ENGAGING OLDER ADULTS WITH TECHNOLOGIES

May 27, 2021

WEBEX TOOLBARS, MENUS, AND PANELS
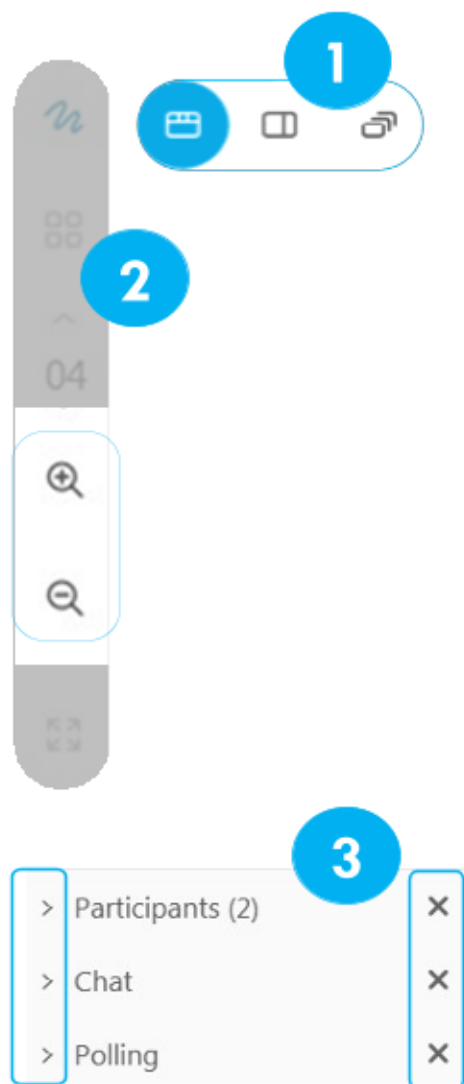
1 The **view icon** in the upper right corner changes your WebEx view.

2 The **toolbar** on the left allows you to zoom in and out.

3 The **panels** on the right show participants, chat, and polling. Click the **>** or **x** to open and close panels.

4 The **menu** at the bottom allows you to mute, open participant and chat panels, and leave the event.

Tip: To raise your hand, open the participant panel, then click the hand icon in the lower right corner.

Participants (2)

Chat

Polling

Unmute   Share   X   Participants   Chat

Presenter:

Dr. Karen Fortuna

Engaging Older Adults with Technologies

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Thank you to the SHIP, SMP, and MIPPA programs

Agenda

COVID, Technology, and Older Adults

The Digital Divide

Affordability and access to new technology

Scientific evidence exploring attitudes towards technologies

Important considerations in building a tech training for older adults

Free local and national resources

The Story of Bonnie Weiss

The last real disaster Bonnie Weiss lived through was San Francisco's 1989 earthquake. Even watching a piece of chimney break through her living room window didn't prepare her to live alone during a global pandemic, she says. Weiss is nearing 80 years old, and has no children. Her partner, who's ill and more susceptible to catching coronavirus, lives 30 miles away. She wishes she could hug or cuddle or hold hands with him, or with anyone. But San Francisco just extended its shelter-in-place, so at least until the end of May, that will be impossible.

"We're all going through it together," she said. "That's the only thing that's a little consoling."

Does the Digital Divide Exist?

Studies show more older adults than ever have adopted smartphones — 42%, according to Pew — and 67% say they have Internet access. At the same time, only a quarter of adults over 65 say they feel confident about using electronics to go online.

