



Two Leading Nonprofits: ONEgeneration and Sages & Seekers, come together to Expand Intergenerational Programs in Los Angeles County

People worldwide are living longer. Today most people can expect to live well beyond their sixties.

- Between 2015 and 2050, the proportion of the world's population over 60 years will nearly double **from 12% to 22%**.

Two local nonprofits devoted to including and supporting older adults as vital participants in society are taking an important step to build on their 10-year partnership.

Starting in August 2024, 46-year-old **ONEgeneration** (onegeneration.org) will be integrating with the 15-year-old **Sages & Seekers** (sagesandseekers.org), welcoming its innovative and unique intergenerational programs as a permanent addition to the ONEgeneration portfolio. Under ONEgeneration's umbrella of programs, Sages & Seekers will continue to bring elders and youth together in schools and community centers across the County for enriching programs that build on multigenerational commonalities that aren't always obvious.

This integration has been thoughtfully engineered, with intentional transparency and shared missions that truly aim to create stronger, intergenerational communities.

ONEgeneration: *Our mission is to support and enrich the lives of older adults, children, and families throughout our diverse communities.*

Sages & Seekers: *Our mission is to develop empathy, combat social isolation and dissolve age-related segregation within our communities, while meeting the universal and compelling need of both young adults and older adults to make sense of their lives.*

The Founder & Executive Director of Sages & Seekers, Elly Katz, has been bringing together elder "Sages" with teen and college-age "Seekers" in schools, community centers and elder care residencies for a structured, evidenced-based eight-week session that include sharing of life stories, aspirations, experiences and ideas about the past, present and future. In facilitated workshops, participants from 14 to 104 years of age overcome feelings of isolation and lack of belonging, engaging in authentic conversations that build bonds and a sense of understanding, meaning and value in each other's lives.

The researched and proven outcomes are nothing short of impactful. Two university studies have shown that Sages & Seekers' interactive programs increase a sense of

social connectedness, psychological wellbeing and purpose-in-life for both the elders and the young people involved.

As Elly Katz says, “There’s something almost magical about what happens when two people, 50 to 75 years apart in age and life experience, discover that they care about many of the same things and can teach, learn and discover together – I’ve seen it happen thousands of times.”

Starting nearly a decade ago, ONEgeneration began utilizing the Sages & Seekers curriculum as an ongoing program within their Senior Center, along with its other intergenerational programming including a shared site Adult Day Care and Infant/Toddler and Preschool program, bringing together children ages 0-6 and adults as old as 104.

Jenna Hauss, ONEgeneration’s President & CEO says, “We find that our older adults and youth in our programs are inspired to new levels of engagement after participating in our Sages & Seekers program. By providing this platform for intergenerational connections, we see discoveries of common values and needs, improved empathy and communication, and most importantly, supporting each other’s sense of identity and belonging!”

Through their robust collaboration, the two women became respected colleagues and then good friends, and in the spring of 2023 when Elly shared her concern for the future of Sages & Seekers as she contemplated the next chapter in her life, without hesitation, Jenna said, “ONEgeneration would love to help.” A year later when Elly began in earnest to plan her transition out of the executive director role, she decided to pick up the conversation where it had left off and had reached out to Jenna to inquire about the seriousness of her offer.

After a thorough exploration process, involving staff, board members, legal counsel, and an outside consultant, Jenna and Elly have co-created a plan for the sustainability, evolution, and expansion of Sages & Seekers as a permanent program of ONEgeneration. Not only will all the current sites and participants continue to be served, but the proven Sages & Seekers methodology will be licensed and shared with organizations beyond ONEgeneration’s local service area.

This exciting integration will not only impact the communities in which Sages & Seekers and ONEgeneration serve, but also hope to expand access to new opportunities for intergenerational programming throughout aging and education systems across the country. Trent Stamp, CEO of The Eisner Foundation, a leading intergenerational supporter whose mission is to identify, advocate, and invest in high-quality and innovative programs that unite multiple generations for the enrichment of our communities shares, “The Eisner Foundation has proudly supported both ONEgeneration and Sages & Seekers for many years, as each attempt to bring people together intergenerationally. At this moment when our society seems more divided than ever, we are excited that this new partnership will expand efforts to break down barriers and make our communities stronger.”

Through this dynamic union of missions and methods, the movement to support healthy, active aging is getting stronger. And, as the world's population ages, Jenna and Elly stand united in promoting intergenerational connections as a sage investment in the future well-being of all people. For more information about ONEgeneration and Sages & Seekers, please email Jenna Hauss at JHauss@onegeneration.org.