

SD

TeachSD: AN AGE-FRIENDLY TECH CONNECTION

The Internet can be an amazing tool. Using digital technology, we can order groceries, consult with health care providers, read the news, and connect with family and friends. But tech also changes and develops so quickly that it can be difficult for many of us to keep up.

Younger people, on the other hand, are often so comfortable with technology that they can be called “digital natives.”

The power of intergenerational connection

TeachSD is a tech coaching program created in 2014 by SDSU Extension that offers an intergenerational solution. The program brings together tech-savvy volunteers ages 14 to 24 and adults who want help keeping their tech skills sharp and learning to use new devices, apps, and programs.

One older woman wanted help loading a Facebook app onto her phone, then learning to use Facebook Messenger. Her delighted comment to her Volunteer Technology Trainer after she got the hang of it: “No wonder you’re all staring at your phones all the time!”

“Our ultimate goals are helping older people use the Internet while allowing younger people to get to know and appreciate someone older,” says Leacey Brown, SDSU Extension Gerontology Field Specialist.

In the fall of 2017, program materials will be available to communities across the state that would like to launch TeachSD. Materials will include training videos for volunteers, a leader’s guide, and a program manual.



“It’s neat to see someone in their 70s send their first text or Facebook message to a grandchild. And it really helped build some connections between the two generations.”

***— Kindra Gordon, TeachSD
Technology Trainer Youth Adviser***

Contact information

For more information, please contact Leacey Brown at Leacey.Brown@sdstate.edu or (605) 394-1722, or visit <http://igrow.org/healthy-families/reports-to-partners/teachsd/>.

