



# START-UP MANUAL

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A GUIDE FOR STARTING A CYBER-SENIORS PROGRAM IN YOUR  
COMMUNITY



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# An Introduction to Cyber-Seniors

## Get Involved

Cyber-Seniors is a non-profit organization whose goal is to bridge the digital divide and connect generations through technology. It accomplishes this goal by providing online mentor training, senior-centric teaching resources and numerous tools to implement and manage a Cyber-Seniors program.

Whether you are a student wanting to make a difference in your community and earn community service hours, or an organization who understands the value of bringing youth and seniors together to bridge the digital divide, we can help you get started.

Together we can put technology to good use – building stronger communities and connecting generations.

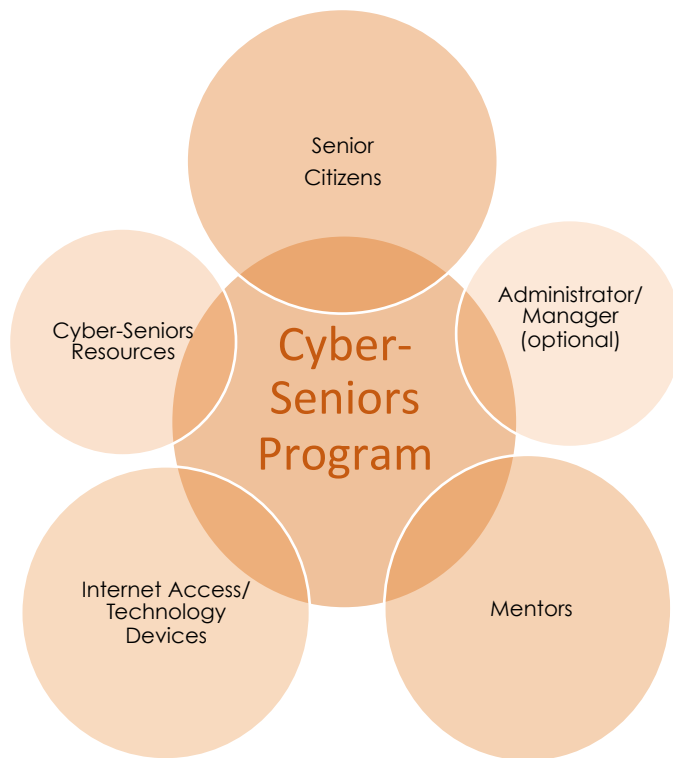
## How Cyber-Seniors Works

Cyber-Seniors can work in many ways, ranging from a highly structured program with several mentors and seniors in a classroom setting, to a spontaneous one-on-one tutorial for grandma! For students, it can result in community service hours or satisfying the requirement of a course credit. Retirement homes, community centers and other senior service organizations may wish to incorporate Cyber-Seniors into their programming by teaming up with a local school or youth group or use the resources to enhance their own computer training program. It's up to you how you want to use the Cyber-Seniors resources and what you want your program to look like.



This manual is intended to walk you through the key elements of a Cyber-Seniors program and provide you with tools and suggestions that can be used regardless of the structure on which you decide.

