



Reciprocal learning in an intergenerational cooking program

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1. Background

Ageism damages our health and wellbeing while stereotypes lead to harmful over generalisations.^a Intergenerational contact programs are among the most effective interventions for reducing ageism.^b

2. Research question and method

Can a short-term intergenerational cooking program provide older men and apprentices with learning opportunities?

Three 3rd year TAFE apprentices planned, delivered and evaluated 8, 2-hour coaching sessions with six older men (73-83 years) in specific cooking skills as part of their 'Coaching Others' core unit.

3. Results

3.1 Older men

- Improved skills in planning and organising meals
- Increased confidence in trying new recipes

3.2 Apprentices

- Increased confidence and sense of achievement in coaching
- Improved coaching skills recognised by industry partners

3.3 Stereotypes

- Groups' descriptive representations of each other became more aligned

4. Discussion & conclusion

- Planning intergenerational learning required time and commitment from all staff
- Structured session content was meaningful for both groups
- Reciprocal learning contributed to changing ageist stereotypes.^c



An intergenerational cooking program shows promise as a successful approach to intergenerational learning and combatting ageist stereotypes

5. Acknowledgment

Thank you to the participants who contributed to this work. Ethics approval was obtained from GOTAFE Research and Ethics Committee.

References

a) World Health Organization. Global report on ageism. 2021.

b) Burnes D, Sheppard C, Henderson CR, Jr., et al. Interventions to Reduce Ageism Against Older Adults: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Am J Public Health*. 2019;109(8):e1-e9.

c) Tambaum T. Intergenerational Learning in Action. In Evans K, Lee WO, Markowitsch J, et al., (Eds). *Third International Handbook of Lifelong Learning*: Springer 2022:1-24.