

---

Toronto Metropolitan University

# The Teri Project

Taryn Cicchelli & Kiaras Gharabaghi

---

# The Teri Project

*An initiative to support intergenerational connection and storytelling between university students and seniors*

The Teri Project connects residents of long-term care facilities with Toronto Metropolitan University students to build meaningful, mutually beneficial relationships.

This project aims to address the pervasive issue of social isolation amongst residents of long-term care homes, and to overcome anonymity of aging in these settings.

The Teri Project facilitates intergenerational relationships based on mutual respect, empathy and care. These relationships rely on engagement and genuine interpersonal relations while also incorporating art and storytelling.

***The Teri Project is inspired in celebration of Teri Truscott, TMU's oldest Child and Youth Care student. Teri was a kind, resilient, life-long learner who could spark a connection with anyone she met. Read more about Teri and Taryn here:***

<https://cyc-net.org/cyc-online/dec2019.pdf>

# The Teri Project

## Mission

Our mission, based on the fundamental values of the Faculty of Community Services at Toronto Metropolitan University, is to build meaningful relationships with elderly individuals to combat the effects of loneliness and social isolation.

## Vision

Our vision is to create enough opportunities for social engagement, comfortable and genuine relationships, and empathetic care to address the effects of social isolation.

We envision that students can create intergenerational bonds that encourage meaningful connections and enjoyment consistently to prove that every participant in the Teri Project has a friend. Furthermore, these relationships are supported through the lens of a trauma-informed, anti-oppressive, social justice, and person-centred approach. Fundamentally, we strive to build meaningful intergenerational relationships under a socially conscious discipline.

## Field Supervisor & Contact

The Field Supervisor for the Teri Project is Taryn Cicchelli and can be contacted at [taryn.cicchelli@torontomu.ca](mailto:taryn.cicchelli@torontomu.ca).

The Field Supervisor is responsible for supporting and guiding the student's learning in their field placement on a consistent basis. They guide the activities of the student to meet their learning goals and promote best practices in their field placement. The field supervisor provides students with regular supervision and is responsible for evaluating the students performance.

At the Teri Project the field supervisor acts as a liaison between students and long-term care homes and is the point of contact for communication regarding student placements and community partnerships.

The field supervisor is not onsite at the LTC homes. We ask that a staff member at the LTC home can oversee the student and provide guidance and support to the student when necessary.

# Students & Seniors Pairs

**Social connections are a fundamental human need that is often overlooked, leaving at-risk populations such as the elderly vulnerable to experiencing social isolation.**

**In order to protect against social isolation it is vital to provide opportunities for relational engagement. This initiative offers frequent, regular connections with university students to fill that gap.**

The student and senior pairs meet weekly for consistent communication, enabling them to build authentic relationships. The weekly meetings provide the opportunity for the pairs to connect and engage in discussion to build relationships.

The students participate for their undergraduate upper-year internships in the Faculty of Community Services at TMU. They come from Social Work, Child and Youth Care and Nursing.

Field placements typically last 4 or 8 months but when appropriate and possible these relationships can extend past the placement timeline.

The intergenerational pairs meet in-person and when needed they can connect via online video call platforms such as Zoom.

Students plan and facilitate art activities to do with their senior partner to engage in a new activity, have fun and enhance the bonding experience.

These relationships are the foundation for real, authentic storytelling to take place. The pairs use engagement, art, and creative activity to uncover and represent the stories and lived experiences of senior citizens.

# How it works

## **Match students and residents**

The field supervisor and staff at LTC home work to create the student/resident matches and coordinate schedules to find a time for consistent visits

---

## **Student Visits**

The student visits their resident weekly to engage in conversation, do activities and work on art projects. When possible, students are also encouraged to support the scheduled activities at the LTC home

---

## **Communication**

The staff contact at the LTC home and field supervisor maintain open communication and frequent contact to provide feedback, updated information, and inform of any absence due to illness or other unforeseen events or circumstances

## **Standards and Procedures**

Students that wish to complete their field placement are required to provide any additional documentation and certification associated with their field of study at Toronto Metropolitan University. The students that complete their field placement with the Teri Project are required to provide a vulnerable sector screening, negative TB test, worker health and safety certificate, and abide by the code of conduct provided by the University.