Affordability and Access to New Technology
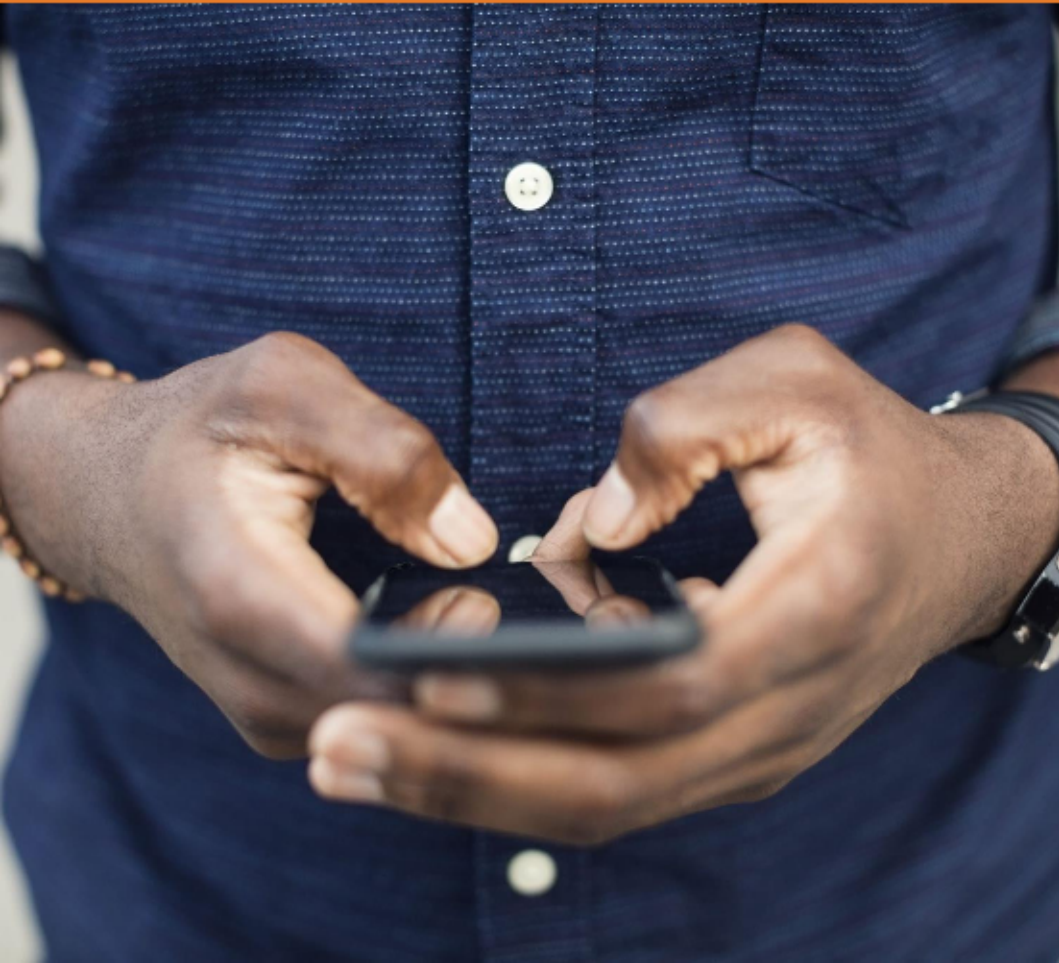
- Medicaid smartphone and data plans (Safelink)

- Local United Way (2-1-1)

