volunteer networks to share the news, as this would be a no cost effort for you, which may have a high impact. However, you can always organize an info-day or some other fun event to advertise and promote your plans!

## Dissemination materials

If the budget allows you, it would be good for your team to prepare a few ready-to-use materials that you can use throughout the activity, such as: scoreboards, diplomas, banners, flags, bracelets, and so on. This always raises the excitement and the interest of the participants and motivates them to be more actively involved in the process, while at the same time builds up the team-spirit and the feeling of engagement.



## Step

## 2

## Implementation

## ■ Inside planning

The second step is dedicated to the actual implementation of the programme and the assessment process. During the implementation period, each session is first prepared and then implemented. The goal of preparatory sessions, where all your team/colleagues are involved, is to define, in as much detail as possible, how the session will run and what activities will take place. This includes: methodological strategies of group management, risk management, group dynamics, etc. This is also a good opportunity to review previous efforts and discuss any adaptations that need to be made to improve how the sessions run. The preparation session can also be a chance to ensure that everyone involved has arrangements in place within the project timescales to avoid any potential issues on the day.

## ■ Establish teams

Once you have your participants in your premises, then you can begin to form your teams. It is highly encouraged to plan the number of people per team beforehand, but also an alternative scenario in case some people do not show up or last minute additions change your balance. Make sure that the teams are mixed, so as to allow the children and seniors to work together.

Once teams are formed, have a brief team session in which participants introduce themselves and discuss their interests and experiences regarding the sport(s) at hand, explain the process, share the team-rules and ensure that everyone feels safe and comfortable.



## Step

## 3

**Debriefing with the participants**

Before you let go of the participants, it is very important to gather them together and debrief on the activities that they just had. This part of the program may include a session where participants share their feelings of the day(s) activities, what they liked/dislikes, what they would change, what they gained, what has been a challenge for them etc. If not articulated by any of the participants, emphasize the value of maintaining a healthy, active lifestyle throughout one's life. The person in charge can always set a good example, by sharing first their opinion and "showing the way" to other participants to do the same by encouraging them to open up.

A few questions you could use to reflect with your participants are the following:

- ✓ **How do you feel about the session?**
- ✓ **What worked well for you and the players?**
- ✓ **Were there any challenges or issues that arose?**
- ✓ **How did you respond to them?**
- ✓ **What actions or solutions would you take to prevent those challenges or issues from occurring again?**

**TIP!** - If you don't wish to make this debriefing process through an open discussion with your participant, you can always make it fun and entertaining! Use some non-formal methods during this reflection time, so that participants feel more comfortable in sharing. For example: *"shoot in the basket and if you score you have to name one negative thing, and if you miss, you will share one positive thing of the day"*.

It is also recommended to include some informal socializing time for when the sporting event is over. If appropriate, try to determine people's level of interest in making this a regular event or get feedback on how you can improve for the next time.

**TIP!** - It is quite practical to have an evaluation form created in advance. Ask for your participants' opinion, their experience, the level of satisfaction and offer them the space to make concrete comments and share their observations. Of course, a printed version would be more suitable in this case, not only for the difficulty in digital tools due to age, but also due to the fact that you will be in a sports venue/public space with no equipment to use.



# IMPLEMENTING YOUR SPORT ACTIVITY

As mentioned previously, before proceeding with any specific sport activity, it is highly important to make sure that you get to know your players. It is very important to know their sports interests and health conditions, as this will help you select an activity that is interesting and not too challenging for them. In any case, while developing and implementing your activity plan, you should take into consideration any difficulties that some of your players might face and find ways to overcome or minimize them in order to prevent your player from being excluded. Here are some practical tips:

<p><b>Visual</b></p> 	<p>Ensure there is adequate lighting;</p> <p>Equipment color contrasts with the environment for better visibility;</p> <p>If your player uses glasses, try to make sure that they are usable (clean, in good shape, etc.)</p> <p>Call out the name of the player that has poor vision before you throw the ball at them.</p>
<p><b>Hearing</b></p> 	<p>Ensure that there is not too much noise</p> <p>Ensure that the instructions are audible (check this with the participants themselves)</p> <p>If your player has hearing aids, make sure they have them on and they work properly.</p>
<p><b>Physical</b></p> 	<p>If your player is in a wheelchair, make sure that they are seated in anti-tip wheelchairs with their seatbelts fastened.</p> <p>If needed, help your player position their wheelchair in a position where they can be actively involved in the activity..</p>
<p><b>Cognitive</b></p> 	<p>Repeat instructions provided.</p> <p>Do not complicate it - keep everything short and simple.</p> <p>Explain multiple times if need be</p> <p>Show an example if one does not understand verbal instructions</p>

