Teen Tech Week^{TM} 2014 Program Ideas

Here are some program ideas ranging from low-tech to more high tech that you can use to celebrate Teen Tech Week in your library.

Coding Station

Using resources freely available online, set up a computer in or near the teen area with links to these resources for teens to use to get quick introductions to various options in the digital learning environment.

- Hour of Code
- Codecademy
- BeatLab
- Digital Learning Day
- Alice: An Educational Software that teaches students computer programming in a 3D environment
- GameMaker: Studio
- Sploder Game Making Software

3D Creation and Printing Program

Does your library have a 3D printer? How about computers or iPads? Using freely available 3D creation software, help teens build a design to be printed on your 3D printer. If your teens love Minecraft, host a Minecraft 3D printing program. Let teens build objects in their 3D Minecraft world and learn how to print them.

Here are a few useful resources:

- TinkerCAD - Free online 3D design software
- Thingiverse - MakerBot's website where you can design, share, and discover 3D objects to download and print
- Autodesk's 123D line of software and apps - 123D Design: online software or 123D Sculpt & 123D Creature: iPad apps are easy to use applications that let you design 3D objects to render and print.
- Minecraft Print - has the code needed to render 3D designs to print directly from Minecraft

DIY Touchscreen Gloves Program or Giveaway

In keeping with the DIY theme, host this fun DIY program. You supply the thread and have teens bring their gloves. Use this Instructable for tutorials, instructions, sources for thread, etc.: http://www.instructables.com/id/Making-A-Glove-Work-With-A-Touch-Screen/
OR for a passive programming option, assemble small kits of conductive thread with a small library-branded tutorial for using the thread to make a pair of touchscreen gloves to be placed in the teen areas as a special giveaway. SparkFun sells large spools of the thread for about $40 each. – As part of this, include a special hashtag and encourage teens to share photos of their completed creations on Twitter or Instagram.

Compiled by Catherine Boddie
University of Denver Practicum Student at the Colorado State Library

DIY Crafting Program

There are a number of options for DIY crafting, both techy and not. Here are a few examples:

- DIY Dino Phone Tripod: http://www.eatsleepmake.com/2013/07/make-dino-iphone-tripod.html
- DIY NES Controller Wallet: http://www.instructables.com/id/NES-Controller-Wallet/
- Customize your Tech Cords & Cables: http://www.apartmenttherapy.com/friendship-bracelets-for-your-tech-cords-cables-166534
- DIY Light Sabers or Sonic Screwdriver Pens: http://www.instructables.com/id/Make-your-own-Sonic-Screwdrivers-and-Lightsaber-Pe/
- Floppy Disk Notepads: http://lexacatcrafts.blogspot.com/2008/04/diskette-notebooks.html
- Floppy Disk Planters: http://www.brit.co/diy-floppy-disk-planters/
- Or check out Teen DIY or Instructables for more great ideas.

YouTube Oscars

For three weeks before the Academy Awards, have nomination ballots available that teens can use to nominate their favorite YouTube videos or creators. Close nominations at the start of Teen Tech Week. Screen the nominated videos to ensure all are appropriate and on the night of the event host a viewing party where teens can come, eat popcorn, and vote for their favorite videos. This is a low cost, fairly low-tech event. All you need are nomination forms, popcorn, a computer, and a projector.

Unwanted Gadget Drive

Host an unwanted gadget drive. Encourage patrons to bring in their old, unwanted gadgets instead of throwing them out. The library can recycle them, donate them to good causes, or even create DIY projects out of them.

Take Apart Day

Using old, donated tech items, host a Take Apart event. Using old tech like answering machines, broken computers, disk drives, telephones, blow dryers, etc., encourage teens to dissect these pieces to tech to see what makes them work. Consider having a tech expert to help explain what's on the inside of some of the things the teens take apart.

History of Technology

A fun interactive display or passive program idea: When most teens think of technology, they think of the tools they have available now. Show them the evolution of the technology they use today. Set up a table in the teen area where teens can see how quickly they can write a passage with a quill and ink on parchment, pen and paper, typewriter, computer, and smartphone. You could take teens through a history of computer games, using emulators and old consoles to play games. For a more formal program you could ask a local history teacher or professor to talk about some aspect of technology and history.

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