# The Cyber-Seniors Model



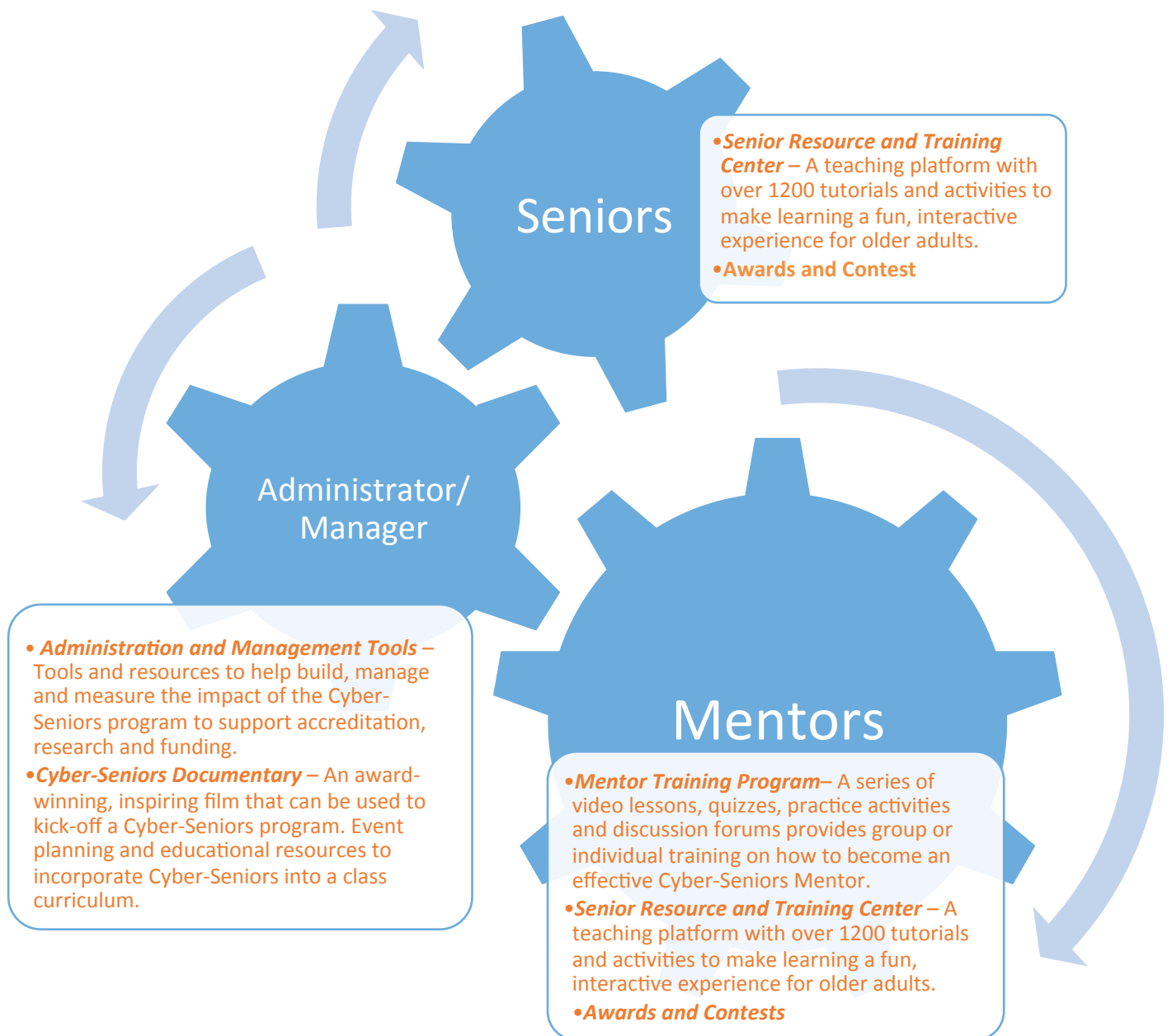
To start a Cyber-Seniors program you will need:

- Cyber-Seniors Resources
- Mentors
- Senior Citizens, and
- Internet Access and Technological Devices

For programs involving several mentors and seniors it is advisable to also have an administrator or manager of the program. Alternatively, a mentor can assume this responsibility, which will include scheduling, overseeing and reporting on the program.

## Resources

Annual membership in Cyber-Seniors provides the following resources for starting a Cyber-Seniors program. For more information on how to become a member [CLICK HERE](#).



## Mentors

Finding qualified young people to act as mentors for your Cyber-Seniors program can be challenging. Even though young people are highly skilled in technology it is not always easy to let them know about this opportunity and the benefits that come with it.

Here are a few suggestions:

***Search our Partner Directory*** - Membership in Cyber-Seniors provides you with access to a database of individuals and organizations in your community who are also members and share your interests in bridging the digital divide. Reaching out for support will help you to find and recruit suitable mentors.

***Contact Local High Schools*** – In many communities, high school students are required to attain a certain number of community service hours in order to graduate. Also, teachers are often looking for ideas to help fulfill the requirements of specific course curricula. Contact the guidance counselor or principal at the school to let them know about this opportunity and ask them how you might work with them to share this information with students and teachers.

***Reach Out to Universities and Colleges*** – The Cyber-Seniors program is excellent practical experience for pre-med and/or healthcare students. Not only does it provide exceptional training for anyone planning a career involving older adults, the hands-on experience will strengthen their résumés and enhance their opportunity for future job and educational aspirations.

***Research Youth Organizations*** – Organizations that serve youth are often looking for opportunities for their members to gain skills and experience that meet their organization’s mandate. Contact local youth organizations and let them know that Cyber-Seniors offers a turnkey programming solution that they can implement at their clubhouse or at a senior center.

