

Playgroup SA

Intergenerational Playgroup



Playgroup SA Inc.

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What is an Intergenerational Playgroup?

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

This play-based learning provides a solid foundation for all children to facilitate their wellbeing and holistic development.

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

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

Why Intergenerational Playgroups?

Research suggests that Intergenerational Playgroups improve outcomes and quality of life for older people, particularly those experiencing:

- Isolation/Loneliness
- Dementia
- Disengagement from community

There are a number of studies that have been conducted on Intergenerational Playgroups and the benefits for aged care residents and attending families.

Research by Skropeta C M, Colvin A and Sladen S (2014)* into participation benefits included the following outcomes for older residents:



- Increase in dignity, particularly with residents who have dementia
- Increase in longer lasting joy and happiness
- Higher levels of self-esteem
- More active participation in the community

The need and benefits extend beyond those of the older person to the parents/caregivers and children within the playgroup. Where parents, grandparents and great-grandparents of attending families may have passed or who do not live locally, the playgroup provides them with the opportunity to engage and interact with older people and provides a safe and fun environment for positive shared experiences.

**Source: Skropeta C M, Colvin A and Sladen S, 2014, An evaluative study of the benefits of participating in intergenerational playgroups in aged care for older people, BMC Geriatrics. <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2318/14/109>*



Who is Playgroup SA?

Playgroup SA Incorporated is a not-for-profit organisation founded in 1974 and is the peak association for Playgroups in South Australia.

Our Vision is to create the opportunity for every child to learn through quality play experiences while supporting family/carers in their roles as primary educators.

Our Mission is to facilitate positive, enriching & educational experiences in a safe environment for young children and their families/carers by providing an accessible network of playgroup services.

Playgroup SA's commitment to Intergenerational Playgroups

Playgroup SA Incorporated is committed to closing intergenerational gaps between older citizens and the community. We recognise the reciprocal benefits for younger and older people participating in activities together, building connections and building on capacity of all generations through these connections.

Playgroup SA affiliation

Becoming an affiliated member of Playgroup SA provides the Playgroup with many benefits including:

- Insurance – contents, comprehensive public liability and personal liability. Children and families will be covered by Playgroup SA insurance
- Apra Music licence
- Access to and visits from the Support and Development Team
- Workshops with a discount for Members and Coordinators



- Resources
- Messy Play sessions
- Activity ideas
- Child Safe Environments training
- Inclusion on Playgroup SA's database referral listing.

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

- A range of art and craft materials
- Ideas and activity starters
- Music resources and literacy materials and;
- Playgroup SA's Playgroup Guide.

The easy-to-use Playgroup Guide is an important resource for Affiliated Playgroups. It features 10 chapters full of Playgroup information including best practices for establishing and maintaining a high quality, sustainable Playgroup, types of play beneficial to children, safety ideas and ways to promote your Playgroup.

There are various options for affiliation available for Intergenerational Playgroups. These can be discussed with Playgroup SA's Support and Development Team.



How to start a Playgroup

1. Contact Playgroup SA to receive advice from one of the playgroup consultants and to receive a New Playgroup Information Pack
2. Affiliate with Playgroup SA to receive specialised and continual support in getting your Playgroup started
3. Complete a risk assessment for the facility, particularly the rooms and/or areas specified for Playgroup, and/or assess own site Policies and Procedures
4. Promote the Playgroup and encourage families to become members
5. Meet with families to define the purpose of the Playgroup and decide upon a meeting time and day
6. Allocate adult roles or duties to spread the workload
7. Work out a budget
8. Agree upon activities to be offered and begin to gather toys and equipment
9. Begin to formulate some ideas on how the group will address any problems or issues that may occur during Playgroup. Devise a Playgroup policy with the group's values and expectations clearly represented. Advise site staff, residents and families that there is a new Playgroup starting.
10. Set the starting date.
11. Run your first Playgroup session! Have fun!

Support from Playgroup SA

Playgroup SA is here to help you at every step of the way. The Playgroup SA Team can provide you with support via phone, email and more importantly via face to face meetings to assist you with commencing your Playgroup.



