**Tiggers Honeypot and Milford House 2013 Intergenerational Project**

The partnership between the children of Tigger’s Honeypot and residents and families of Milford house embraces the notion that we can challenge biases and stereotypes, promote inclusiveness and advocate for social justice and equity within our communities. In 2008 the Tigger’s Honeypot and Milford House project began and over those years has evolved into a partnership with enormous benefits for both children in the early years and the elderly in a care facility.

Though an Aged Care facility is specifically designed for aged adults and early childhood centres designed for young children, there are numerous benefits when children and the elderly engage in each other’s environments. By utilising each other’s facilities and combining resources, there is shared knowledge, skills and learning.

Take for example residents visiting Tigger’s Honeypot to engage with children in the centre’s outdoor environment. Residents are able to participate in creative art experiences such as canvas painting and clay work in natural surroundings, rather than an enclosed indoor environment. When children visit Milford house they equally benefit, as they participate in shared learning experiences such as Bingo and fine motor activities.

It is important to remember that early childhood educators play a critical role in ensuring young children are involved in real life experiences that stimulate learning, encourage children to question their world and promote a sense curiosity and wonder. Children and the elderly can sometimes be the ‘invisible’ members within our communities, many biases and stereotyped attitudes exist toward them. The pedagogy at Tigger’s Honeypot values all ages within our community, from the young to the very old and the ongoing relationship with Milford House embraces this notion.

**Benefits of intergenerational relationships**

- Children can be active citizens within their local community
- The elderly can enjoy the company of young children as well as the teachers and participate in reciprocal relationships and shared learning experiences
- Children are able to develop an appreciation and understanding of diversity, acknowledge difference and develop an appreciation of elders in the community
- Endless opportunities arise to challenge stereotypes and biases and break-down barriers within our community
Benefits of additional funding to ensure continuation of the project

It has taken many years to establish a partnership between both services. For visits to continue to remain an integral component of the program at Tiggers Honeypot additional funding is required.

Additional funding would allow for a designated person to be employed who will ensure the visits happen more frequently. Currently visits occur on a fortnightly basis but at times these can be sporadic due to unforeseen factors such as staff illness/leave and weather conditions resulting in less frequent visits. These situations can cause distress to children and residents who are actively looking forward to interacting. With a dedicated person, the liaison officer would be available to ensure consistency in visits as well as organising necessary transport if required.

A liaison representative would be able to formalise and enhance the program further by

- liaising between Tigger’s Honeypot educators and recreational organisers of Milford House in ensuring curriculum ties between respective programs
- overseeing the development of co-constructed goals, reviewing and implementing shared learning experiences
- ensuring a commitment to research into the benefits of children engaging with residents
- sourcing other related agencies and organisations and inviting them to become involved
- establishing a monitoring system to examine the impact and benefits of intergenerational relationships
- developing and rolling out a program to inspire other early learning centres in the community to connect with their local aged care facility

With additional resources we see endless possibilities.

If you would like to support Early Years to reach their goal of employing a project liaison officer please click on the link below. Indicate that you would like to donate to the Tigger’s Honeypot Milford House program.


Tigger’s Honeypot and UNSW would like to extend their many thanks to all the staff and residents and families of Milford House, for continued support of our children’s visits. We embrace children, as citizens of our communities, and see them as being capable and valuable members of our society, and our elders, also as citizens of our communities, and a wealth of knowledge who we can learn so much from.