After reaching out to these organizations/institutions you may want to provide them with a Recruitment Notice that they can post or offer to do a presentation. The most impactful presentation would include a screening of the Cyber-Seniors documentary film, however the Cyber-Seniors Community Outreach PowerPoint presentation and video is a good option. Also provide them with a supply of Mentor Application forms. These resources and much more are available to Cyber-Seniors members.





## Senior Citizens

The next step is to find older adults in your community who are interested in participating in the Cyber-Seniors program.

We suggest contacting retirement homes, assisted living centers or senior community centers in your area. Let them know that you are interested in setting up technology training for their residents/members and arrange for a meeting with them.

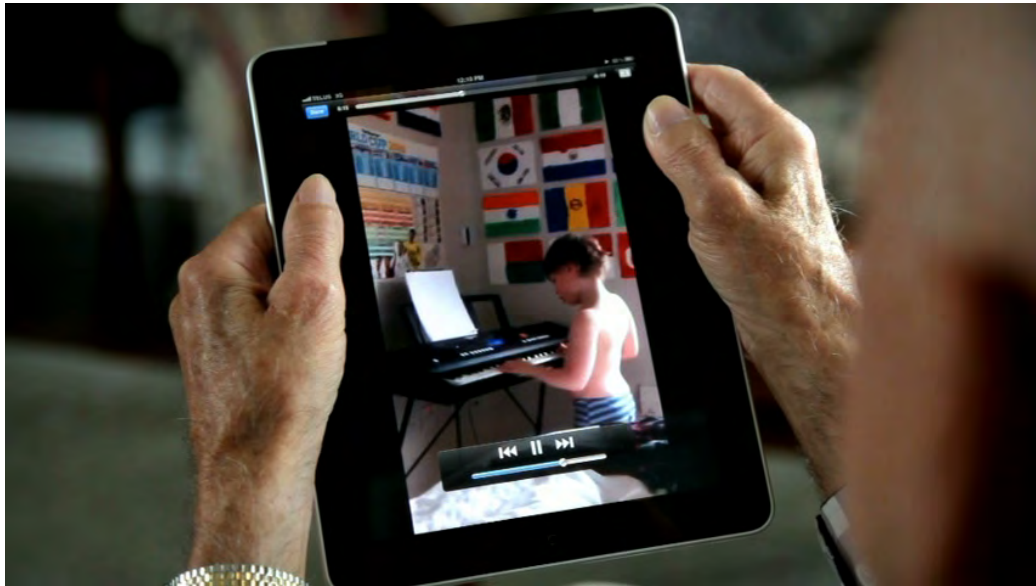
### Follow this simple agenda during your initial meeting:

- Provide an overview of the Cyber-Seniors program and the goal of the program.
- Establish whether there is an interest on their part to work with you to set up a Cyber-Seniors program.
- Discuss the various ways the program can work and determine what the best structure would be for their organization (eg. structured classes, drop-in, etc.)
- Determine best days/times for you/your group to provide the program. Consider other activities happening at the facility to ensure there are no scheduling or room booking conflicts.
- Determine if mentors will be permitted to offer training or assistance with technology problems in residents' rooms or apartments, and if so what security procedures are in place.
- Discuss the availability of computers for the participants (NOTE: it is common for some individuals to have their own devices, where others will depend on the facility to provide a computer or tablet).
- Determine if there is any requirement for volunteers to have a police check or undergo policy and procedure training at the facility (NOTE: Whether or not formal training is in place, ensure you obtain copies of policies and procedures as they pertain to volunteers).
- Establish a contact person at the facility that will be responsible for helping you to set up the program.
- Schedule a date and time to do a presentation for the residents/members at the facility.



## Internet Access and Technology Devices

Having access to the Internet and technology devices is an essential part of running a Cyber-Seniors program. If seniors have their own devices they should be encouraged to bring them to learn on. Many seniors will not have their own device or will own a desktop computer so the availability of computers or tablets in the class is essential. Classes can take place in a school, senior center, library or even a church, providing that the Internet is available and that seniors are able to travel easily to the chosen location.





# Measuring Your Program's Impact

Measuring the impact of your program is important for several reasons. It helps you identify areas in need of improvement and also helps to support the importance of your work to accreditors, supervisors, funders and others.

What should you measure?

