

Generations Connected at Perley Health



Sharing news about Intergenerational activities at Perley Health

Edition 11
August 19, 2026



Welcome to the eleventh edition of our Generations Connected newsletter, your home for information on the Andrew Fleck Children's Services Intergenerational Early Learning Centre at Perley Health and so much more.

The Intergenerational Early Learning Centre is a partnership between Perley Health, which provides a community of care and services for Veterans and Seniors; the Perley Health Foundation, which raises and manages funds to support programs, services, and capital needs; and Andrew Fleck Children's Services (AFCS), a non-profit organization that operates childcare centres across the region.

Construction is complete on the Intergenerational Early Learning Centre and children are beginning to settle into their new environment. Intergenerational programming will be introduced gradually over the coming months. As we start to hear the welcoming sound of little feet in the halls, we are transitioning to a new type of newsletter - one that continues to emphasize the Intergenerational Early Learning Centre while expanding to cover all intergenerational programs and services that make Perley Health a unique community of care.

We plan to publish quarterly to bring you all the intergenerational news from Perley Health and our partners. Following the distribution of this newsletter in August 2026, our next edition will be available in October 2026.

For day-to-day information on the Intergenerational Early Learning Centre, please visit the dedicated webpage hosted by Andrew Fleck Children's Services (www.afchildrensservices.ca/our-locations/perley-health-intergenerational-child-care-centre) to access the family handbook, program statement, and waitlist information. For general inquiries about these childcare services, the application process, or program availability, please connect with the Parent Navigator at 613-736-1913 ext. 206 or email pn@afchildrensservices.ca.

Andrew Fleck Children's Services Intergenerational Early Learning Centre at Perley Health



Meet the Team Behind the Intergenerational Early Learning Centre

By Tina McLean, Program Coordinator, Andrew Fleck Children's Services Intergenerational Early Learning Centre at Perley Health

Meet Tina

I am honoured to have the opportunity to lead the Andrew Fleck Children's Services Intergenerational Early Learning Centre at Perley Health. This unique partnership creates opportunities for children and older adults to learn, grow, and create meaningful memories together while contributing to the vibrant community that already exists at Perley.

With over 30 years of experience in the early learning sector, I am a dedicated educator and leader known for my commitment to relationship building, lifelong learning, and community connection. Throughout my career, I have worked in a variety of environments across Ottawa, supporting children, families, and colleagues with warmth, professionalism, and a deep passion for creating meaningful, inclusive learning spaces. My experience has included helping to open kindergarten programs at the YMCA, managing school-age programs, teaching future educators at Algonquin College, and supporting students as a placement supervisor.

Most recently, I worked at the Mooney's Bay Intergenerational Early Learning Centre, where I expanded my practice by collaborating closely with grandfriends who regularly visited the centre, as well as through weekly outings to St. Patrick's Retirement Home. This experience strengthened my belief in the power of intergenerational relationships and the positive impact they have on individuals and communities alike.

Some of the most memorable moments came from a shared laugh, a conversation about a favourite memory, or a child proudly showing a piece of artwork. These moments may seem small, but their impact can be profound. One of the greatest lessons I learned was that there is always a way to connect. By meeting people where they are and creating opportunities for meaningful participation, everyone can experience a sense of belonging and purpose.

I am driven by a passion for enhancing the lives of those around me and fostering strong, supportive relationships across all ages. My philosophy is rooted in the belief that learning thrives when people feel valued, understood, and connected.

Outside of my professional life, I am a proud wife and mother of two boys, Liam, 16, an elite gymnast, and Noah, 14, a competitive hockey and golf athlete. With a family full of sports enthusiasts, life at home is lively, active, and often competitive. When we are not travelling for competitions, we enjoy

exploring nature, running, and swimming. Most of all, I cherish quiet family time, playing games together, and sharing plenty of laughs.

As a former personal trainer, I remain deeply passionate about health and wellness, and I aim to weave that commitment into all areas of my life and work. Teaching and leadership have never felt like just a job to me. They are a true calling. I am excited to bring my experience, energy, and relationship-focused approach to the Perley Health community, and I look forward to building meaningful relationships with residents, families, staff, volunteers, and children as we learn and grow together.



