

Ottawa Celebrates Intergenerational Day on June 1st with New *Gathering Bench*

May 31, 2022– Ottawa, Ontario

The City of Ottawa will proclaim June 1st as Intergenerational Day — a day to celebrate the value of connections between different generations. iGenOttawa has selected “Coming Together” as this year’s theme. iGenOttawa has partnered with Ottawa Community Housing (OCH) and the Ottawa Tool Library to build an intergenerational “*Gathering Bench*” in celebration of the day to promote spaces that encourage connection between people of different ages.

The “Gathering Bench” was built on May 18 by volunteers and will be unveiled on June 1 on the grounds of Clementine Towers, OCH building near the Billings Bridge Shopping Centre. The seating area will accommodate several people and includes several planters. Colourful flowers will be planted by Ottawa City Councillors Shawn Menard and Mathieu Fleury, and Chief Executive Officer of OCH Stéphane Giguère at the unveiling ceremony alongside some of the Clementine Towers’ Garden committee members.

There are many ways for older and younger people to connect in meaningful ways – to share their time, interests, talents. Even small acts can foster a sense of belonging:

- older adults sharing homemade treats or spring flowers;
- children and youth creating artworks and cards with kind messages to share with older adults; and
- impromptu concerts for those musically-inclined!

For a second year in a row, students at the Centre d’Excellence Artistique de l’Ontario at l’École Secondaire Publique De La Salle will share arts booklets with the residents of the Centre d’Accueil Champlain.

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Quotes

“Benches connect people. iGenOttawa is pleased to have partnered with Ottawa Community Housing and the Ottawa Tool Library to create this inviting space for people of different ages to come together. We hope this will be the first of many gathering benches in Ottawa!”

- *Christine Franklin, Co-Founder of iGenOttawa*

“We’re thrilled to share tools, skills and bench design with the “*Gathering Bench*” projects of Ottawa led by iGenOttawa.”

- *Bettina Vollerhausen, Co-Founder and Tool Goddess at Ottawa Tool Library*

“The Volunteer Engagement Program facilitates beautification projects and social inclusion, which would not be possible without the support of the broader community. Thank you iGenOttawa and Ottawa Tool Library volunteers for this wonderful space you have created for tenants.”

- *Stéphane Giguère, CEO, Ottawa Community Housing*

“Projects such as this help increase the pride of place tenants feel about their community. This will help to provide a space where people can connect. I hope to see more projects like this, where young and old can connect, learn, and share.”

- *Mathieu Fleury, Rideau-Vanier Councillor and Ottawa Community Housing Board Chair*

Interesting facts

- In the next decade, the proportion of Canada’s population aged 65 and older will exceed 20 percent. The number of adults over 85 will quadruple, and the number of centenarians will triple.
- Loneliness is comparable to the risk of smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day. Source: American Psychologist, Julianne Holt-Lunstad, a professor of psychology at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah
- There are 6,811 seniors living in OCH communities.
- 285 seniors live at 1455 Clementine – the average monthly income is \$1,596

Additional Link

[Intergenerational Day Canada](#)

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Photos for Use



Photo Cutline: Members of iGenOttawa, Ottawa Tool Library and Ottawa Community Housing relax on the newly built “Gathering Bench”.

Contributors



Backgrounder

History of Intergenerational Day (Est. in 2010)

Intergenerational Day Canada started in British Columbia in 2010 to celebrate the value of connections between generations. Since then, more than 100 cities have officially recognized the day. For the fourth year in a row, Ottawa will be joining other cities across Canada in proclaiming June 1st as Intergenerational Day – to raise awareness of the power of simple intergenerational connections and to celebrate the positive influence intergenerational connections have on eliminating isolation and loneliness. It is a day to celebrate all the good things that are presently taking place between generations in the community as well as to promote activities to encourage individuals of different ages to connect.