Playgroup SA can provide you with advertising, establishing a routine, developing a program, plus sourcing materials and equipment.

The "First 6 weeks" is an intensive support plan implemented by the Playgroup SA Support and Development Team to ensure your Playgroup becomes a high quality, sustainable Playgroup.

Playgroup SA also offers training and workshops to Playgroup Coordinators to equip them with the essential knowledge of how to coordinate a Playgroup. The Support and Development Team will assist you to make a reservation for these.

Resources and Equipment

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



Ideas for resources and materials may include:

- Paints and paper
- Pencils, textas, crayons
- Craft equipment – glue, boxes, tape, etc
- Building blocks
- Soft balls
- Playdough and playdough tools
- Cars & trucks
- Books
- Dolls, prams and blankets
- Ride on or push toys
- Dress ups and role play equipment
- Any other resources which are safe and suitable for the young and the young at heart.

Other equipment required may include First Aid Kit, tables, chairs, blankets, tea and coffee and travel mugs.

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

Costs for Families

There are 2 options for the Intergenerational Playgroup families to become members. The Playgroup could purchase a nominal amount of memberships on behalf of the families, reducing their total costs.

Alternatively, families could become individual members of Playgroup SA for a small fee. Playgroup SA offers yearly, half-yearly or term membership options.

In both instances, parents or carers must complete a Playgroup Membership Form on their first day (returned to Playgroup SA). This will ensure the Playgroup has child and family details, emergency contact details, and all children, parents and carers are covered by Insurance.



Members will gain access to a range of benefits including ABC Membership Card, State of Play Magazine, access to discounted courses and workshops, a free ticket to the Pregnancy, Baby and Children's Expo, Insurance, invitations to Playgroup SA events, subscription to ePlay news and access to as many affiliated Playgroups within SA as they wish.

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

Routine

The Intergenerational Playgroup is encouraged to set a routine for the Playgroup session. Routines will assist the session to flow smoothly, attendees will know what is happening next and any behavioural concerns will be reduced. Playgroup SA recommend including a short Welcome activity, Snack Time and a Farewell activity in your routine. These can be as simple as a song or story book. The Playgroup SA team can issue you with song lyrics and ideas to use during your session.

Snack Time

Children, families and residents should have scheduled time to enjoy a small snack together during the Playgroup session. This could be as simple as a small range of fruit. As some residents have special dietary needs, Intergenerational Playgroup may opt to provide the snacks for the attendees. Families should also be discouraged NOT to bring nuts or eggs into the facility for safety reasons. Playgroup SA has a template available for Playgroups to distribute to families, which outlines what foods are and are not allowed to be brought onto the site.



Safety

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

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

The Residential Facility will need to complete a risk assessment prior to starting an Intergenerational Playgroup. Risks should be identified, assessed using a risk assessment matrix and strategies implemented to ensure the safety of residents, children and families. Playgroup SA will be able to provide the Coordinator with a risk assessment to complete.

All children attending Playgroup will need to be recorded on a weekly attendance form. This will not only help the Playgroup Coordinator to keep track of who has attended, but also for emergency purposes such as evacuations. The attendance records must be emailed to Playgroup SA at the end of each term, with the original copies kept on site at the Residential Facility.

Playgroup Guidelines

Guidelines are a simple way to ensure everyone feels a sense of belonging at Playgroup. Playgroup belongs to everyone and expectations should be clearly outlined. This will help to make the session a more relaxed, comfortable and enjoyable experience for all. Guidelines may be set in collaboration with the volunteer Coordinator, residents, children, parents and carers.

Guidelines could identify:

- Acceptable and non-acceptable behaviours
- Responsibilities of the parents and carers
- Diversity and Cultural Inclusion
- Other environmental guidelines for example, smoking, sun smart, etc
- Rights and fair play

Intergenerational Playgroups may have additional requirements related to illness, foods, toileting, emergency procedures, access to facility, moving through the Playgroup room, etc. These guidelines help to ensure the safety of residents, staff and children.



For further information

Further information about Intergenerational Playgroups can be sought from the team at **Playgroup SA** on **1800 171 882**. Monday to Friday 9am-4pm.