Furthermore, there are quite a few aspects that are also important if you wish to implement a meaningful and successful intergenerational sport activity. Take a look!

## Foster social interaction

Social interaction is very important for seniors and at times it may seem less "necessary" for children. Nevertheless, we firmly believe that social interaction is essential and advantageous to both groups. Intergenerational sports activities change the modes of communication and the traditional roles of young and older people, and thus provides new ways and opportunities for connecting the two age groups. Through sports activities that all participants are interested in, you are offering them an enjoyable and interesting activity in a friendly atmosphere – this helps facilitate the development of positive social interactions between these two age groups and bridge the intergenerational gap.

To build the bond that we are looking for between generations it is very important to foster social interaction between your players before, during and after the activity. Here are some practical tips that can be quite useful in this direction:

### Before the activity:

- Invite players to introduce each other or have them introduce themselves to the rest of the team (e.g. share their favorite sport, team player/sports team, etc.).
- Invite them to decide on a team name and cheer/dance
- Ask them to shout their team cheer/do their team dance before the activity begins.

### During the activity:

- After every goal is scored, encourage the scoring team to do their team cheer/dance together.
- Pair players or volunteers up to complete tasks with special conditions (e.g. one player uses their left hand and the other uses their right hand only).

### After the activity:

- Make a quiz game and award teams with one bonus point for every correct answer about their teammates.
- Ask them to name one positive thing about another team member
- Invite them to share positive feedback for one another

## Warm up and cool down

Before starting to play any kind of sport, we recommend that you conduct warm up exercises, while upon completion you can use cold down exercises. To make sure that all of your participants are comfortable, then all of these exercises are to be done while the participants are seated. While you are doing these exercises, you should keep an eye out and ensure that:

- These exercises are suitable for all members, taking into consideration their mobility skills and any other health issues.
- Players do not bounce or overstretch during these exercises.
- Ensure that players only exercise the arm/leg that they are able to move independently.
- If any of the players experience sharp pain/discomfort during these exercises, please refer them to an appropriate healthcare professional to evaluate their suitability for sporting activities.



# Examples of intergenerational sport activities

Intergenerational sports activities that you can play can be numerous, however, they cannot and should not be played the traditional way at this point. Rules of a game vary on a case-by-case basis, to suit the individual needs of the people playing.

In order to make sure that your sports activities are both safe and fun for your participants, we have tried to elaborate a few methods that can assist you in delivering your activities successfully in both team and individual sports. These methods are divided in different categories to ensure that you have everything covered during your sports activity. These categories include:

## Teaching/Coaching style

This point includes how the coach/facilitator delivers the activity, how they organise, lead and communicate. How coaches go about things may have a big impact on successful inclusion. Here are some things that you can try:

- be aware of the abilities and needs of all the participants
- use age appropriate language
- keeping instructions short and simple and check for understanding
- be mindful of your positioning, are participants within visual and audible range
- using appropriate physical assistance — guide a participant's body parts through a movement



## Rules

Making changes to the rules that govern games and activities can enable greater inclusion. You can completely remove a few or simplify them. Here are some suggestions:

- allow for more bounces in games like tennis, more steps in basketball or more hits in volleyball;
- reduce the number of players on a team to increase the chances of getting involved;
- increase the number of players on a team to decrease the amount of activity required by each player;
- more frequent substitutions;
- allow rolls, bounces, or underarm in cricket, baseball or softball;
- modify the distances for pitching or defending;
- reduce or remove competitive elements such as scoring.

