



INTERGENERATIONAL

DIGITAL

ART

Mahon Intergenerational Photography Group, Ireland

PROBLEM

This was an Intergenerational Digital Photography Project. The older people and younger participants met on a weekly basis with a digital photography tutor, a development worker for older people and a youth worker. The group learned digital photography skills and put together a thematic exhibition, 'Young and Old', which was displayed publicly.

Before the larger digital photography group came together, the younger and older participants met separately. This facilitated session aimed to establish and record any existing attitudes and prejudices.

A mid-point review was also held at which stage both groups were reminded of their original comments. This was an opportunity to observe if there was any difference in opinion. A DVD captures the views and learning of the participants. It highlights the stereotypical views that can exist prior to engaging with another age group, and how after some time the preconceived ideas can be transformed, with mutual respect developing.

SOURCE:
https://www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/attachments/mapping_report_november_2012_web.pdf

ACTION

The group met once a week in Mahon CDP at an agreed time that was suitable to both older and younger people. The youth worker and development worker were present and the photography tutor led the session. The tutor taught the group new skills in relation to digital photography. In later weeks, they worked towards creating images for a public photography exhibition, based on a theme of 'Young and Old'.

RESULT

Both age groups were able to contribute in a meaningful way to the group as a whole but also on an individual level whereby, in one particular case, one of the younger people assisted an older man with operating his camera, in return, the same man gave the younger person a brief history on the subject of his photograph, which was of an old manor house in the area. This was a clear demonstration of the fact that both generations have a lot to teach each other and learn from each other.

Some positive relationships were established which has led to a reduction in the divide between the age groups.

The gender balance and age balance worked well and has been repeated with the formation of a new group. The involvement of the different workers, i.e. youth worker and development worker for older people, was beneficial as each worker knew the participants well. This was a vitally important component.

The medium of digital photography was a good focal point as all participants had an interest in learning more on the subject. Working towards the exhibition introduced a new energy into the group and having the theme of 'young and old' encouraged the participants to view their images in a new light.