Chapter 7 – Basic GenYES Curriculum: Units 1-3

All GenYES schools have access to the first three Units of GenYES Curriculum:

➡ Unit 1 - Getting Started Guides
➡ Unit 2 - Speciality Technology Guides
➡ Unit 3 - Wrapping Up Guides

These units are meant to provide a solid base for GenYES clubs and classes to get started with student support for school technology integration. These three units offer multiple activities and resources that guide GenYES classes and clubs through the major innovative activities that make GenYES special.

Unit 1 - Getting Started Guides

The activities in this unit introduce students to the GenYES program through eight 90-minute club-style meetings. They cover using the GenYES tools, working and collaborating with teachers, planning projects, troubleshooting, and information literacy, and establish the fundamental student-centered philosophy of GenYES.

Expansion activities are included for implementation in a GenYES class. The activities should be broken up to fit into the class schedule.

Each activity in this section includes:
- Overview
- Student Objectives
- Teacher Preparation
- Time
- Procedures
- Evaluation
- Resources - these can be useful handouts, links, videos, and vocabulary

Using Unit 1 in a Class or Club
Unit 1 - Getting Started Guides in a Club Model
These activities are meant to be very flexible to accommodate GenYES club implementations. You may not have every student available at every club meeting, but it is important to get started with as many students as possible doing at least the first four activities as a group.

Bringing students together for a Saturday "boot camp" can be a successful strategy. Building a team relationship between the students is an important part of starting and sustaining your GenYES club.

Unit 1 - Getting Started Guides in a Class Model

These activities should **ALWAYS** be the first things you teach in your GenYES class. Many teachers assume that it is better to sneak some technology activities in before tackling the GenYES curriculum. We urge you not to do it this way. These activities give the students context for the entire class and learning their new technology skills. You should find that students will pick up the technology skills more quickly than you expect once you give them the responsibility and the context for creating projects that help teachers.

Expansion activities are included for implementation in a GenYES class and offer a variety of ways students can use available technology as a "fun" way of covering the material in the Activity Guide. The activities should be broken up to fit into the class schedule.

List of Getting Started Guides
What is GenYES?

This activity introduces students to the GenYES program and explains how they will be collaborating with teachers (and other adults) to help integrate technology into your school. By the end of the activity, each student will have established a GenYES website account and completed a pre-survey.

Becoming Familiar with GenYES Tools and Resources

Students will spend most of their time in GenYES working on Technology Assistance Projects (TAPs) with collaborating partner-teachers. The online TAP tool, accessed from each student's GenYES account, is key to managing and tracking TAPs. In this activity, you assign sample TAPs to give students practice using the tool. At the same time, these TAPs will make students aware of your school's Acceptable Use Policies and general guidelines for using technology safely and appropriately.

Collaboration and Communication

Now that students know how the TAP tool works, they are ready to learn how TAPs help teachers and other adults in their school. Collaboration between students and teachers is key to the GenYES process and students need to understand their responsibilities as co-partners in the model. In this activity, students discuss interpersonal skills and critique the student-teacher interactions in a role-play exercise.

TAPs and Learning

As with any tool, there are effective and ineffective ways to use technology to enhance learning. This activity is designed to get students thinking about the ways that they learn best, and how TAPs can help teachers create more

engaging and active learning experiences for students. The themes of this discussion should be an ongoing component of your GenYES program as students work on TAPs and continue to think critically about their own learning.

TAPs and Teaching

This activity is intended to give students a taste of how teachers do formal lesson planning. Students will discuss lesson-planning and see some examples of past GenYES lesson plans. Depending on the structure of your program, you can also have students practice creating their own in-depth lesson plans in preparation for their TAPs. Not all TAPs involve creating a technology-infused lesson plan but many will. This activity will prepare GenYES students for this kind of TAP.

Troubleshooting and Tech Support

Whether or not advanced technology infrastructure support is an integral part of your GenYES program, your students will inevitably encounter problems with the technology they use themselves and with teachers. This activity introduces principles of troubleshooting, finding solutions, escalation, and preventative maintenance that will help get your students started with tech support.

Tutorials

Your students will undoubtedly find times when they need to teach a teacher or another student something about technology. This activity teaches students how to write or perform a good tutorial and how to use the GenYES Wiki to create a custom tech support resource for your school.

Information Literacy

In order to take advantage of the opportunities and knowledge available on the Internet, students must be able to judge the quality of information, assess the reliability of sources, and know how to stay safe online. This activity introduces these skills and provides foundational guidelines for students to follow throughout GenYES and any work they do online.

Unit 2 - Specialty Technology Guides

The activities in this unit can be used as the basis for lessons for a GenYES class, as inspiration for TAPs, or as small-group GenYES projects. They are designed to show how GenYES students can help teachers with popular educational technology resources already in your school.

When new technology purchases are used often and well, it shows the administration, community, and parents that technology is worth their investment. The goal of this unit is to provide you with very flexible resources and suggestions about how to tailor your GenYES program to mesh with the hardware and software you probably already have.

