

FAMILY REUNION INSTITUTE'S

STICKY REUNION SITUATION

DOES AGE MATTER

May 2016

The Situation:

Is anyone ever too old or too young to help plan the reunion? We have a couple of family elders and some first and second graders who want to help plan the reunion, but we don't think they're age appropriate. Doesn't their age exclude them from being on the planning team?

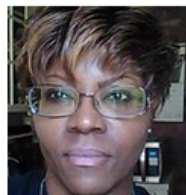
The Fix:



Doug Harris

Although it may not be appropriate to ask the very old or the very young to plan and implement the myriad details that are part of a family reunion, it is more than appropriate to ask for their input. Issues regarding the site, negotiating prices and add-ons, and other thorny aspects of planning should be left to those most capable. But first and second graders and the elderly know what they like. For instance, you might ask the youngsters what games and activities they'd like to share with their same-age cousins, and ask the elders what they would like to see on the reunion program. Ask them to be reunion advisors, rather than reunion planners.

The Fix:



**Sylvia
Ford-George**

Reunion planning teams should be inclusive--not exclusive, and family members who want to be part of the team should be encouraged. I agree with Doug that you have to assign tasks appropriately (this goes with members of any age). The young ones need to be groomed so that in the future they can help continue the work being done, and elders need to be respected for what they have already done—and know. Elders may be able to coach the team on negotiating skills, identify the best place for deals on picnic items, know who in the family to contact for info on family members, or who to talk to locally regarding meeting places. The young ones can show you how to use social media for communicating with the younger generation. Every family member has a part to play, and when they're asking to step up and do their part, you should do all you can to support them.
