



## Manchester Museum

Shortlisted for Family Learning to Support Health and Wellbeing

**Manchester Museum is one the UK's largest museums, with more than half a million people visiting for free each year. The museum aims to build understanding between cultures and work towards a more sustainable world through inclusivity, imagination and care.**

To Have and To Heal is a family learning programme of events and activities for the community, bringing school children and care home residents together. To achieve this, they have been working with four partner organisations, as well as community groups across the city. Judges from NCFE were impressed by the range of innovative and engaging activities on offer.

### Family learning provision

To Have and To Heal is a unique arts and wellbeing programme set up in response to how the Covid-19 pandemic affected communities. It aimed to support recovery and resilience while exploring the Egyptology collection and popular fascination with ancient Egypt.

Working with 10 community groups and 6 care homes across multiple settings, the project focused on four of the Five Ways To Well-being: Take Notice, Connect, Learn, and Give. Each group chose a theme, ranging from 'Magical Healing and Touch', to 'Loss and The Meaning of Art'. Discussion and reflections were shared in relation to the objects and the personal experiences they may connect with.

The intergenerational learning aspect of the programme was supported and facilitated by arts and health professionals, including an art therapist, mindfulness practitioner and music therapist. The same participants were engaged over several sessions, encouraging conversations, connections and sharing.

Participants were invited to visit the museum's forthcoming 'Golden Mummies' exhibition, with the choice of either online or in-person sessions depending on individual needs and preferences.

### Impact and next steps

The programme gave participants an opportunity to connect with each other and share thoughts and feelings, indirectly benefiting their family life as well. Older adults were linked with pupils from the local school, creating understanding within the community, with some children who had recently lost grandparents being able to connect and be comforted by older adults.



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The venues that participated in the project are still in touch with each other today and the intergenerational work continues. As part of the project, objects have been loaned for display within the local settings, making them more accessible to the wider community.

Feedback from participants of the longer term intergenerational sessions showed that significant change had taken place in relation to attitudes, mood and abilities, with one colleague from Age UK saying: "The project is stimulating client's memories and thinking, and trust and confidence amongst group members is growing."

Manchester Museum hopes to connect other groups in a similar way, with a focus on providing longer term sessions and less one-off sessions. They also see an opportunity to reach pupils in need of wellbeing input, continuing to work with venues situated close together to enable legacy partnerships to continue beyond the lifetime of the project. Additionally, they hope to add a family sharing event to the final participating event, which will allow families to connect by sharing what they've done.