These activities do not have to be conducted as whole-class lessons. You may select whether to teach the activity as a lesson for the whole group, or whether to train individual students as the need arises and create a small group of student "experts" who can tutor their peers.

Each activity outlines broad procedures for introducing a specific technology to GenYES students. Additionally, each activity highlights special considerations for each type of technology and provides ideas for how this technology can be used in TAPs. Encourage your GenYES students to browse these resources on their own if you choose not to lead a lesson.

List of Specialty Technology Guides
Handhelds
Handheld computers are growing in popularity as an educational tool. They are versatile, portable, and easy to use--especially when GenYES students are there to help teachers find ways to use them in their classrooms. GenYES students can quickly master handheld technology at almost any age, and this can be a very effective way to show that these students are really making an impact.

Help Guides and Video Tutorials
This activity goes into greater depth about student-created tutorial projects, focusing especially on video tutorials. Tutorials make great projects for students to work on in a lull between TAPs, or to use as a quick reference guide for a TAP that requires them to teach a class or a partner-teacher some technology.

Digital Storytelling
Digital storytelling is an increasingly popular technique for allowing students (and others) to express their unique voices through technology. Using video, narration, digital photographs, and music, students can tell and share their own stories. This activity can be used as a resource for TAPs, or it can be a project for GenYES students to practice editing digital audio and video.

Inspiration and Kidspiration
Inspiration Software, Inc. offers visual thinking tools for elementary and secondary students. These applications help students create visual diagrams, thought charts, and organized brainstorms and can be a great tool for research or creative projects in any subject area. If your school has purchased one or more of these products, this activity suggests numerous ways Inspiration can be used in TAPs.

Tech4Learning Tools
Tech4Learning offers software and online tools that help students create multimedia projects. If your school has purchased Tech4Learning materials, GenYES students can use them to create graphics and videos for almost any TAP - presentations, websites, or class projects.

CyberSmart!

The CyberSmart! School Program is designed to introduce students to the skills necessary to use computers and the Internet safely, responsibly and effectively. Generation YES has partnered with CyberSmart! to make these free, proven, and easy-to-use resources available as an extended option for teaching web safety skills with GenYES students.

How Unit 2 - Specialty Technology Guides fits in to GenYES classes and clubs

The Specialty Technology Guides can be used in a number of ways. You can use them as filler lessons, or as independent study resources for advanced students. They cover topics and specific hardware or software use that will not be of interest to every school, such as handheld or PDA programs and digital storytelling. In addition, many students find that their partner-teachers would like some assistance with a specific software application. For example, elementary teachers often ask a GenYES student to help them with class projects that use Inspiration, software designed to build visual maps. GenYES Advisors can facilitate this by using the Project Starter on Inspiration and Kidspiration.

There may be times when a GenYES Advisor uses these Specialty Technology Guides to deliver a whole class lesson, especially if GenYES students have been asked to support a new hardware initiative in the school, such as helping teachers use handhelds. In this case, it is important for the whole class to learn about handhelds. Alternatively, however, you may have a situation in which only one partner-teacher needs help with a topic covered in this section. If you have a student who is up for an independent project, these Specialty Technology Guides can be a great resource for them.

Unit 3: Wrap-Up Guides

This unit contains concluding activities for a GenYES program. In addition to completing any last TAPs, students create a portfolio of their work and discuss ways to publicize their successes and recruit students and teachers to participate next year. This unit also covers the important end-of-year surveys for students, Advisors and partner-teachers, which provide data for program assessment and summative reports. Finally, celebrate your achievements and recognize outstanding projects in a class- or school-wide ceremony.

Portfolios

Every TAP or project created in GenYES is an "artifact," meaning a piece of work that shows what a student has learned and accomplished. Creating portfolios is a good way for the teacher of a GenYES class to do an authentic assessment of each student's technical and academic progress. For clubs or other programs where students do not need a grade, cumulative portfolios provide an opportunity for students to showcase and share their best work.

Finishing TAPs and Year-End Surveys

A few weeks before the end of your GenYES program, students will need to stop receiving new TAPs and concentrate on finishing up any outstanding projects (and on completing their portfolio, if necessary). Every GenYES student, along with the GenYES Advisor and all the partner-teachers and other staff members who requested TAPs during the course, must complete a final survey about the program before the course ends.

What It Means To Be a GenYES Graduate

This activity prepares graduating GenYES students to provide continuing tech support and leadership in their schools and community. Students also collect data about the help their TAPs provided and create ways to share their accomplishments and promote the GenYES program to other students, teachers, schools, and the community.

Celebration and Recognition

No GenYES class or club should end without a chance to applaud the students for their great work! This activity suggests ways to recognize your GenYES students' accomplishments with an assembly, parent night, certificate ceremony, or other celebration. Students can take the lead in planning and running this event.