ConnectHome
Playbook 12: Tracking Progress

Measuring and sharing success

Tracking progress is essential for assessing the impact of your community's efforts, learning what is and what is not working, fine-tuning your goals and setting new ones, and demonstrating your success.

Begin setting up a process to track your progress in conjunction with your baseline survey (*Playbook 3*) and action plan (*Playbook 5*).

At a minimum, you should aim to measure progress in your population's **home Internet adoption.** You can track this in a variety of ways, as the following table illustrates:

Metric	Data Sources	Pros	Cons
Households actively *using* high-speed Internet at home (not counting smartphones)	Resident survey	Reliable	Difficult to track without directly surveying residents
Households with high-speed Internet service at home (not counting smartphones)	Resident survey / Internet Service Provider	Good proxy metric for adoption	Requires Internet Service Provider cooperation
Units connected through property-wide networks	Housing agency / Internet Service Provider	Ease of counting	May overestimate adoption

Collecting data across HUD programs

ConnectHome has created opportunities for communities to coordinate their resources, objectives, and data collection across HUD programs, including Family Self-Sufficiency, Jobs Plus, and Choice Neighborhoods. Data collection in one program may enable you to collect data for another program without creating additional burdens for residents and staff.

Some pilot communities collect data about in-home Internet access as a benchmark for their self-sufficiency and mobility programs. For example, Family Self-Sufficiency and Jobs Plus program coordinators are capturing the number of participants who live in unconnected households as part of their required program monitoring data. This enables those communities to gain a better understanding of how progress in a program like ConnectHome might help generate better outcomes in other programs, and to identify synergies among programs and residents.

MODELS: Tracking new connections

You can track new Internet connections in your community with a combination of methods, based on your available data and resources:

MODEL 1: Resident surveys

Resident Internet adoption surveys are one of the best methods for tracking progress over time. For ease and consistency, you can model your tracking survey after your baseline survey *(Playbook 3)*.

As with the baseline survey, you can partner with a research partner— ideally a local university, government agency, or research organization— to assist with selecting a representative sample, designing your survey, collecting and analyzing your survey data, and reporting your findings.

You also can engage residents, students, and staff to administer your tracking survey, whether door-to-door, by telephone, in the mail, or at resident events—including your community's Internet sign-up events.

MODEL 2: Recertification and relocation forms

You can ask residents if they have access to high-speed Internet at home as part of your regular recertification and relocation paperwork. If they do, consider asking if they have *gained* access since the time of your baseline survey or last recertification.

You may also want to train your staff to clarify *in what manner* residents are connected to high-speed Internet. This can also be a good opportunity to inform residents about the affordable Internet, device, and digital literacy offers in your community.

Intake surveys

The Tampa Housing Authority surveys incoming residents about their in-home Internet adoption, the availability of a computer or other Internet-ready device in their home and interest in participating in digital literacy trainings.

Trained intake specialists survey residents who are relocating into their communities or recertifying their eligibility. The specialists also use the opportunity to discuss the benefits of digital inclusion and share information about ConnectHome stakeholder offers. By surveying residents in this way, the housing agency continually measures community progress toward in-home Internet adoption.

Model 3: Internet Service Provider agreements

Individual Internet subscriptions

As a result of their ConnectHome stakeholder agreements, national Internet Service Providers (ISPs) regularly share with HUD numbers of new Internet connections in the ConnectHome pilot communities. Specifically, they provide information about the number of households in public housing and HUD-assisted multifamily developments that sign up for their low-cost Internet offers in these communities. HUD then shares the relevant number of new connections with each pilot community to help track progress.

Property-wide connections

If your community has property-wide Internet connections—whether through a wireless network or a bulk billing agreements with ISPs—you can use your occupancy data for the property to track new connections.

Communities that adopt single-payer connectivity models through bulk-billing agreements with ISPs can track connectivity through the standard monthly billing process.

Sharing your success

Powerful impact stories can inspire residents to learn more about the benefits of digital connectivity, as well as motivate stakeholders to participate and contribute toward your community's efforts (see "Developing a communications strategy," at the end of *Playbook 5*).

Blogs and social media posts and are great ways to share the impact of your work and the successes residents have achieved. Putting together success stories can be fun, quick, and easy.

Examples of success stories, photos, and videos are located throughout the *Playbook* and on the ConnectHome website (ConnectHome.HUD.gov). Here are **five key elements** to include:

1. **Brief background** about ConnectHome efforts in your community

2. **Resident profiles,** with a short summary of their backgrounds and brief descriptions of the relevant challenges they face

3. **Description of how they addressed and overcame their challenges** through your community's digital inclusion efforts

4. **Examples of their successes and positive impacts** as a result of being connected with digital opportunities

5. **A call to action** for residents and stakeholders in your community

Photos and videos are engaging and effective ways to tell your stories. You can frame all of the essential elements of your story in an interesting way, with soft, natural lighting, and clean and attractive backgrounds.

Work with your organization's legal department to obtain photo and video releases from any resident that is individually identifiable, including from the parents of any minors.

Making an Impact: Little Rock

"I am really glad this program exists for my kids." —Stacie Brown

For Stacie, a mother of four in Little Rock, having access to affordable high-speed Internet at home means saving the hour-long roundtrip bus ride to the library, and having access to a tablet means no longer having to wait in line to access a computer. With digital literacy training through a partnership between the city's Metropolitan Housing Alliance and BestBuy's Geek Squad, Stacie is gaining 21st Century job-ready skills.

For Stacie's four children, ConnectHome means being able to research and apply for college and federal financial aid, discovering recipes that support healthy eating habits, and, for her son, learning multiplication tables in a way that is tailored to his special needs.

"I can now get on the Internet and am able to do everything that everyone else is doing," Stacie says. "Being a single mother, I have had to put my dreams on hold, but ConnectHome is helping me to start working toward my dreams."