## Environment

Following the tips provided in the previous chapters, this part is all about making changes to the space for the whole group or individuals within the group. To have a suitable environment for your player, you can try these approaches:

- reduce or increase the size of the playing area;
- reduce net, hoop or goal height and width;
- use a smooth surface such as an indoor court;
- limit distractions in the surrounding area such as loud music, unnecessary equipment or other activities.

## Equipment

There is no single rule for this part, however, you can try a few simplifications that will make your experience better:

- change the size;
- change the weight;
- change the color;
- change the length;
- change the way you use it;
- use balls that bounce less or float more;
- use equipment that contrasts with the area of play;



## Task

This part relates to the task and process of changing the nature of an activity. Consider these things:

- break skills down into their component parts;

**Example:** Before playing basketball, have your players form a circle and simply let them throw the ball around for a few tries before starting to play (adapt this to the type of sport you are playing, e.g. instead of throwing straightforwardly, then throw it in the air with your volleyball positioned hands instead).

- practice skills alone or with a partner before incorporating them into a game.

**Example:** Ask your players whether they would feel comfortable to practice a skill alone or in a group – remember to take their opinion into consideration at all times. If the majority decides to practice alone, then have them do a final round together.



## People



This part is all about making changes to the people participating in the activities. This might include changing the numbers or ways in which people are involved and how they interact with each other. However, we advise that at all times you balance teams according to the overall abilities of the whole group to maximize participation.

## Inclusion



Inclusion marks a very important aspect of intergenerational sports activities and should be your main focus. Therefore, make sure that everyone in your group or team gets an equal chance to take part. Try to think about the following aspects:

- ensure everyone has to touch the ball before the team can score;
- make sure each player has equal the field of play;
- allocate different player roles or match positions to participant abilities.

## Inclusion



Changing how time works or calculated during your activity can enable more effective participation. Here are some suggestions:

- change the duration of the activity;
- include additional or longer rest periods.



Let's check out a few practical examples of sports adjusted to the intergenerational prism.

### Example No 1:

#### INTERGENERATIONAL FOOTBALL



To illustrate one example, see how we could adapt a **FOOTBALL** game:

The **match lasts 30 minutes**, rather than 90 – you can adapt this as well, but we do not recommend more than 30 minutes (breaks are not included).

**A full team consists of seven players**, rather than 11 – if you include too many players at the same time, then it will be problematic to manage the players. Possible chaos may make some players feel uncomfortable or even decrease motivation among some team members to play more actively as there might be too many players on the field already.

**No running allowed, and no contact** between players – this also depends on the fitness of your players, however, if you want to play a sport where your players traditionally run a lot, then you can adapt that to a 'walking sport'.

There is **no offside rule** – If your senior players come from clubs with former professional players, they will likely oppose excluding this rule; however, if you have less experienced players, this might just make the process easier.

Teams can make **unlimited substitutions** – this is very important not only for the fact that this way you will have more people included in the activity, but this way the players can take breaks more often without disrupting the entire game.

Teams can have **unlimited breaks** – if members of the team get too tired during the game, then you can hit that pause button and let them take a rest and maybe let them strategize a bit while hydrating.

The **football field is much smaller** than the regular one, or limited to only half of the regular one, or maybe to a 5x5 mini-football field.





## Example No 2:

### INTERGENERATIONAL BOWLING



To illustrate one example, see how we could adapt a **BOWLING** game:

Use **bowling ramps** – this tip is perfect for those needing physical assistance when rolling the ball with their hand. With the ramp, those who have low muscle tone or limited range of motion in their arms can also participate and strike!

Switch to **inflatable/rubber bowling balls** – this is advisable when you have a team with people who may have a difficult time lifting heavier balls. This ball is suitable for both children and seniors, as due to its lighter weight, it allows for a creative routine where both hands and feet may be used.

Use **both hands** – if your players feel comfortable, then it might be easier for some of them to throw the ball with two hands instead of one.

One game lasts until the first person reaches **21 points** (this depends completely on the number of participants, the time you have available and the number of pins you can use since you can have several players shoot at the same time in different lanes).

If your participants struggle with visual impairment, use **tape on the floor** to mark off the optimal path for the ball.



Now you have all it takes for your first attempt in intergenerational sport activities! Take a big breath and jump into this amazing and adventurous journey! Good luck!



MOVE IT



# ACROSS



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