

San Antonio and Greater Bexar County Community Digital Equity Plan and Roadmap

Population Segments: Older Adults

August 2021

Disclaimer:

The information found in this portal is intended for public use. It reflects work produced and provided by the SA Digital Connects team and community members starting in January 2021 to the present.

Some information will reflect the moment in time when the work was done. Data, funding, maps and assumptions may fluctuate in the everchanging digital ecosystem.

Initiative Details

Population Segments

Closing the Digital Divide | Access for Older Adults

Challenges

- **One-third** of adults ages 65 and older report they've never used the internet, and **half** don't have internet access at home
- Of those who do use the internet, **nearly half** say they need someone else's help to set up or use a new digital device
- Even within their age group, there is significant variation in skills linked to people's education, income and autonomy of use, creating a "**second-level digital divide**"

Organizations already involved

Little Brothers Friendly of the Elderly: Tech Allies program offers older adults the opportunity to learn how to use a tablet device through an 8-week training course

Teeniors: Tech-savvy teens and young adults who help seniors learn technology (smartphone, computer, software) through one-on-one, personal coaching

Solutions



Goal-directed learning

- Research shows that that most older people have a **strong motivation to learn new skills** and to continue living fully through learning
- In order to get older adults to learn a new tech skill or more fully engage with technology, **they must see a clear reason for it**



Patient practice

- Teaching older adults new tech skills requires time, patience and practice. When teaching older adults digital skills, **a well-written set of steps** are crucial to remind older people how to use a new skill online
- The **ability to practice new skills** is also key. Ideally, older adults would attend regular classes and be supplied with a tablet/laptop to practice on during the week



Tackling discomfort

- Though some older adults may express a lack of interest in technology, this can reflect an **underlying fear of technology and lack of skills** rather than a true lack of desire to use digital tools
- Appropriate training can help to quell those fears and generate interest by making the **elderly more comfortable with digital tools**



Thank You