

## Toddlers to the Rescue

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In an article published on September 2, 2022, in The New York Times and written by Hikari Hida and John Yoon, the authors review a program at the Ichoan Nursing Home in Kitakyushu, Japan. The residents suffer the same problems as those in many assisted living facilities: loneliness and boredom.

The nursing director there started a program where mothers were invited to bring their children aged four and under to spend the day at the facility. The children roam the halls, socializing with the residents. In exchange, they receive free diapers, baby formula, photo shoots and coupons to a nearby café.

The impact on the residents of interacting with the children and babies supports the studies that show such interaction lessens loneliness, lowers blood pressure and reduces risk of heart attack. For the children, the hugs and interactions have been shown to enhance social and personal development.

All in all, a marriage made in heaven.