

## **Age Friendly Kitchener Older Adult at Home Programming**

As part of the City of Kitchener's commitment to be an Age-friendly community, we have created many different opportunities for older adults to stay connected while at home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Here is a list of the programs and how to join:

### **Kitchener Connections**

Join us Monday through Friday for a FREE interactive **telephone-based** program from the comfort of your home. Themes include fun activities, health and wellness topics and much more. Each month a new calendar will highlight the upcoming days of activities.

To register for Kitchener Connections call (519) 741-2382 (TTY 1-866-969-9994). Registration is simple and only requires participants to complete a short intake over the phone. Registered participants are welcome to sign up for any of the sessions listed in [Older Adults Events Calendar](#)

### **Social Support Calls**

With physical distancing measures in place to stop the spread of COVID-19, the City is supporting Kitchener seniors, who may be feeling isolated, or just want to talk, through regular social and well-being support calls. If you know a senior who would benefit from this service, please have them contact (519) 741-2916 (TTY 1-866-969-9994). to register. Referrals from friends, family and community agencies are also accepted, provided the senior has given permission to share their contact information and has agreed to receive reassurance calls from the City.

### **Walking Groups**

For those who would like to get out and enjoy the fresh air in a social atmosphere we have two walking groups each week. Walkers are asked to wear a face covering and maintain physical distancing throughout the walk.

Victoria Park- every Wednesdays from 9:30-10:30 am

Forest Heights- every Friday from 9:30-10:30 am

Registration is required to participate, and space is limited. Contact Julie Laderoute at 519-741-2200 ext. 5346 or email [julie.laderoute@kitchener.ca](mailto:julie.laderoute@kitchener.ca)

### **Connected @ Home Program**

To assist older adults in staying active and connected to one another while at home staff are delivering activity boxes and kits to their front door. Individuals registering for the program are asked to complete an initial questionnaire about their social and leisure interests. This information assists staff in developing activities and programs that are personalized for each participant. After completing the questionnaire, participants will receive an initial box of program activities and supplies that are tailored to their interests. The first Friday of each month participants will then receive a delivery from staff a folder with additional activities and a monthly program schedule.

To support social connections, individuals receiving the activity boxes will be encouraged to join weekly teleconferences or Zoom programs to participate in group activities such as BINGO,

guest speakers, trivia games or discussions. For more information about this program or to register, please call 519-741-2916 (TTY 1-866-969-9994) or email [andrea.klein@kitchener.ca](mailto:andrea.klein@kitchener.ca)

### **Grand Connections Letter Writing Program:**

The City of Kitchener is looking to bridge the gap between our younger citizens and our older neighbours through the Grand Connections writing program. Community members of all ages are encouraged to submit electronic letters, cards, artwork and messages of hope that City staff will share with an older adult in our community during their regular social support calls and other programs.

The goal is to let isolated older adults know that you are thinking about them and they are still connected to our community while we need to be physically apart. Encourage your neighbours and schools to get involved and help brighten a senior's day! Unfortunately, we are unable to manage responses to messages and communication is only one-way. Additionally, please do not provide personal information such as your full names and address. To submit your messages visit the [Grand Connections page](#) on the City's website or mail them to:

Grand Connections Program  
c/o Downtown Community Centre  
35B Weber Street West.  
Kitchener, ON. N2H 3Z1

### **Technology Training and Lending Library**

**COMING SOON-** The City of Kitchener received a grant from the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program to support a technology lending library and training programs for older adults. Beginning in January 2021 older adults in the Kitchener community will be able to borrow a tablet or Chromebook with or without cellular service for up to a month. To borrow technology resources individuals will need to register for this service by calling (519) 741-2382 (TTY 1-866-969-9994).

In addition to the technology lending library, the City of Kitchener has partnered with the Bits and Bytes computer club to offer virtual group or individual technology training programs. The [Bits and Bytes Computer Club](#) hosts ongoing monthly Zoom training sessions, virtual events including speakers' meetings, computer "drop-in" support, and presentations on a variety of technology topics.

For more information on technology training programs contact Sandy Hrubik at 519-741-2200 ext.5079 (TTY 1-866-969-9994) or by email at [sandy.hrubik@kitchener.ca](mailto:sandy.hrubik@kitchener.ca)

### **Virtual Classes**

A new recent addition to our virtual programs is some of our most popular registered programs at Rockway Centre including:

- Strength training
- Flexercise
- Chair yoga
- Stretch classes
- Stability ball
- Memoir writing

To learn more about these programs or to register visit the City of Kitchener's [Active Net](#) or contact Rockway Centre at 519-741-2507 (TTY 1-866-969-9994).

### **Rock Solid Connections**

Rock Solid Connections is an interactive Zoom-based social and recreational program that aims to keep older adults active and engaged in their community from the comfort of their own home. Programs include Guitar Jams, adult coloring and a weekly social coffee chat. There is no charge to participate but registration is required by emailing [brenda.vandekeere@kitchener.ca](mailto:brenda.vandekeere@kitchener.ca) or by calling Rockway Centre at 519-741-2507 (TTY 1-866-969-9994).

**Our goal is to remove barriers and to provide accessible programs and services. If you require accessible documents, support or accommodation to participate in any of our virtual or in-person programs, please contact Bethany Pearce at 519-741-2200 ext. 5081 (TTY 1-866-969-9994) for assistance.**

## Kitchener Tech Connects

### Free Tech Courses for Seniors

The City of Kitchener was awarded a New Horizons for Seniors Program grant through the Government of Canada to provide seniors with small group technology training with the goal of improving social connections and access to information that will support them during the COVID-19 pandemic and in the future.

We are excited to offer these **free tech courses** for older adults in our community. All courses are taught virtually using Zoom.

Course	Description	Dates
<b>Intro to iPads</b>	Participants will learn the physical parts of the iPad, how to take a 'selfie', common apps and how to find videos and read the news. iPad or iPhone required for this 2-day course.	Mon Jan 18 from 1:30-2:30 pm Wed Jan 20 from 1:30-2:30 pm
<b>Intro to Chromebooks</b>	Participants will learn about the physical features of a Chromebook, its basic functionality and how it differs from other laptops and devices. We will explore the Chrome Browser and learn how to use it to gain access to common websites. Any device can attend this course, the 2 <sup>nd</sup> day is for those with a Chromebook	Tues Jan 19 1:30-2:30 pm Thu Jan 21 1:30-2:30 pm * *those with Chromebooks only
<b>Intro to Email</b>	Participants will learn about the effective and safe use of email - various platforms, uses, account set up and maintenance, best practices / etiquette, phishing and personal protection. Any device can attend this 2-day course.	Mon Jan 25 10:30 -11:30 am Wed Jan 27 10:30-11:30 am
<b>Intro to the Internet</b>	Participants will learn common terms related to using the internet, ways to access the internet, common purposes for using the internet, how to 'google' effectively, how to locate and save favorite websites, and basic safety practices for being online. Any device can attend this 2-day course.	Tues Jan 26 1:30-2:30 pm Thu Jan 28 1:30-2:30 pm
<b>Stay Safe Online</b>	Participants will explore why and how to maintain safe online practices, the importance of safe passwords, examine common scams and how to recognize and avoid them, and how to stay current with their digital literacy. Any device can attend this one-day course.	Tues Feb 2 1:30 – 3 pm

To register for any of these courses or for more information please contact Sandy Hrubik at 519 741-2200 Ext 5079 or [sandy.hrubik@kitchener.ca](mailto:sandy.hrubik@kitchener.ca)