Warmly,
Tina McLean
Program Coordinator
Andrew Fleck Children's Services Intergenerational Early Learning
Centre at Perley Health

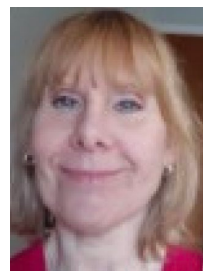
Meet the Educator Team

Our educators bring a wealth of experience, diverse backgrounds, and a shared passion for creating meaningful learning experiences. **11 of our 15 educators come to Perley from another AFCS program.** Together, they are building an environment where children feel safe, supported, and inspired, while fostering the unique intergenerational connections that make the Andrew Fleck Children's Services Intergenerational Early Learning Centre at Perley Health so special.

Infant Program

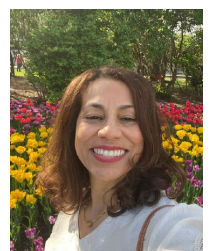
Sandy

A Registered Early Childhood Educator with Andrew Fleck Children's Services since 2010, Sandy has extensive experience supporting infants and toddlers. She is passionate about providing high-quality care while continually growing as an educator through lifelong learning and reflection.



Marlene

With more than 20 years of experience working with children and older adults, Marlene is excited to be part of the intergenerational team at Perley Health. Originally from Brazil, she enjoys travelling, spending time with her family, and outdoor adventures.



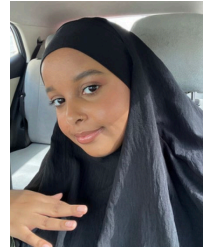
Amy

Amy has worked with Andrew Fleck Children's Services for the past five years across several centres, supporting infant, toddler, and preschool-aged children. She believes every child is capable and strives to create caring, responsive environments where children feel valued and confident.



Safia

Safia joined Andrew Fleck Children's Services last summer and now supports the Infant Program as an Early Childhood Education Assistant. She loves creating positive environments where children feel safe to explore and enjoys baking, reading, cooking, and learning new hobbies.



Bola

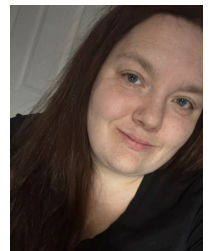
Originally from Nigeria, Bola has a background in childcare and social work and has previously worked with Andrew Fleck Children's Services as both a supply and contract educator. She looks forward to building relationships with new families and enjoys music, dancing, travelling, and meeting new people.



Toddler Program

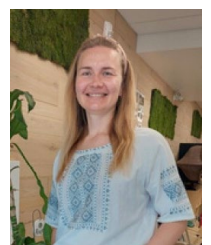
Tiffany

Tiffany joined Andrew Fleck Children's Services in 2022 after beginning her career as a personal support worker. She enjoys creating caring, relationship-focused environments where children thrive and is excited to begin this new chapter at Perley Health alongside her young son, Izaac.



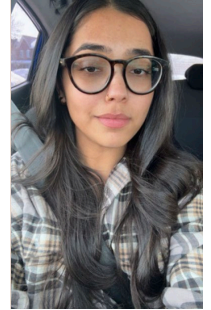
Lesia

Originally from Ukraine, Lesia holds a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education and brings a wealth of international experience to the Toddler Program. She is passionate about helping children build confidence through kindness, exploration, and play, and loves spending time outdoors, gardening, and caring for animals.



Mehar

Originally from North India, Mehar completed her Early Childhood Education at Algonquin College and believes in creating warm, supportive spaces where children can learn and grow. She enjoys encouraging outdoor play and, in her free time, loves cooking, art, and spending time with family and friends.



Olivia

Raised in Deep River, Olivia holds a Bachelor's Degree in Early Learning and Community Development and is passionate about fostering learning through responsive relationships and community connection. Outside of work, she enjoys running, hiking, sailing, and exploring Ottawa.



