



## CENTER FOR INNOVATION AND WELLBEING

### Piers Project Case Study



### **Empowering and educating older adults to practice safe online behavior.**

Cyber security and online safety are increasingly critical issues for older adults, especially as Internet use grows among older adults who wish to take advantage of the benefits of online services and resources. As older adults increasingly go online, they also become vulnerable to elder abuse through Internet fraud schemes.

While roughly [59% of Americans above the age of 65 reported utilizing the Internet in 2014](#), [only 1 in 14 cases of elder abuse are brought to the attention of authorities](#). And for every incident of violent crime, [approximately three incidents of Internet crime were committed against seniors](#). [In 2011 alone, older adults lost \\$2.9 billion to financial abuse](#).

In response to the pervasiveness of cyber crime and often devastating financial impacts on older adults, the Front Porch Center for Innovation and Wellbeing (FPCIW) launched The Piers Project. Funded by a generous gift from the estate of Ellie Piers to benefit the FPCIW's ongoing mission of using technology to enhance wellbeing among older adults.

Ms. Piers, a resident at [Carlsbad By The Sea](#), was an avid Internet user who was excited with the benefits and convenience of online access—yet she also recognized and was concerned about how new users could be prone to financial and privacy abuse. Her contribution allows FPCIW to address cyber security through education, training, partnerships with private and government resources, and the use of technologies that promote Internet safety, especially in the Greater San Diego area.

FPCIW created the [Cyber Safety Toolkit](#), which covers common Internet-based fraud schemes, various forms of identity theft, social media fraud, and malware protection. It includes a list of reporting agencies and cyber fraud resources.

FPCIW has partnered and leveraged the resources of several key San Diego-area groups such as [OASIS of San Diego](#), [Serving Seniors](#), the [Elder Abuse Alliance](#), [AARP](#), and the [San Diego Futures Foundation](#). FPCIW has distributed more than 3,200 *Cyber Safety Toolkits* and conducted 23 community workshops on Internet safety in Greater San Diego and Los Angeles.

Also planned are a FPCIW hosted Twitter chat with Internet safety experts, senior service providers, and technology companies and piloting technologies that actively address the financial and privacy security of older adult users.

The Piers Project activities promote clear and concise cyber security education that include awareness of key warning signs of online fraud, preventative behaviors, reporting fraudulent activity, and a greater level of confidence in using the Internet.

### **About the Front Porch Center for Innovation and Wellbeing**

The Front Porch Center for Innovation and Wellbeing is part of Front Porch®, one of Southern California's largest not-for-profit providers of retirement living communities and affordable housing. The Front Porch Center for Innovation and Wellbeing strives to harness technology solutions that support and enhance wellbeing in older adults. The Front Porch Center's core initiatives focus on how technology can: assist in maintaining brain health; enhance social connectedness; promote engagement and growth; empower control over health and wellness; prevent emergencies or serious events; and increase resources and support for formal and informal caregivers. The Front Porch Center for Innovation and Wellbeing is a signature program of Front Porch's Humanly Possible® commitment to doing everything humanly possible to creatively meet the needs of those we serve today and in the future. The Front Porch Center is the winner of the Bronze Award for the Dignity category in the 2015 McKnight's Technology Awards and the Aging 2.0 Pilot Pioneers 2015 Innovation Award. More information can be found at [www.fpciw.org](http://www.fpciw.org).

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