CyberPatriot Engagement Guide:

Tech Caregiver
Program

CyberPatriot Program Overview

CyberPatriot – the National Youth Cyber Education Program was established by the Air & Space Forces Association to attract students to STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education and careers. CyberPatriot programs include:

- National Youth Cyber Defense Competition (Grades 6-12)
- AFA CyberCamps (Grades 6-12)
- Elementary School Cyber Education Initiative (Grades K-5)
- Cyber Education Literature Series (Grades K-5)
- CyberGenerations (Senior Citizens)
- Tech Caregiver Program (student and adult volunteers [ages 14+])

The success of CyberPatriot has been made possible because of the outstanding support offered by sponsors and volunteers. Participation in CyberPatriot can make a real difference in your community and in the public's perception of your organization. This leading STEM program enables you to engage directly and in an extremely positive way with educators, administrators, community leaders, parents, and students interested in improving STEM and cybersecurity education.

==This guide is specifically designed to assist you in promoting the Tech Caregiver program, including the identification of volunteers who would be interested in receiving their Tech Caregiver certification.==

For information on promoting or getting involved in other CyberPatriot programs, please see the program-specific guides offered on our website.

General Guidance – Get Organized

Organizations that are most successful are those that adopt CyberPatriot as a key activity and those which give it consistent focus throughout the year. These tips may help you in your efforts to be successful:

- **Appoint someone to lead your CyberPatriot efforts:** This will lead to improved continuity, communication, and consistency.

- **Make CyberPatriot a regular topic in your communications**. CyberPatriot has a variety of programs that are offered throughout the year. Make sure you know what is happening and when:

  o **Year-round:** Promotion of and participation in the Tech Caregiver program
  o **October:** National Cybersecurity Awareness Month (and a great time to promote the program!)

- **Tell your CyberPatriot story:** Use your CyberPatriot involvement with local schools and youth organizations to tell your community and state how you are inspiring students to get more involved in STEM studies! This could include reaching out to media (crafting media releases or letters to the editor or making local media appearances) or informing your local congressional representatives about CyberPatriot's success. You can also submit your stories directly to CyberPatriot for a chance to be featured in *The CyberSentinel*, CyberPatriot's monthly newsletter.

- **Ask for help:** AFA's CyberPatriot Program Office is happy to help you in any way it can. Staff members can be reached at info@uscyberpatriot.org or by phone at (877) 885-5716.

The Tech Caregiver Program

Step 1: Familiarize yourself with the concept of a Tech Caregiver and CyberPatriot's CyberGenerations Program

Before introducing CyberPatriot's Tech Caregiver Program to prospective participants, we strongly encourage you to familiarize yourself at a basic level with the purpose of a tech caregiver and how they can help support CyberPatriot's CyberGenerations program.

In 2020, CyberPatriot and AT&T joined forces to create CyberGenerations, a program designed to help older individuals who need assistance understanding the safety risks of using mobile devices and computers. CyberGenerations offers a self-paced guide for interested seniors to review at their own convenience. The program also offers workshop resources for communities looking to hold a larger scale event on the topic of cybersecurity. Currently, all resources are available for download from the CyberPatriot website, free of charge.

The importance of Tech Caregivers

As the world becomes increasingly dependent on technology, we must consider the importance of protecting and empowering those who may not possess the cyber skills to protect and empower themselves.

Tech Caregivers are people who provide cyber security support to those adults who are often vulnerable to cyber threats due to a lack of technological experience and knowledge. While many older Americans are tech savvy, others find some online activities and security measures to be confusing or intimidating. Tech Caregivers are trained to help individuals gain the confidence necessary to safely operate online by teaching basic security measures in a way that is easy to understand.

Becoming a Tech Caregiver

Those interested in becoming a Tech Caregiver may complete the official Tech Caregiver training course, which uses a combination of resources and guides provided by CyberPatriot and AT&T. At the end of the course, participants must complete a brief test. Those with passing grades will be issued a Tech Caregiver certification and can start giving back to the senior citizens in their communities by hosting CyberGenerations workshops or offering small scale lessons following along with the self-paced guide.

The following resources are most useful to review before reaching out to potential volunteers:

- CyberGenerations and Tech Caregiver Factsheet: This one-page factsheet explains the CyberGenerations program designed for keeping senior citizens safe online and the purpose of the tech caregiver program.

Step 2: Identify organizations that can provide Tech Caregivers

Once you feel confident in your understanding of Tech Caregiver Program and how it relates to CyberGenerations, it's time to identify schools and organizations that might be interested in having their students and employees participate.

Consider the following options when looking for volunteers:

- Friends, family members, and colleagues
- Local high school and middle schools
- STEM youth organizations
- IT departments of local companies
- Colleges and universities
- Become a Tech Caregiver yourself!

Step 3: Promote the benefits of being a Tech Caregiver

When reaching out to prospective Tech Caregivers, it is important for them to understand why this is such a unique opportunity. Points to consider mentioning include:

- the importance of cyber safety across all generations
- the opportunity to give back to the community
- In the case of middle school and high school students, the opportunity to earn community service hours

Additional ideas for promoting the program:

- Promote the Tech Caregiver Program in your next newsletter
- Solicit IT professionals from local companies
- Reach out to local high schools and middle schools
- Make personal phone calls or send personal emails to "likely volunteers"
- Contact youth groups that specialized in STEM or cybersecurity
- Advertise through local media outlets

Step 3: Walk a prospective Tech Caregiver through the certification process

Once you've found volunteers who are interested in becoming Tech Caregivers, it's time to guide them through the process. Becoming a Tech Caregiver can be done in three easy steps.

1. A prospective volunteer visits the Tech Caregiver Program page on the CyberPatriot website.
2. They click the link that says "*Click here to start your Tech Caregiver Journey*" to access the training course.
3. Once they've gone through the training, they click the link to the quiz (included in training course document). Upon completion of the quiz (with a passing grade), they immediately receive their Tech Caregiver Certification.

Step 4: Maintain contact and help Tech Caregivers give back to the community

The recruitment of Tech Caregivers is not the end of the story. You can continue to support a Tech Caregiver's efforts by:

- recognizing Tech Caregivers on their certification
- coordinating opportunities for Tech Caregivers to host CyberGenerations workshops
- introducing Tech Caregivers to communities and programs designed for senior citizens

We greatly appreciate your support of the CyberPatriot Program!

**If you have any questions, the CyberPatriot staff can be reached at
877-885-5716 or by email at info@uscyberpatriot.org.**