Preschool Program

Ashley

Ashley is a Registered Early Childhood Educator with a Bachelor's Degree in Early Learning and Community Development. Passionate about outdoor and land-based learning, she enjoys helping children build confidence through exploration while sharing her love of nature.



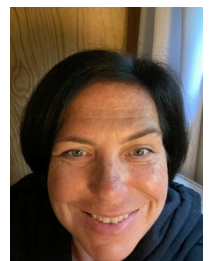
Jada

Since graduating in Early Childhood Education in 2019, Jada has been committed to creating warm, inclusive environments where children learn through play, curiosity, and meaningful relationships. She especially values the unique opportunities for connection that intergenerational programming provides.



Natalie

A Registered Early Childhood Educator, Natalie brings years of kindergarten experience to the Preschool Program and is excited to join the Perley Health community. Outside of work, she enjoys gardening, thrifting, documentaries, and spending time with her family.



Neethu

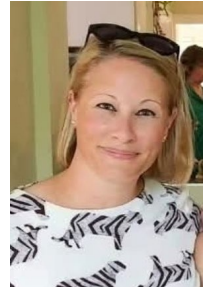
Neethu began her journey with Andrew Fleck Children's Services as a student before becoming a supply educator and Early Childhood Education Assistant. She enjoys supporting children's everyday discoveries through creativity, play, and a caring environment, and has a passion for art, photography, and the outdoors.



Support Team

Jennifer

Jennifer began her early childhood education career after graduating with honours from George Brown College in 2000. Now supporting the Perley Health program as its housekeeper, she especially enjoys reading, singing circle-time songs, and sharing her love of animals, birds, bugs, and all things creepy-crawly with the children. Outside of work, she enjoys nature walks and camping with her daughter.



Meet the Perley Health Team

Perley Health Team

Brooke

Brooke has a diploma in Practical Nursing and a degree in Therapeutic Recreation. She has worked at Perley Health since June 2024 in various roles including Recreation Programmer, Administrative Assistant at the Care Clinic, and now in her role as Veteran Liaison Coordinator and Intergenerational Liaison. Brooke's role in supporting the Andrew Fleck Children's Services Intergenerational Early Learning Centre at Perley Health is to work with both organizations to bring the intergenerational programming to life.



"This is ideal for me and my family. It's incredibly convenient having childcare at my place of work and I'm sure that my daughter benefits from structured, daily interaction with older adults."

Stephanie Deschamps, Perley Health Care Coordinator, Assisted Living Services



A Dream Realized

New Intergenerational Early Learning Centre Opens

(Excerpt from the Perley Post V22, July 2026)

The Andrew Fleck Children's Services Intergenerational Early Learning Centre at Perley Health officially opened its doors, welcoming children on Monday, July 6. The milestone follows a six-year joint planning initiative, a pilot project weekly playgroup, a 12-month construction phase, and official licensing from the Ontario Ministry of Education.

The newly renovated and expanded facility, across from the pharmacy and near Deborah's Gift Boutique, creates a unique environment that brings together infants, toddlers, and preschoolers to engage with the Perley Health community of care. Perley Health employees receive priority access to these childcare spaces and applications are open to the public.

While formal intergenerational activities will roll out over the coming months - after everyone settles in -- daily life is expected to foster connections throughout the Perley Health community.

"I thank all our partners for making this dream a reality," said Katrin Spencer, Perley Health Vice-President of Strategy and Business Development. "We could not have achieved this without the strong support of donors to the Perley Health Foundation, our residents, tenants, clients, families, friends, architect, construction partners and so many more."

The initiative represents a growing shift toward integrated care models that offer mutual social and cognitive benefits. To support the opening, the Perley Health Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™ is evaluating the program's impact. Academic researchers from the University of Ottawa and Carleton University are currently assessing facility design, tracking children's development, and studying how these shared experiences benefit Veterans, Seniors and staff.