- Comcast $9.99 a month for low-income individuals

- Free hot spots

- **State Assistive Technology Act**
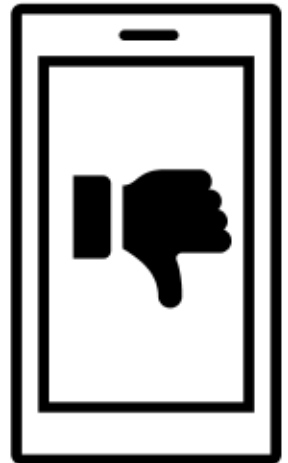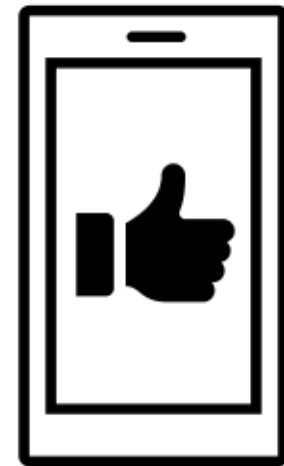 - https://www.massmatch.org/
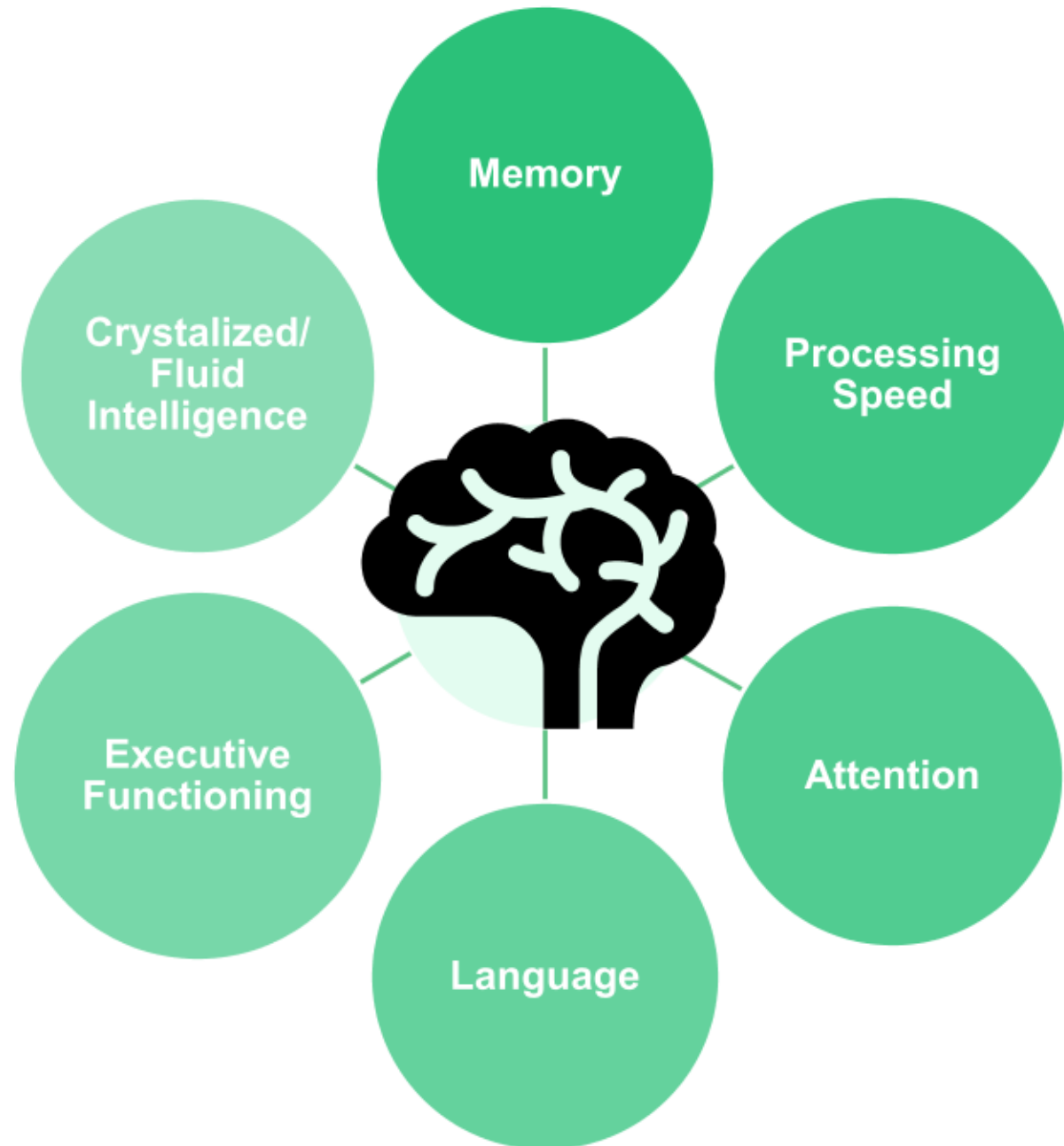
What Motivates Older Adults to Use Technology

- Connection to family/ friends
- Health services and maintenance
- Entertainment and hobbies
- Activities for independence (maintaining finances, paying bills, etc.)

