



## Engaging younger family members in family philanthropy

Family philanthropy brings family members together to achieve a shared purpose, whilst making a positive social impact.

As outlined in Mutual Trust's publication [Why the Modern Family Office Matters](#), the benefits are two-fold. By working together, families can maximise the impact of their time, treasure, talent and ties, whilst simultaneously developing the values, work ethic and skills of the younger generation.

There is so much to gain from giving younger family members a say in family philanthropy, however knowing where to start isn't always straightforward.

### Bridging the gap between existing family leaders and the next

We meet many families with a long-standing commitment to philanthropy. This can date back to the first generation, who consistently used their wealth to make a positive impact on causes important to them, thereby establishing a family legacy.

Over the years, there often comes a time when they seek to introduce younger family members to their philanthropic journey. To do this successfully, they may need to adapt and evolve their approach so it meets the needs of the next generation. This is when they reach out to Mutual Trust for support, seeking a solution that is both age and life stage appropriate.

#### **When the time comes to engage the youngest generation**

Terry and Jennifer Carbell\* were successful entrepreneurs who had built a thriving family enterprise, alongside maintaining a deep commitment to philanthropy.

Over the years, they worked hard to successfully instil this commitment in their three children - the second generation - who went on to establish the Carbell Family Foundation. Today, the Foundation employs six staff and is recognised for having a significant positive impact on the communities it supports through strategic grant-making.

There is now a third generation of the Carbell family, consisting of eight grandchildren aged between nine and 22. Terry and Jennifer wanted to do all they could to carry their family's philanthropic legacy across to these youngest family members and ensure they were prepared to eventually take on roles in the family enterprise, starting with the family Foundation. They decided to engage Mutual Trust for support.

### Instilling a passion for giving starts with understanding the 'why'

We see families successfully engage their youngest family members when they take the time to communicate their family history and share why having a positive social impact is important.

Whilst there is no 'one size fits all' approach, our experience in supporting families with their intergenerational giving has uncovered many tools and techniques to effectively engage younger family members, based on their age and life stage.

#### **Communicating the 'why' and sharing the family story**

Mutual Trust organised and facilitated a family retreat for the Carbell family. Whilst the retreat was focused on the strategy and goals of the Family Foundation, it also presented an opportunity to get all three generations in a room together – from ages nine through to 75.

With the support of Mutual Trust's Philanthropy Specialist, Terry and Jennifer shared their story with the group and explained why the act of giving is so important to them. They communicated the ups and downs of their life experience, what they have learnt along the way and the joy and fulfilment gained through their giving.

Taking the time to share their story helped the younger Carbell family members understand the 'why' behind their family's philanthropic legacy, along with the significant positive impact Terry and Jennifer had made on causes they held close to their hearts.

### Allowing all family members to identify how they would like to give is critical

To maintain engagement and spark a passion for giving, it's important to encourage younger family members to give in a way that feels right to them.

There is no correct age to start. Regardless of whether a family member is in primary school or a young adult, there are a myriad of ways to engage in philanthropy. Importantly, consideration should go beyond just giving financially (treasure) to also include the act of volunteering (time), sharing vocational skills (talent) and opening up access to individual networks (ties).

#### **Planning a giving approach, based on the interests of each family member**

Once the Carbell family's philanthropic purpose was communicated, our Philanthropy Specialist facilitated a workshop for the younger family members to discuss and identify ways they would like to be involved, based on their individual interests and values.

Given the age variation within the third generation, this looked different for each individual. For example, the younger family members agreed that every three months they would pick out some of their toys and books to give to families in need, whilst the mid-aged children decided to sell baked goods at a stall and donate their profits to a charity they selected. The older members of the third generation decided to register for a fun run and raise money for a chosen cause.

The output was a 12-month action plan, which Mutual Trust now coordinates and maintains on behalf of the family. After 12 months, we will run another strategy workshop with the family to develop an approach for the next year, adapting the ways to give and chosen areas based on evolving family interests and maturity levels.

This approach not only instilled a sense of excitement and engagement in the younger generation, it also enabled the Carbells to identify suitable ways for their Foundation to evolve, establishing a platform for their long-standing legacy to endure for years to come.

**To discuss how Mutual Trust can help you engage your younger family members in philanthropy, please contact your Relationship Manager. For a copy of Mutual Trust's report 'Why the Modern Family Office Matters' please click [here](#).**

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\*Family name has been changed to protect privacy

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