NYU Serves Up Unique Way to Cut College Costs

The news that the U.S. is preparing to forgive over [$100 billion](#) in student loan debt hit the news stand yesterday and left Americans either sighing or rejoicing. Regardless of which camp you fall into, the student loan forgiveness plan signals one thing that we can all agree upon: college has become way too expensive.

But instead of dealing with the problem after the fact through student loan forgiveness, why not come up with creative, cost-saving solutions before students rack up thousands in debt?

New York University (NYU) may have hit on one of those solutions. According to the [*New York Post*](#), NYU is seeking to make room and board less expensive by farming out students to various empty-nesters in New York City:

> *"In response to soaring housing costs, NYU is rolling out a pilot program in the fall that would let students live in the spare bedrooms of local senior citizens.*
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> *'We are extremely enthusiastic about the program,' said Ellen Schall, chair of NYU's Affordability Steering Committee. 'The cost of housing is a significant challenge for many students.'*
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> *Students who opt in to the 'home stay' program would slice their $14,000-per-year housing bill in half.*
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> *…*
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> *Under the plan, cash-strapped students will get a break on rent, and seniors will get extra cash."*

But while cost-savings is the main motivator in this new

housing program, it seems there could be another side benefit, namely, the intermingling of generations.

Having to spend large amounts of time with others beyond their immediate age range may be a new experience for many college students. As former Teacher of the Year John Taylor Gatto [once explained](#), the factory-like, age-sorted school system has alienated children from adults, and as a result, may be separating them from the past and a strong community support structure:

> *"Children and old people are penned up and locked away from the business of the world to a degree without precedent – nobody talks to them anymore and without children and old people mixing in daily life a community has no future and no past, only a continuous present. In fact, the name 'community' hardly applies to the way we interact with each other. We live in networks, not communities, and everyone I know is lonely because of that."*

In the end, throwing young and old into shared housing experiences is only a small start toward rebuilding the generational gaps which we've assumed in society. Do we need to go a step farther and reevaluate the ways in which the school system alienates children from almost everyone besides those their own age?