

LICENSING TESTIMONIAL:

Independence at Home - A SCAN Community Service

Based out of Long Beach, California, [Independence at Home](#) is on a mission to keep older adults with behavioral health difficulties as well as their caregivers healthy and independent. We chatted with Mila Lilien, Supervisor of the TEC program, and Pedro Carbajal-Madrid, Clinical Director, about how they are helping people thrive at home with the help of Senior Planet's technology training.

It all started with the need to virtually connect homebound patients with their therapists.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Independence at Home mental health specialists who delivered at-home services were not able to visit their clients as they normally did. Many of their clients are bedbound, homebound, or for whatever other reason are unable to visit traditional clinical settings. Social distancing made at-home visits impossible, so the team quickly transitioned to virtual sessions in order to continue to provide this vital service. But there was a problem. As Pedro describes it, "We started running into clients that wanted to interact with us virtually, but they just did not know how to do it."

“
It all started with wanting to link clients that were receiving behavioral health services to their therapist virtually.
”

This need for digital skills training led to the creation of the Technology, Education, and Coaching Program (TEC) at Independence at Home. TEC specializes in one-on-one digital literacy support for older adults and their caregivers. As the program and need grew, Independence at Home, "became aware of Senior Planet classes [as a] way for us to reach a broader audience." (Pedro). They joined the Senior Planet licensing program and quickly saw the benefits of technology training.

Senior Planet's classes add unique benefits to Independence at Home's already robust set of programmatic offerings. Specifically, it gives their clients a supportive environment to socialize and learn practical technology skills that improve their day-to-day lives. As Mila puts it: "There's this misconception that older adults don't care about technology, or they're scared of technology... These classes show that's not the case for everyone. Because people keep coming out and they want to learn. They're getting social interaction and actual information that they can tangibly take away and make their life better."

When asked how technology training can help people who have behavioral health difficulties thrive at home, Pedro says, "We see it as addressing issues related to social isolation. All the goals that we get from the clients have to do with connecting with families and connecting with resources."



OF LOCAL
TRAINERS TRAINED:

9 currently
active

OF SENIOR PLANET
CLASSES OFFERED:

308 programs

OF LOCAL OLDER
ADULTS SERVED:

2.3K engagements
to date

OF SITES

66 sites have
offered classes

“All the things that Senior Planet was offering were a perfect fit for the program that we were trying to get off the ground.”

Mila shared the example of a recently incarcerated man who was struggling to reintegrate into an increasingly digital world. With the help of Independence at Home and Senior Planet, “He was able to find training, look for a job, and... reintegrate into the world.”

In the end, it’s all about helping older adults use technology to access the tools they need to thrive. As Mila puts it, “There are so many different barriers that we come across where people really can use technology to their advantage, especially to improve their mental health and social isolation.”

When asked why other organizations like Independence at Home should join the Senior Planet licensing program, Mila says, “It’s such a value benefit to the community at large. It’s a rich program that [is] really easy to implement. I think the materials are user-friendly for both the people who teach it as well as for the people who are getting the information. And I feel like it covers a lot of different territory for a lot of different levels of people’s knowledge.” Pedro added, “There is a huge need out there for this kind of education.”

Growth Is on the Horizon:

- AI classes have been the biggest attraction for older adults and their caregivers. “It’s everywhere and people really want to know about it.” (Mila)
- The need is growing! Halfway through 2026, Independence at Home had already offered 199 Senior Planet classes. By comparison, they offered a total of 109 classes throughout all of 2025!
- While based in Southern California, Independence at Home is offering Senior Planet classes all over California and even in parts of Texas!



The Senior Planet licensing program serves as an open-ended framework for administrators like Mila to develop programs and activities based on unique needs of their communities. You can learn more about the free program at www.oats.org/licensing