Older Adults' Attitudes Toward Technology

- *Perceived ease of learning* (Older Adults)
  - Apprehensive when clear instructions or assistance are not present in the learning process
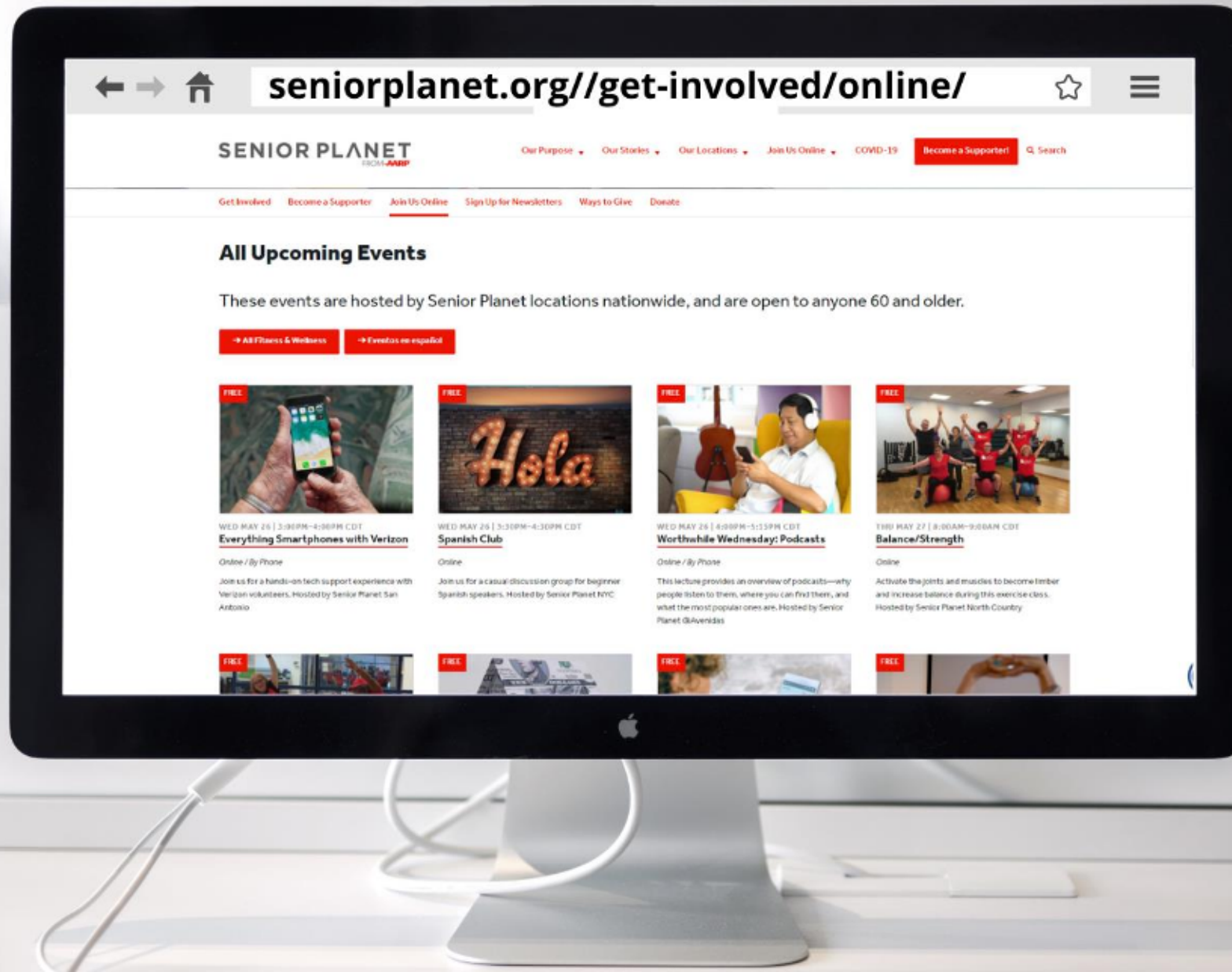
- *Social influence* (Older adults + and younger adults -)

Vaportzis, E., Clausen, M. G., & Gow, A. J. (2017). Older Adults Perceptions of Technology and Barriers to Interacting with Tablet Computers: A Focus Group Study. *Frontiers in psychology, 8*, 1687.

Kim S, Choudhury A Comparison of Older and Younger Adults' Attitudes Toward the Adoption and Use of Activity Trackers JMIR Mhealth Uhealth 2020;8(10):e18312

If you are building a technology program or supporting older adults….

Memory

Processing Speed

Attention

Language

Executive Functioning

Crystalized/ Fluid Intelligence

Harada, C. N., Natelson Love, M. C., & Triebel, K. L. (2013). Normal cognitive aging. Clinics in geriatric medicine, 29(4), 737–752. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cger.2013.07.002

Collaterals

National Resources

Anecdotal Findings

- Tech helps us reach more older adults

- Older adults are reinventing themselves

- Older adults are using technology to sign up for benefits

Scientific Findings

Older adults with existing depression show resilience during the pandemic

Date: August 19, 2020

Source: University of California - Los Angeles Health Sciences

Summary: A multi-site study finds that seniors are more concerned with being infected with COVID-19 than the effects of social isolation.

