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Joy of Life kindergartens - intergenerational meetings and prevention of loneliness

Background

The public health report Meld.St.19 (2018/2019) and the quality reform for seniors Meld.St.15 (2017-2018) encourage more intergenerational meetings to prevent loneliness among children and elderly. Intergenerational interaction is regarded as beneficial to children's growth, development and affiliation. Joy of Life for The Elderly has several years of experience with intergenerational meetings through the concept Joy of Life Kindergarten, and recently finished a project focusing on further development of this concept.

Aims

The main goal: to further develop the concept, enabling more kindergartens to take part in intergenerational meetings. The project aimed to investigate which prerequisites were necessary to create good intergenerational meetings, establish the importance of the meetings, and the kindergartens need for follow-ups.

Method

There was completed mappings, developed digital tools, and created digital platforms for exchange of experience, inspiration, and information.

Results

Intergenerational meetings are just as important for the children as for the elderly. The kindergartens experienced the meetings as important for social learning in interactions with the elderly. Following prerequisites for good intergenerational meetings were found: 1)A start-up meeting between participants to clarify expectations, 2)regular meetings between the children and the elderly, 3)joint activity between participants.

Conclusion

Intergenerational meetings functions at the best when hold as a low-threshold activity. Joy of life kindergartens is a low-threshold concept which create engagement and positivity among participants. Intergenerational meetings can contribute to the prevention of loneliness by giving the participants a feeling of affiliation, and a sensation of being seen as well as being significant to others.