Veterans Engage with The Intergenerational Early Learning Centre

(excerpt from the Perley Health 2026 Community Impact Report)

Ongoing Perley Health Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™ research aims to maximize the positive impacts on Veterans of the Andrew Fleck Children's Services Intergenerational Early Learning Centre at Perley Health. The combination of licenced childcare with intergenerational programming in a long-term care home represents a significant innovation. To maximize the potential benefits of the project for Veterans, a series of Centre of Excellence studies is underway. Support Our Troops, a registered charity, is funding this research. The first phase of research included interviews and co-design workshops involving Veterans and Seniors who live at Perley Health, along with families, volunteers, parents and staff. Approximately half of the more than three dozen participants in the workshops and interviews either served in the Canadian Armed Forces at some point in their careers or had a close family member who served. "For researchers, the Intergenerational Early Learning Centre represents an opportunity to gather the evidence and guidance that other homes need to implement similar projects," says Danielle Sinden, Director, Centre of Excellence.



The Little Ones Have Arrived and the Joy Has Begun!

Every day, children from the Intergenerational Early Learning Centre fill Perley Health with new energy, curiosity, and joy. Residents light up as little ones wave hello in the hallways or share a smile. These simple interactions are already becoming meaningful moments that brighten everyone's day.



Thanks to your generosity, what was once a dream is now part of everyday life. You have helped create a place where generations are connecting and happy moments happen naturally.

Thank you for making this possible.

If you would like to help with a donation, there is still time to support the Bridging Generations Campaign.

Ways to give:

- Online at PerleyHealthFoundation.ca/bridging-generations
- Call the Foundation office at 613-526-7173
- Visit the Foundation office 8:00 am - 4:00 pm, Monday – Friday

Together, we're creating a place where generations truly belong. Thank you for your kind support.

Tracy Holmes, CFRE

Annual Giving Program Manager

Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care

By Michaela Adams, Research Associate, Centre of Excellence



The Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™ is in the process of completing a rigorous evaluation on the new Andrew Fleck Children's Services Intergenerational Early Learning Centre at Perley Health. Dr. Annie Robitaille, Commissionaire Ottawa Research Chair and Associate Professor at the University of Ottawa, is leading a study to understand the impact of the Intergenerational Early Learning Centre on older adults, veterans, and the Perley health community. Dr. Robitaille's study will provide valuable insight into how to refine program structures and operational workflow prior to the Intergenerational Early Learning Centre opening. The Centre of Excellence is collaborating with numerous researchers and students to explore the diverse perspectives and benefits of participating in the program on residents, veterans, tenants, volunteers, children, staff, care partners, parents, and community partners.

Batool Hayajneh, a Master of Design student at Carleton University supervised by Professor Chantal Trudel, is developing a Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE) toolkit for the future Intergenerational Early Learning Centre. The toolkit is intended to support the assessment of the physical environment after occupancy and help ensure the space meets the needs of children, older adults, families, staff, and the broader community.

In collaboration with Andrew Fleck Children's services, Dr. Maeghan James, Assistant Professor in the School of Epidemiology and Public Health (SEPH) at the University of Ottawa, will be evaluating how the program impacts children and families. Dr. James and Master of Public Health student, Maeve Kinsman, will explore children's perspectives on the program as well as how their health and development changes over time. Findings and lessons learned from the research projects will be continuously shared with program facilitators to ensure community feedback is integrated into the program. The evaluation will continue once the program opens.

"I am really excited about it. Knowing that Serena and I are driving in together and leaving together is a huge thing."

Casandra Boushey, Perley Health Project Manager, Corporate Planning and Implementation



Intergenerational Programming at Perley Health

For All Ages

(Excerpt from the Perley Health 2026 Community Impact Report)

As evidence of the benefits of intergenerational initiatives has grown in recent years, so too has the number of these initiatives at Perley Health. EntourAGE, for instance, operates at a total of seven LTC homes (including Perley Health), three retirement residences and one adult day program. Under EntourAGE, older adults, including those living with dementia, regularly interact one-on-one with high school, college and university student volunteers.

University of Ottawa student Shalini Gangapersad participated in EntourAGE at Perley Health for more than two months.

