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What is the project about?

"Best Friends" is a EU-funded project with 6 organisations from 6 countries: UK, Latvia, France, Austria, Greece and Italy.

The number of older people living on their own is expected to increase as a consequence of the demographic change in European Societies.

BEST FRIENDS focuses exactly on this factor and aims to break the isolation and exclusion of older people in our communities, by developing an innovative curriculum / toolkit and collecting inventive games that promote intergenerational communication and learning.

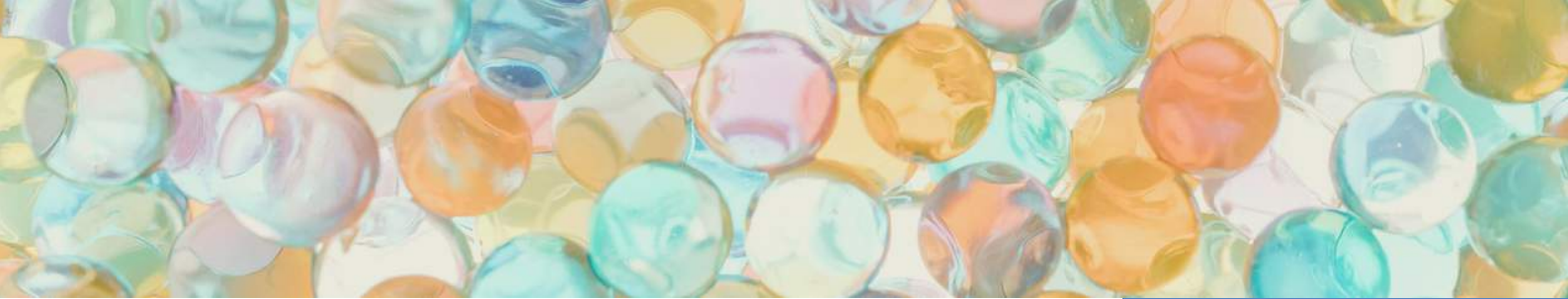
Pilot Testing of the BEST FRIENDS Handbook

The organisation of the Pilot Testing of the training handbook began soon after the learning, training and teaching activity in England took place (April 2022).

The participants who attended the training prepared the contents for the pilot testing workshops and these workshop pilot testing events took place in each partner country between the months of June - Oct 2022.

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The Pilot Testing of the training handbook was carried out in Greece, France, Latvia, Italy, Austria and the UK with over 110 participants comprising of:

Care workers, educators, social workers and volunteers working with or supporting elderly people in the community.

During the sessions the participants "tested" a number of modules (if not the entire handbook), and intensive evaluation was carried out.

The feedback from the evaluations was extremely positive, with all participants keen to carry out more Intergenerational activities and use what they had learned by putting it into practice.

Participant Feedback

"I am very excited to start to organise some intergenerational activities at work"

"It would be great if the information for the training could reach more people"

"It was wonderful and interesting"

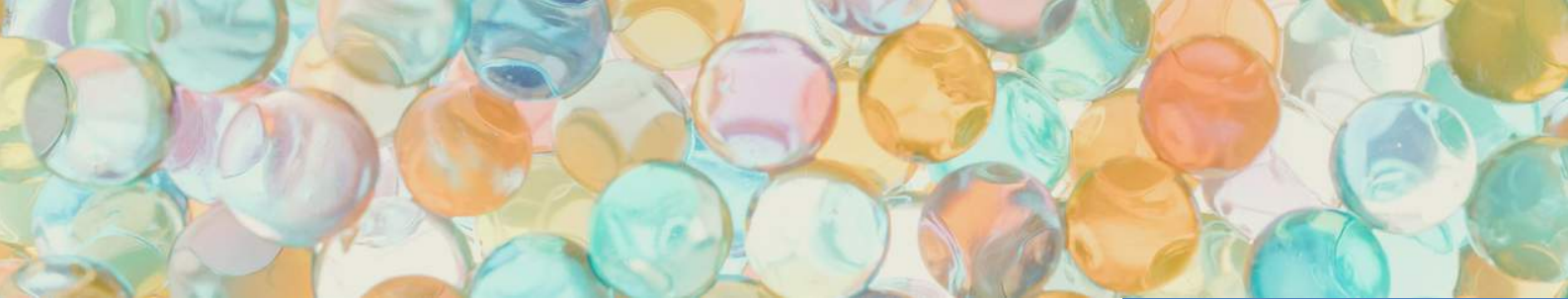
"Well-constructed handbook which answers to the needs of those who are interested in the subject"