As a minimum you should consider measuring the following variables:

- Number of mentors and seniors who are served by your program
- Number of hours logged by mentors and seniors
- Changes in age perspectives, attitudes towards aging and compassion for others, experienced by the mentors
- Changes in social isolation, social engagement, quality of life, attitudes towards technology and digital competence, experienced by the seniors
- The experience of being a part of the Cyber-Seniors program reported by all participants

Membership in Cyber-Seniors provides administrators the option of measuring these variables through the automatic logging and reporting of hours and pre and post program online surveys. Administrators also have the ability to run a number of reports demonstrating the impact of their program on these variables.

Cyber-Seniors data collection and research process follows a strict protocol and is overseen by Professor Skye Leedhal of the University of Rhode Island.



# Senior Information Session

Anticipated Time: 45 mins – 2 hours

## Necessary Supplies

- Participant's Handbooks (for Computers or Tablets)
- Pens
- Cyber-Seniors Documentary Film or Community Outreach PowerPoint presentation (includes link to video)
- Event Attendance Sheet

Make arrangements for the facility to let people know about your presentation. Provide them with Posters or Senior Recruitment Notices that they can post around the facility and Event Invitations that they can slip under residents' doors. Also, encourage them to provide refreshments for the event.

## Presentation Structure

- Welcome everyone and have each person introduce themselves
- Introduce the program
  - Show the Cyber-Seniors Documentary Film
  - Provide an overview of the Cyber-Seniors program or use the Community Outreach PowerPoint presentation
  - Explain the structure of the program (eg. is it an 8 week program? Where will it take place? Are drop-ins allowed? Will equipment be provided? Who will be doing the mentoring?)
- Pass around the Participant's Handbook and explain that the program will start by them telling the mentors what their interests and skill levels are to make sure the lessons cater to their specific needs
- Let them know that the mentors are also looking forward to learning from them
- Answer any questions
- Have individuals indicate their interest using the Event Attendance Sheet
- Collect the Participant's Handbooks

## Common Q&A:

**Q:** How are youth and seniors partnered?

**A:** Participants will be partnered up during the first formal session. The number of participants will determine the configuration of partners. For example it may be 1:1, 2:1, 1:4, etc. Ideally the partners/groups will be consistent throughout the length of the program, but if people are absent this might change.

**Q:** Can I get support after the program ends?

**A:** Many youth/senior partners stay in touch after the program ends, but this is an individual decision.

**Q:** How do I know it is safe for me to use the Internet?

**A:** As part of the Cyber-Seniors training program you will watch a video on Staying Safe Online and have the opportunity to discuss and ask questions about safety with your mentor.

**Q:** If I already know how to use a computer/tablet how will I benefit from this program?

**A:** Your mentor will ask you about your current knowledge of the Internet and will make sure to teach you more advanced skills.

**Q:** Will my mentor help me with my cell phone?

**A:** Yes. Your mentor can help you with any device you're interested in using.

# Mentor Training

**Anticipated Time: 1 - 3 hours**

## Necessary Supplies

- Cyber-Seniors Online Mentor Training Program
- Mentor's Handbook

## Structure

Training is critical to the development of effective, patient, empathetic mentors. Even though young people are highly skilled in technology, being able to communicate and teach these skills to an older population requires an understanding of the aging process and knowledge of how to communicate successfully with older adults. Cyber-Seniors membership provides a series of six video lessons, along with quizzes and suggested learning activities that will prepare mentors for their new role. Mentors can watch the training videos as a group (in a classroom) or individually on their own time.

Mentors are required to complete a quiz on each lesson and we encourage them to try some of the learning activities, either as a group or individually.

Once the mentor has concluded the training, they will be provided with a certificate of completion and will be ready to participate in orientation.

## Learning Activities:

1) To gain a better understanding of what it feels like to have physical impairments have the mentors try some of these activities:

- Use chopsticks to pick up a small (round) object to understand an older adult's limited mobility when using a mouse
- Wear headphones or earmuffs to mimic hearing loss or work with a partner and practice mouthing sentences to each other.
- Wear gardening gloves while typing on your computer keyboard to simulate stiffened joints.

2) Have mentors research 2-3 innovations from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to gain a better understanding of the world into which older adults were born.

3) Have mentors sit for 1 hour in a quiet place outside and do nothing to get a sense of what it feels like to be unplugged and connected with their surroundings.

4) Have the mentors create a list of free software that is available on the Internet that can help individuals who suffer from visual, hearing and physical impairments.