“I enjoy it very much,” says Gangapersad. “It’s been nice getting to know the resident I’ve been matched with and to spend time with her. Part of my studies include neuroscience and this program helps me to learn more about the practical realities of dementia.”

Former Perley Health resident Christine (Chris) O’Brien, who passed away last year at age 91, participated in the program for the last two years of her life.

“My mom lived with dementia and loved the visits,” says daughter Anne-Marie O’Brien. “She always wanted to be around people but was reluctant to participate in group activities. The regular one-on-one visits were perfect for her. They also benefitted me, because I felt less pressure to visit her on the days that a student visited.”

A second example is the Caring for Others Program, a credit course for Grade 10 students at Immaculata High School, located a few kilometres from Perley Health. During the spring 2026 semester, 22 students devoted two hours a week to participating in activities with Perley residents.

“It is special to know that even small gestures, such as a smile or a conversation, can brighten someone’s day and make them feel valued and cared for,” says Immaculata student Rama AbdulRahman. “I also appreciate the chance to give back to those who have contributed so much to our community.”

Other relevant programs include the weekly Intergenerational Playgroup and Youth Volunteering. Volunteers play a vital role in all of these programs; so too, does Perley Health’s Volunteer Services team.

Intergenerational Playgroups

Sessions: Every Friday morning, 10 seniors engage with 10 children, ranging from newborns to six years of age.

Learning Hub: Lessons learned from these vibrant sessions actively influence program and space development.

Get involved: For families with children interested in participating, email EarlyOnOttawasouth@afchildrensservices.ca and for Senior Living tenants or residents interested in participating, please email Info@perleyhealth.ca



Maeve and her grandmother Keitha interact with Senior Living tenant Laura Boucher at Intergenerational Playgroup.

The Perley Health Summer Youth Program

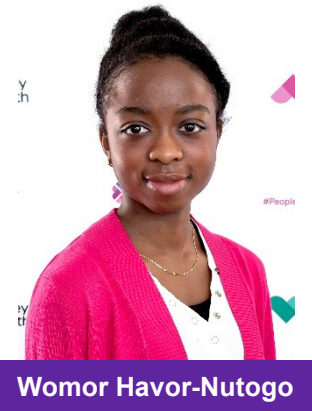
By Womor Havor-Nutogo, Summer Youth Program Assistant, Perley Health

The Summer Youth Program is an intergenerational program that connects young people to our residents and tenants. Each summer, youth volunteers aged 13-18 assist with various activities around the Perley. Some examples include physiotherapy, horticulture therapy, meal assistance, and therapeutic recreation.

In the first week of July, volunteers participate in a full-day orientation session to learn how to navigate their roles (and how to navigate the large facility!) On this day, volunteers meet each other for the first time and begin to form friendships that I witness blossoming over the summer. They are also introduced to some of our incredible staff who deliver presentations according to their areas of expertise. Presented topics included: infection prevention and control, dementia, and empathy/loss.

During the summer, most volunteers engage in group activities with residents, which encourages lively social connection and interaction. I often hear stories of memorable moments shared during these programs. For instance, in early July, one volunteer assisting with the Card Games program had a fun time learning how to play Cribbage after residents offered to teach him the basics.

Volunteers also get the chance to build deeper, individual connections with residents. A couple days after Summer Youth Program Orientation, Jessie Stephenson, Spiritual Health Practitioner, held a visiting workshop to teach youth about different the strategies to employ during one-on-one visits. The 23 volunteers who attended received valuable tips and tricks on how to conduct meaningful and respectful visits in long-term care. Based on the feedback I receive, volunteers are often fascinated to hear stories about wartime, past occupations, and family history. As most youth stated during their interviews, listening to stories about life experiences from a different generation is what they love most about these conversations. Visits like these create a positive impact for all parties involved as they learn from each other and enjoy each other's company.



Keep up to date by visiting:

PerleyHealth.ca/generations-connected

A Peek Inside the Andrew Fleck Children's Services Intergenerational Early Learning Centre at Perley Health!