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Participant Feedback

"This is an amazing project"

"Interesting encounter thanks to which I met a type of learning I had not heard of. A good opportunity to broaden horizons"

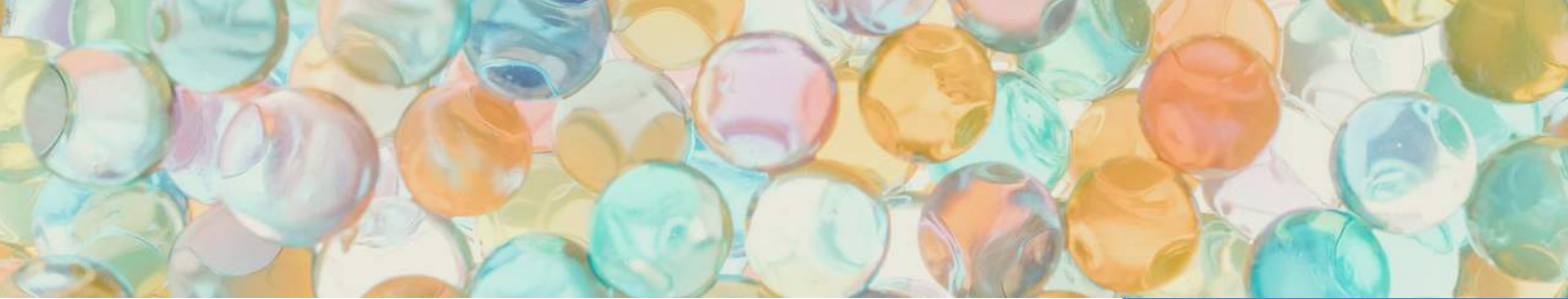
"The knowledge acquired has provided useful tools that we will try to apply in our activities"



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As a partnership we developed a toolkit which includes a collection of materials / games to be used by care workers, social workers, educators (anyone working with older adults / children). This toolkit will help to plan and implement intergenerational learning programs. The games were selected by the partnership due to the fact that they can be adapted easily to the needs of elderly people playing games with young children. Alongside this we were aware that the toolkit and collection of games should be easy to access by those arranging or carrying out Intergenerational Activities as well as costing as little to carry out in the future, making the project sustainable well into the future.

Between the partnership all games within the toolkit were pilot tested and over 180 participants took part. The participants included: Elderly people, children (aged 4-5), care workers and educators.

Evaluation took place following the sessions from the elderly people, the children and educators in order that we could assess all of the games in the toolkit.

The feedback based on the evaluations was very positive. Both the children and elderly people were very motivated and pro-active.

The educators and care workers really liked the different games as they had various benefits and outcomes such as:

- Training memory
- Social skills development
- Social communication
- Sensory skills
- Improving dexterity and concentration

The educators, care workers and older adults were surprised with how engaged the children were and interactive they were, especially as these children had spent many vital years struggling with Covid and lock downs, being isolated from social contact with others during vital formative years. Some of the children couldn't believe that even though they were "old" they could still run and do the games and have fun.

Participant Feedback

"It was fun",

"We can be friends even if we have different age"

"I felt like a child"

