SOCIAL INTERACTION + THE OUTDOORS: ABSTRACT

Outdoor space has been linked to many benefits seen in a person’s physical, mental, and social health (Karlten, 2005), therefore, residential settings must include well designed outdoor spaces to support and promote the well-being of its occupants. Studies in the realm of healthcare have shown that visual and physical access to a natural habitat reduces stress and improves patients’ recovery (Ulrich, 1999) and that interaction with the younger population improves elders’ perceived quality of life (Taylor + Repetti + Swearer, 1997). Both the aging population and members of younger generations have shown to benefit from social interactions fostered by the addition of outdoor space to living environments (Marcus, 2000), proving access to outdoor space can greatly impact social health within inter-generational living. The social relationships necessary to sustain inter-generational communities can be greatly enhanced through the addition of outdoor space. This study is interested to explore the integration of a variety of outdoor spaces at various levels of scale in the design of inter-generational living in order to support social interaction between residents. It is hoped that through the implementation of design criteria discovered through research, a socially integrated, inter-generational population can be promoted.

OBJECTIVE

To discover socially beneficial aspects of various types of outdoor space and integrate them into design guidelines for inter-generational living. Used in combination with other aspects vital to inter-generational design, this process will result in a beneficial living experience for a wide variety of users.

ARCHITECTURAL STRATEGY

To encourage social interaction, spaces such as entry ways, vertical and horizontal circulation and primary gathering spots will be located in the realm of outdoor space.

REFERENCES


In the realm, social interaction between residents will be encouraged.