5) Have mentors provide a verbal explanation of the following concepts without using any technical jargon and using analogies from a time when there was no Internet.

- Where does the information come from and how does the information get into my computer?
- What is social media?
- What is a web page?

# Mentor Orientation

Anticipated Time: 1 hour

## Necessary Supplies

- Mentor Commitment Contract
- Mentor Confidentiality Agreements
- Cyber-Seniors Mentor's Handbook
- Cyber-Seniors Participant's Handbook (for Computer or Tablet)

## Structure

It is best for orientation to take place at the location that the Cyber-Seniors program will run so mentors can become familiar with the space.

- Welcome everyone
- Introduction to staff at the facility
- Outline their responsibilities and have them review and sign a Commitment Contract and Confidentiality Agreement.
- Make sure they have completed a Mentor Application form indicating the days and times they are available to mentor (this will help you with the scheduling). You can check their references using the Reference Check template.
- Have mentors take the program pre-survey if they have not already done so
- If the classes are taking place at a retirement home or continuing care facility mentors may require police checks and training on the Residence's Policy and Procedures. Check with the residence and make sure mentors are in compliance.
- Pass out copies of the Cyber-Seniors Mentor's and Participant's Handbooks (either for Computer or Tablet)
- In the Mentor's Handbook, review the Cyber-Seniors Policy Guidelines
- In the Participant's Handbook, review the Cyber-Seniors Participant Profile Form, the Learning Log and the Progress Report
- Either as a group or on individual devices have the mentors log onto the Senior Resource and Training Center using the "Browse" mode to get a feel for the resources available
- Have a few mentors randomly pick a lesson in their Mentor's Handbook and share their thoughts on how they might structure the lesson to include instruction followed by practice and exploration
- Review the importance of logging on/off and having seniors log on/off during each mentoring session
- Encourage them (once they start mentoring) to share their ideas, suggestions and experiences with other members via the discussion forum on the website
- Collect the Participant's Handbooks but have the mentors keep the Mentor's Handbooks
- Thank them for being part of this intergenerational experience and let them know when they can expect to receive a final schedule from you



# Scheduling Your Program

Once you have your mentors trained and seniors committed the next step is to finalize your program schedule. The number of mentors and seniors you have participating, as well as the size of the space and number of computer stations, will all be factors in determining your schedule.

An eight-week program with 1-hour classes twice a week or 2-hour classes once a week is ideal. However, the structure can take many different forms, providing the goal of the program is met.

The number of mentors to seniors can vary from class to class, depending on attendance. There can be 2 mentors per senior, 1 mentor to 3 seniors, or 1 mentor to 1 senior. All of these scenarios work.

Make sure the class location has adequate Internet connection and that there will be no scheduling or room booking conflicts.