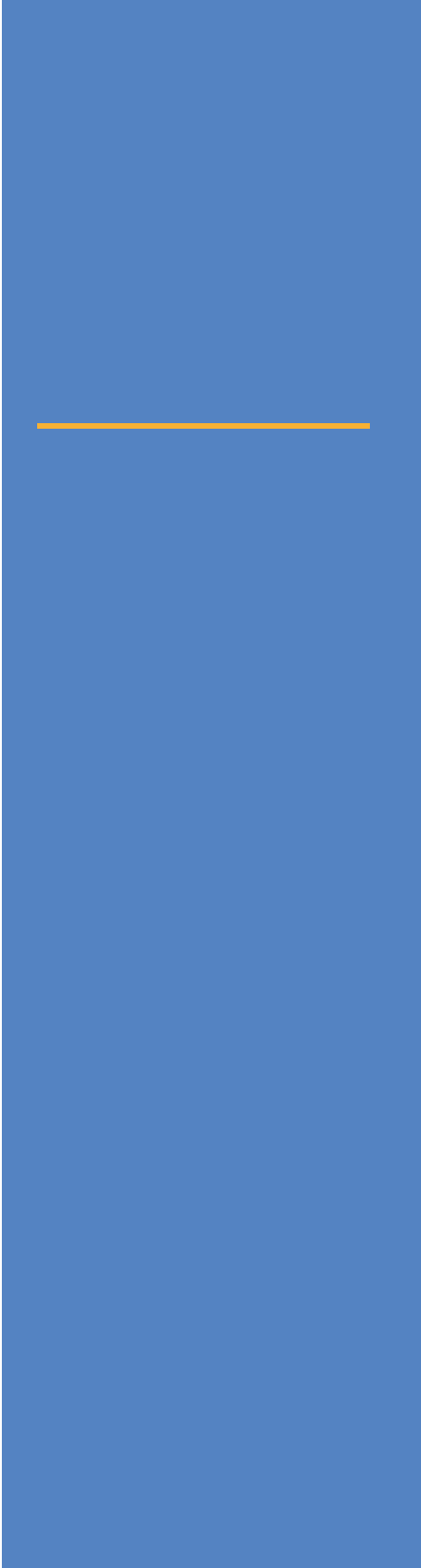
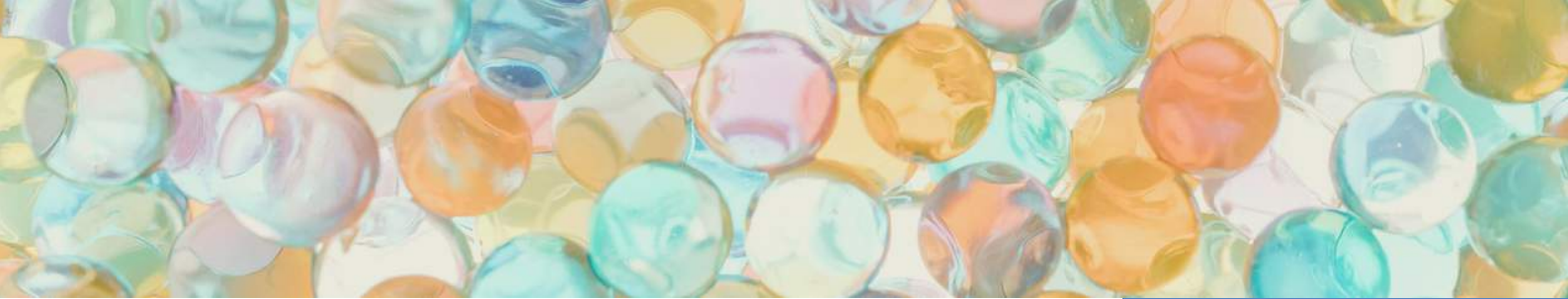
"I felt very happy"

"I can't believe how much I enjoyed it".