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RELATED TOPICS

Health & Medicine

> Mental Health Research

> Influenza

> Chronic Illness

Mind & Brain

> Mental Health

> Depression

> Psychiatry

FULL STORY

A study involving older adults with pre-existing major depressive disorder living in Los Angeles, New York, Pittsburgh, and St Louis found no increase in depression and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Researchers from five institutions, including UCLA, found that the older adults, who were already enrolled in ongoing studies of treatment resistant depression, also exhibited resilience to the stress of physical distancing and isolation. The findings were published in peer-reviewed journal, *The American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry.*
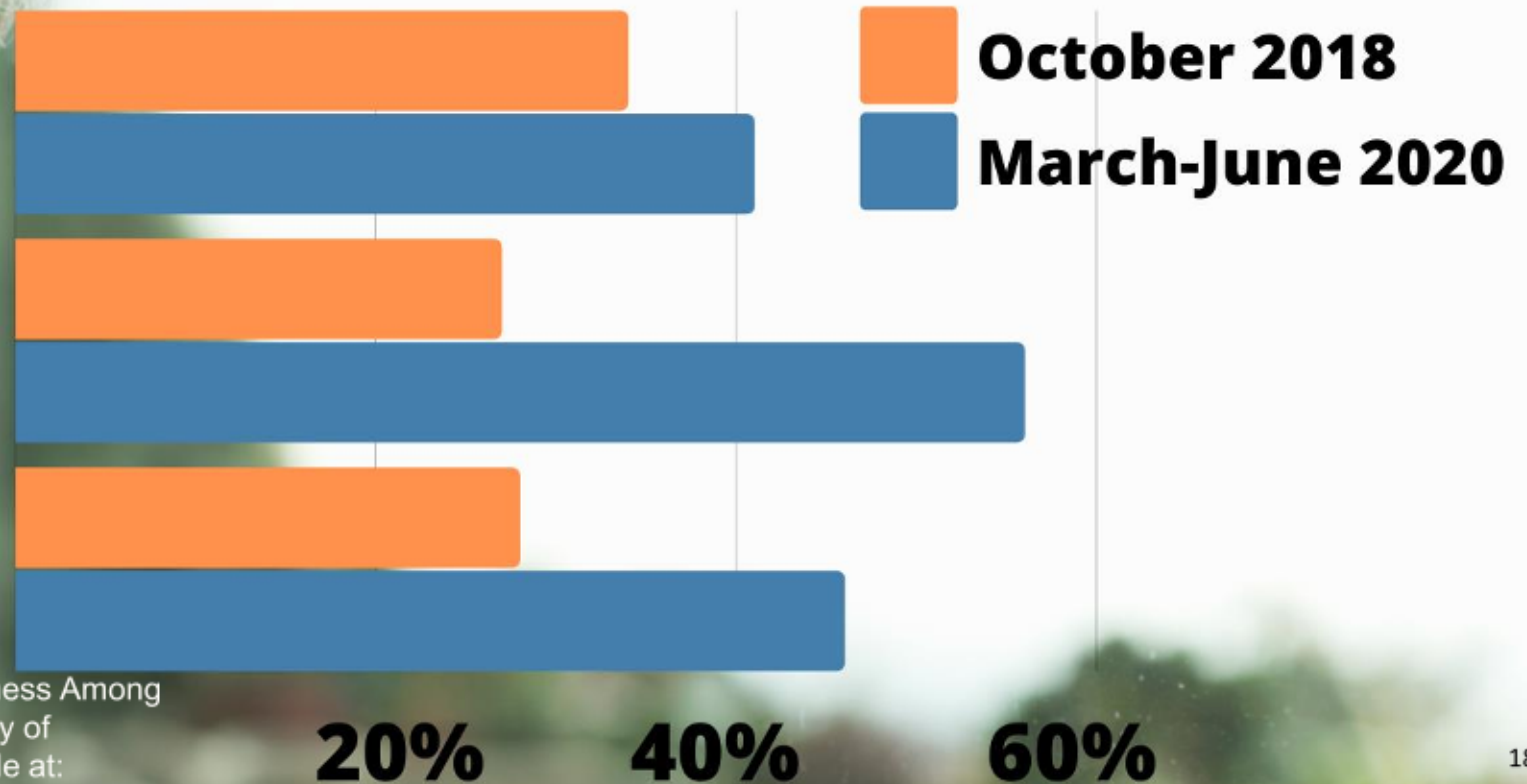
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Scientific Findings

Changes in loneliness and social contacts, 2018 to 2020
Among adults age 50-80

Felt a lack of companionship

felt isolated from others

had infrequent social contact

October 2018

March-June 2020

20%   40%   60%

Piette J, Solway E, Singer D, Kirch M, Kullgren J, Malani P. Loneliness Among Older Adults Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic. University of Michigan National Poll on Healthy Aging. September 2020. Available at: http://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/162549

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The Next Chapter for Bonnie Weiss

Thank You

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Webinar Resources in the Libraries

SHIPs

1. Login at www.shiptacenter.org (click the orange SHIP Login padlock). 🔒 SHIP Login
2. Go to the Resource Library.
- Search for keyword "technology."

SMPs

1. Step 1: Login at www.smpresource.org (click the blue SMP Login padlock). 🔒 SMP Login
2. Step 2: Search for keyword "technology."

MIPPA Grantees

- Resources will be emailed to the MIPPA listserv.

Questions and Discussion