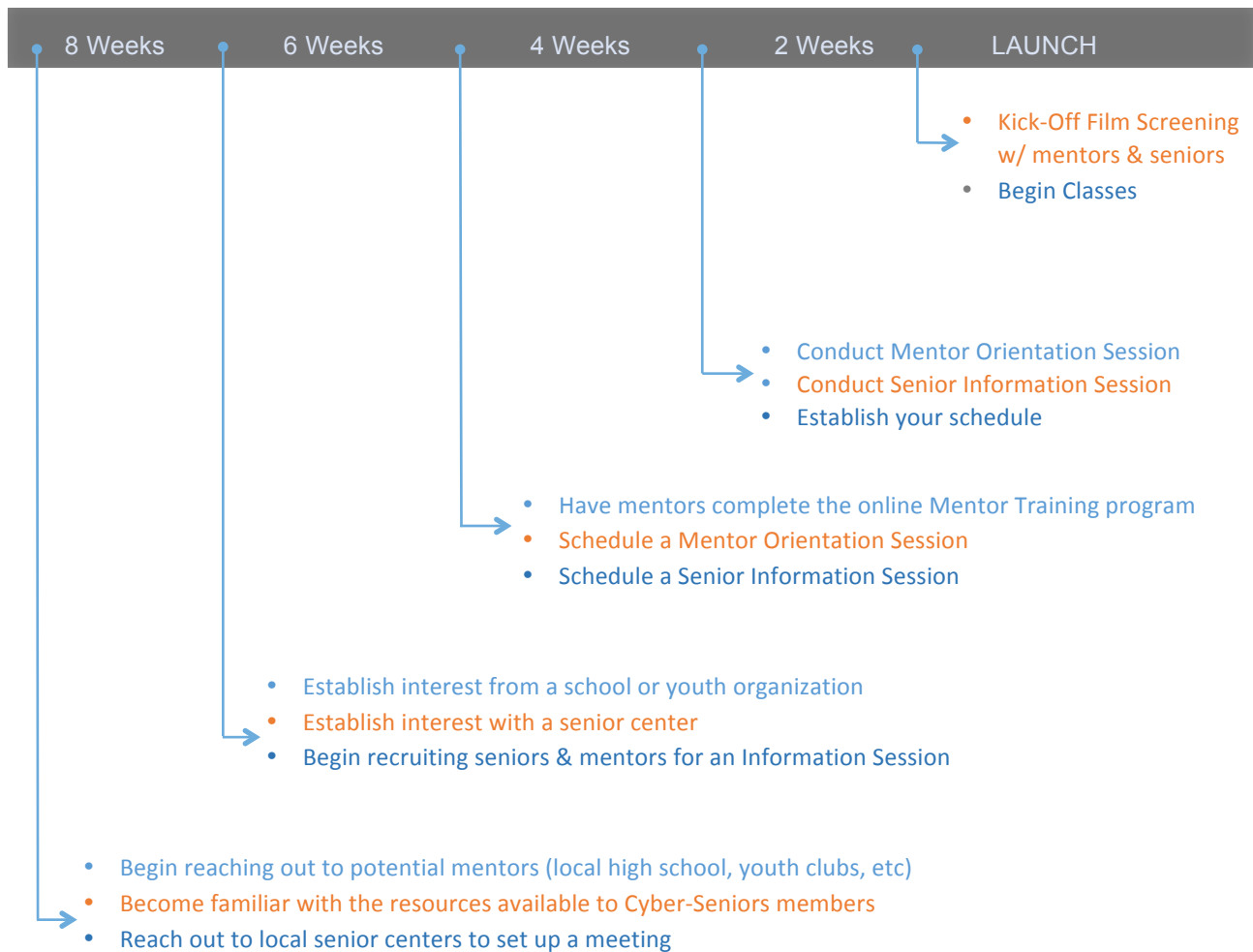
Once you have a schedule, contact all mentors and seniors. It is a good idea to also send out reminders before each session. A Schedule template and Reminder Notices are available to members.





# Timeline To Launch

Featured below is a suggested timeline for launching a Cyber-Seniors program. You should adjust your timeline according to your individual situation but allow enough time to prepare, recruit, and execute your plan.



# Launching Your Program



## Cyber-Seniors Screening Event

Screening the Cyber-Seniors documentary film for your program participants and community at large is a wonderful way to launch your program. Not only will it get people excited about participating in the program, you will be letting your community know about the great work your organization does.



Cyber-Seniors membership entitles you to stream the film as often as you like, or you may purchase the film and screening license by visiting our [online store](#). The film comes with event planning resources and a discussion/activity guide to help host a truly memorable event.



## The Cyber-Seniors Logo

Displaying the Cyber-Seniors logo on your website, social media platform, newsletter and other marketing material is an important way to let others know about your Cyber-Seniors program.

Membership in Cyber-Seniors entitles you to a number of logos and banners that you can proudly display as you see fit.

# First Class

## Necessary Supplies:

- Mentor's Handbooks
- Participant's Handbooks
- Computers
- Internet Connection
- Communication Log
- Nametags

## Schedule:

- Welcome everyone and have them fill out a nametag
- Provide a brief summary of the program's goal
- Review the program schedule and emphasize that regular attendance by everyone (seniors and mentors) is crucial for the success of the program
- Establish a process for communications with participants between classes. Setting up a communication binder or bulletin board in the training room is a good option
- Start by partnering up the mentors and seniors. If there is an uneven number there is no problem in doubling up mentors or seniors
- Have everyone log into the Senior Resource and Training Center of the website
- Before beginning, have everyone take the online survey. Most of the mentors will have already completed it but the seniors will not have done so. It is important to remind everyone of the importance of measuring the impact of the program, answer any questions they may have and explain the process to them. Assure them that their information is confidential, and that once both the pre- and post-surveys are completed their name will be deleted from the survey and they will remain anonymous. Also let the seniors know that the mentors are on hand to assist them if needed
- Next, have the mentors interview the seniors and complete the Cyber-Seniors Participant Profile Form, found in the Participant's Handbook
- Once they have completed the survey they can get started teaching based on the knowledge level and interests of the senior. Encourage them to spend roughly half of the lesson providing instruction and the other half practicing what they have learned and exploring the Internet
- Give a 10-minute warning when class is about to end and remind the mentors to complete the Learning Log and the Progress Report in the seniors' Participant's Handbooks.
- At 5 minutes left, have everyone log out, turn off and pack up any personal electronic devices
- Remind everyone of the next class time and to bring their Handbooks to class. Note: you may choose to have everyone hand these in (with their names on them) and store them in a secure location, so they are there for next class