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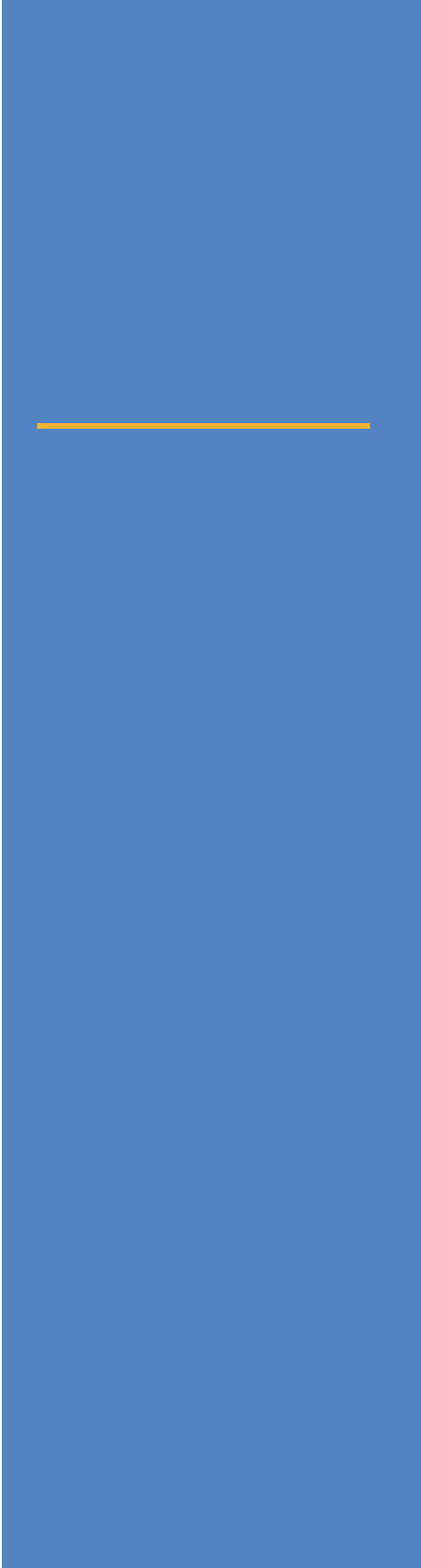
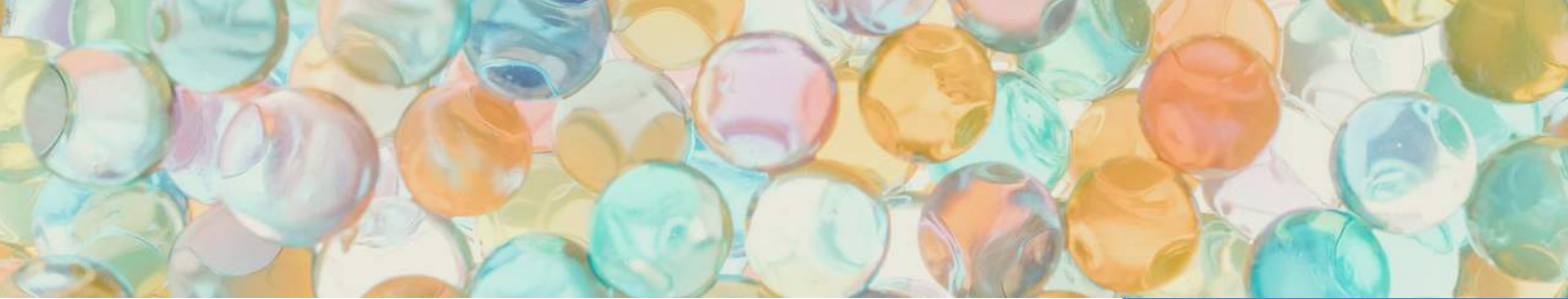
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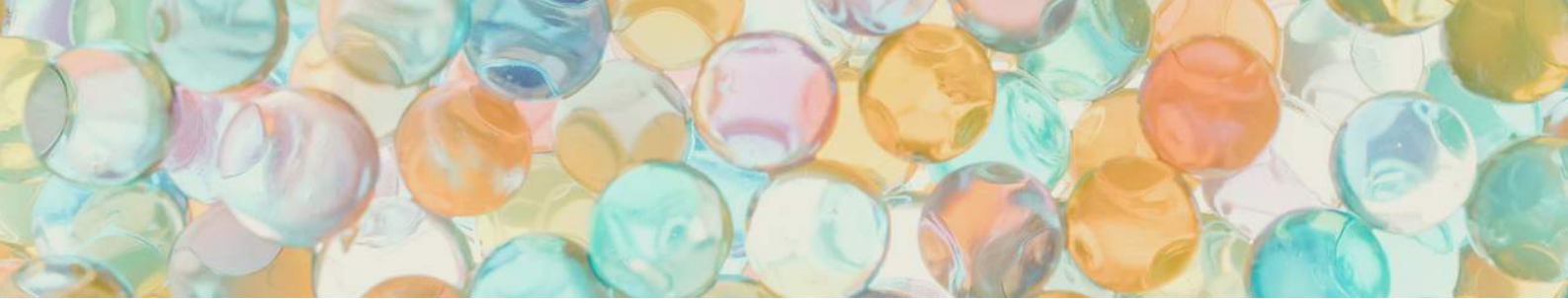
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