Students are also asked to sign the Student Internship Privacy and Confidentiality Agreement. Social work students also must abide by the specified Social Work Code of Ethics.

Nursing students are required to adhere to the Standards of Practice for Nurses in Ontario as defined by the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO). These standards of practice are available from the CNO at: <https://www.cno.org/en/learn-about-standards-guidelines/standards-and-guidelines/>

In the event that a student witnesses or receives a report of abuse or negligible care, the student is to report the incident to the field supervisor and LTC staff contact at the soonest possible time.

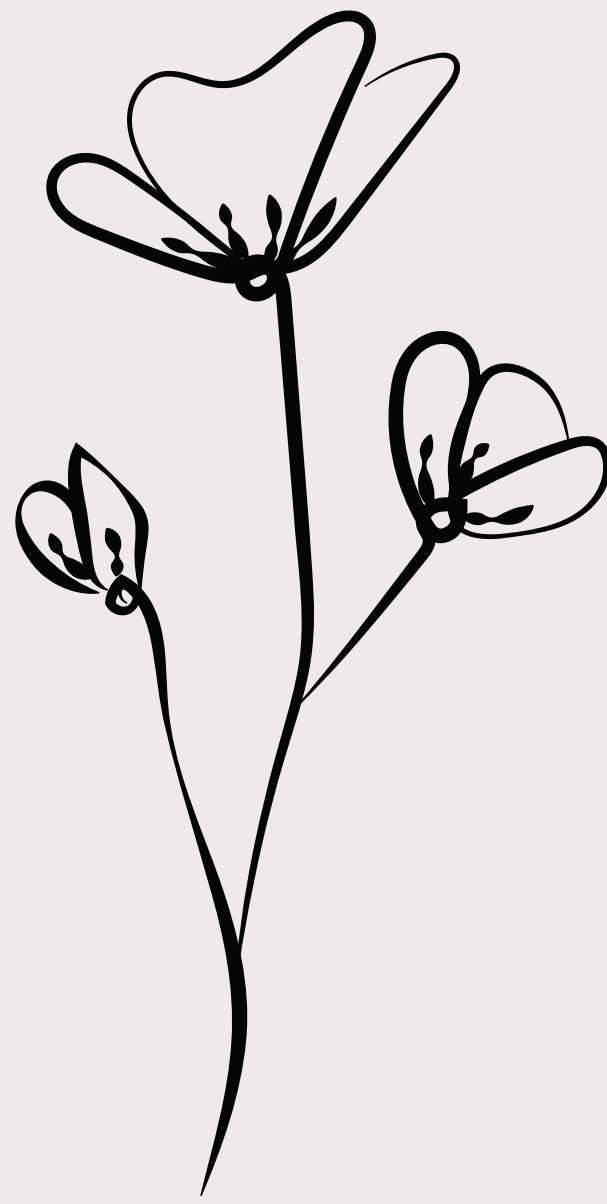
# Partnership

## **What we are looking for in a partnership:**

- They embrace the concept of intergenerational relationship
- They are willing to identify residents within their care who may benefit from this program and are able to participate
- They can work with us to identify any emerging problems, risks or adverse effects on the residents
- Where appropriate, they can manage the family context of any residents and ensure that there is no resistance or negative feedback to the resident on the part of family members
- Report any incidences or occurrences of inappropriateness outside of this experience that might impact the student/resident relationship
- They can provide a point of contact for each student in order to facilitate communication between field supervisor, student and long-term care facility

While we understand that residents will present with a wide range of cognitive capacity, and we are well prepared to engage with residents across multiple levels of cognitive capacity, we rely on the long-term care facility to judge the value of this project in relation to each participant's cognitive capacities.

To the extent that any aspect of the intergenerational dyad requires any supplies or materials (for example, to do art work together), the student will procure and deliver such materials to the long term care facility; all materials are paid for by TMU and no costs will accrue to either the resident or the long term care facility



*WE ARE SEEKING  
PARTNERS IN  
LONG-TERM CARE!*

PLEASE CONTACT PROGRAM  
DIRECTOR, TARYN CICCHELLI AT  
TARYN.CICCHELLI@TORONTOMU.CA IF  
YOU ARE INTERESTED IN WORKING  
WITH THE TERI PROJECT!