# Ongoing Classes

## Necessary Supplies:

- Mentor's Handbooks
- Participant's Handbooks
- Computers
- Internet Connection
- Communication Log
- Nametags

## Schedule:

- Welcome and remind everyone to put their name tag on
- Hand out everyone's Handbook and supply new Handbooks to newcomers
- Ask the mentors and seniors to pair up as they were in the previous session and assign newcomers or individuals to a new partner or group whose previous partner is not present
- Have everyone log into the Senior Resource and Training Center of the website
- Remind those participants who have not taken the program pre-survey to complete it before beginning
- Remind mentors to review the Learning Log and the Progress Report in the seniors' Participant's Handbooks before beginning the lesson and if it is their first time mentoring the senior, to read over the senior's Participant's Profile Form. Also if a senior is new to the class have the mentor complete the Cyber-Seniors Participant Profile Form
- Have the mentors do a brief review on what was covered in the session before moving on to a new lesson. Remind them to spend roughly half the lesson providing instruction and the other half practicing what they have learned and exploring the Internet
- Give a 10-minute warning when class is about to end and remind the mentors to complete the Learning Log and the Progress Report in the seniors' Participant's Handbooks.
- At 5 minutes left, have everyone log out, turn off and pack up any personal electronic devices
- Remind everyone of the next class time and to either bring their Handbooks to class or hand them in for secure storage.

Note: As classes progress, and the seniors become more fluent in technology, mentors may explore more advanced content in the Senior Resource and Training Center.



# Final Class

## Necessary Supplies:

- Mentor's Handbooks
- Participant's Handbooks
- Computers
- Internet Connection
- Nametags
- Sign-in sheet
- Certificates of Completion

## Prep Work:

For the final class, consider planning something special. For example, organize a class potluck party with games, or present projects that seniors may have completed (eg. online photo albums, YouTube tutorials, blogs, etc.). As a minimum you will want to present each of the participants (mentors and seniors) with a completion certificate (these are generated automatically with membership after logging 16 hours on the system).

Whatever you decide to do, it is important to recognize the participants, celebrate, and reflect. Many programs end with a graduation ceremony. Watch [this video](#) for some inspiration.

## Schedule:

- Welcome the class for the last day!
- Take the time to talk to individuals and praise them for their hard work and progress and ask them to share with the class what they learned/enjoyed about Cyber-Seniors
- Hand out certificates of completion
- Have mentors and seniors who have not yet completed a program post-survey do so. Note: Participants will be automatically prompted to complete a survey after logging 16 hours in the system.
- Thank everyone for coming



# Resource Directory

We hope this Start-Up Manual has provided you with some ideas on how to get your Cyber-Seniors program off the ground. Membership in Cyber-Seniors provides you with access to all the resources referred to in this manual, and so much more. We hope you will consider joining our community and experience the many benefits of membership.

Below is a directory that will help you find the resources you are looking for.

Activity	Suggested Resources	Where to Find
<b>Recruiting Mentors And Seniors For Your Cyber-Seniors Program</b>	Partners Directory	Member’s Dashboard
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Screening Event Planning Guide</li> <li>- Screening Event Poster &amp; Invite Template</li> <li>- Screening Event Media Alert Template</li> <li>- Screening Event Discussion Guide</li> <li>- Event Flyer Template</li> <li>- Event Attendance Sheet</li> </ul>	<b>Cyber-Seniors Screening Event Toolkit</b> <i>Available to Group Members only. Located in the Administration and Management Tools area of the website.</i>
	Cyber-Seniors Documentary Film	<i>Available to Group Members only. Located in the Cyber-Seniors Documentary Film area of the website</i>
	<b>OR</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community Outreach Planning Guide</li> <li>- Event Flyer Template</li> <li>- Community Outreach PowerPoint Presentation and Video</li> <li>- Community Outreach Media Alert Template</li> <li>- Event Attendance Sheet</li> <li>- Community Outreach Poster Template</li> </ul>	<b>Cyber-Seniors Community Outreach Toolkit</b> <i>Located in the Mentor Training Program and the Administration and Management Tools area of the website.</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mentor Recruitment Notice</li> <li>- Senior Recruitment Notice</li> <li>- Mentor Application</li> <li>- Mentor’s Handbook</li> <li>- Participant’s Handbooks</li> </ul>	<b>Cyber-Seniors Program Toolkit</b> <i>Located in the Mentor Training Program and the Administration and Management Tools area of the website.</i>
<b>Mentor Training and Orientation</b>	Online Mentor Training Program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 6 Video Lessons</li> <li>- Learning Activities</li> <li>- 6 Quizzes</li> <li>- Cyber-Seniors Program Toolkit</li> <li>- Cyber-Seniors</li> </ul>	<b>Cyber-Seniors Mentor Training Program</b> Can be found in the Mentor Training area of our website.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mentor’s Handbook</li> <li>- Participant’s Handbooks for Computers and for Tablets</li> </ul>	<b>Cyber-Seniors Program Toolkit</b> <i>Located in the Mentor Training Program and the Administration and Management Tools area of the website.</i>

		OR In the Senior Training and Resource (Cyber-Seniors 101) area of our website.
	- Mentor Commitment Contract - Mentor Confidentiality Agreement - Reference Check Template	<b>Cyber-Seniors Program Toolkit</b> Located in the Mentor Training Program and the Administration and Management Tools area of the website.
<b>Setting Up and Running a Cyber-Seniors Program</b>	- Start-Up Manual - Logo & Banner Guide - Communication Log - Mentor’s Handbook - Participant’s Handbooks for Computers and for Tablets - Schedule Template - Mentor Reminder Email - Senior Reminder Notice	<b>Cyber-Seniors Program Toolkit</b> Located in the Mentor Training Program and the Administration and Management Tools area of the website.
	Senior Resource and Training Center - Participant’s Handbooks for Computers and for Tablets - Cyber-Seniors 101: - 3 Video Lessons - Accessibility Resources - Intermediate & Advanced Tutorials - Explore the Internet - informative websites - The ‘DoApp’ tool - Cyber-Seniors Internet Scavenger Hunts - Recommended tech products/services - Cyber-Seniors Corner YouTube channel - Partner Directory	Can be found on our website – available to all members
<b>Managing a Cyber-Seniors Program</b>	- Program Pre- & Post-Surveys - Activity Reports: ✓ Program Participants ✓ Mentor Activity Report ✓ Senior Activity Report ✓ Training Sessions Report ✓ Completed Survey Report	Available to Group Members only. Located in the Administration and Management Tools area of the website.
<b>Measuring Your Program Impact</b>	Outcome Reports	Available to Group Members only. Located in the Administration and Management Tools area of the website.
<b>Educational Events or In-Classroom Lessons</b>	Discussion & Activity Guide	<b>Cyber-Seniors Education Toolkit</b>
	Cyber-Seniors Mentor Training Learning Activities	<b>Cyber-Seniors Mentor Training Program</b> Can be found in the Mentor Training area of our website.
	- Discussion and Activity Companion Videos	Available to Group Members only. Located in the Cyber-Seniors

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cyber-Seniors Documentary Film</li> <li>- Film Extras, Directors Comments, Interview with Cyber-Seniors founders</li> <li>- Family Online Safety Institute Panel Discussion</li> </ul>	<i>Documentary Film area of the website</i>
<b>Community Events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Screening Event Planning Guide</li> <li>- Screening Event Poster &amp; Invite Template</li> <li>- Screening Event Media Alert Template</li> <li>- Screening Event Discussion Guide</li> <li>- Event Flyer Template</li> <li>- Event Attendance Sheet</li> </ul>	<b>Cyber-Seniors Screening Event Toolkit</b> <i>Available to Group Members only. Located in the Administration and Management Tools area of the website.</i>
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## Contact

Please reach out to us with any questions you may have at [info@cyberseniors.org](mailto:info@cyberseniors.org).

Or if you'd like to schedule a time to speak with a member of the Cyber-Seniors team visit [calendly.com/cyberseniors](https://calendly.com/cyberseniors) to schedule a phone meeting.