Learning at Home While Under-Connected:
A Toolkit for Parent Discussions and Data Collection in Your Community

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Background

When schools throughout the country altered their plans in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, families with young children had to adapt. Lower-income families in particular had to cope with inadequate and unreliable internet access and out-of-date devices on top of health concerns, school-building closures, reduced hours in child care settings, and missing in-person connection with teachers and family members.

Over the past year, researchers, in partnership with New America and Rutgers University, sought to understand the challenges these parents and caregivers faced while also documenting their successes. The full project, Learning at Home While Under-Connected: Lower-Income Families During COVID-19, included a national probability-based telephone survey conducted in March and April 2021 and a report on the survey’s findings; a series of parent discussion groups conducted in three communities and three briefs detailing insights from those parents; a national event (virtual) to showcase the report and community briefs and a recap blog post; three community discussions (virtual) to talk about the findings; a three-page question set for leaders to use in quickly assessing needs in their community; and this toolkit.

This toolkit is designed for community leaders who are interested in gathering parent data and insights using research methods similar to those used in the Learning at Home While Under-Connected project. We started the discussion-group segment of this research in April 2021 by facilitating and recording one-hour discussions with lower-income parents and caregivers in three communities: Detroit, MI, Pittsburgh, PA, and Santa Clara County, CA. The focus was on those with young children, ages three to six, in households with annual incomes below $75,000. Discussion-group questions were designed to align with questions in the national survey.

These discussions enabled us to gather in-depth and contextual information on what lower-income families have endured during the COVID-19 pandemic, what they need in terms of internet and device access, what they learned about their children’s learning while working with them at home, what they want for their children in the coming school year, and more.

Families are diverse. To better capture their varying needs and experiences, we engaged with community-based organizations (Brilliant Detroit, Reading Ready Pittsburgh, FIRST 5 Santa Clara County, Grail Family Services, and Raising A Reader) to help us identify and connect with parents and caregivers with a range of backgrounds, including varied primary language, culture of origin, education, and employment status. Our discussion groups were held in English and Spanish.

Due to the pandemic, we could not hold meetings in person, so we used Zoom, since chatting via video allowed us to see one another and document the conversations. We took steps to make the process as quick and easy as possible for parents, first with outreach and an initial quick survey, then reminder messages via text or email, and finally the one-hour discussion group meeting. Parents and caregivers received a $50 gift card and children’s books after participating.

This toolkit can be adapted for in-person, hybrid, or virtual parent discussion groups. If and when we return to in-person gatherings you can include snacks for families and coloring books or activities for children who join. We hope it will help schools and organizations gather deeper insights from the parents and caregivers in their communities, leading to new ideas for supporting these caregivers—and ultimately helping to build partnerships that improve ecosystems of learning for today’s children and families, at home, at school, and online.
Contents of Toolkit

This toolkit includes materials developed in English and Spanish, used for recruitment and data collection with parents and caregivers through the SurveyMonkey and Zoom platforms. In it you will find:

- **Recruitment flyers.** We developed and shared flyers with community partners via email or as printed handouts for their outreach to parents, grandparents, and other caregivers.

- **Survey questions.** We developed an online survey via SurveyMonkey:
  
  1. To identify participants that met our main criteria: parent or guardian age 18 or older, at least one child between the ages of three and six, child enrolled in school or would be enrolled the following year, and comfortable speaking English or Spanish.
  2. To help schedule participants: we asked their preferred meeting time based on our available group days and times.
  3. To gather information on a participant’s preferred method of communication prior to and following the meeting.
  4. To capture important information regarding under-connectedness (internet access, device availability, etc.) that we could discuss as a group.

- **Discussion group protocol.** We held the meetings in English and Spanish. This protocol is an example of how we introduced ourselves and set up the meetings. We explained who was leading the project and how participant information would be used. We explained that we were recording the discussion but that all information would be kept anonymous. Since we had not established a relationship with these parents and caregivers prior to the discussion, we let them know we were interested in learning about their experiences and emphasized that there were no right or wrong answers. We did ask parents to think about a focal child during the conversation, as many families had more than one child. Since we had already collected some information in the survey, we did not need to collect contact information or other details.

- **Three-page question set.** The final pages of this toolkit include a stand-alone question set developed by Vikki Katz of Rutgers University after the discussion groups concluded and the national report was published. This question set could be used for a more rapid diagnosis of a family’s needs related to technology and under-connectedness. This set includes some of the same questions in the online survey developed via SurveyMonkey.
Sample Recruitment Flyers
To preview the survey in English visit: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Preview/?sm=mla7xN8sDiWWa4CsLhOjdiFsmKSQGuxhlPX3OuCzhpblI5q_o2BEgg8RzzGhvi1zq_2BTB

Parent and Guardian Discussion Group

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in participating in our discussion group. We’ll be discussing topics related to your child’s home-learning experiences during the pandemic. The following questions will determine whether you are eligible to participate and will take about 5 minutes to complete.

Eligible parents will receive a separate email with a Zoom link to a 1 hour discussion group held in April.

Participants will receive a $50 gift card to thank them for their participation.

* 1. What is your age?
   - < 18
   - 18-24
   - 25-29
   - 30-49
   - 50-64
   - 65+

* 2. Are you the parent or primary caregiver for at least one child ages 3 to 6?
   - Yes
   - No
3. Which best describes your child’s school, preschool, or child care participation over the past 12 months?

- In person only
- Online only
- Mix of in person and online/remote
- Homeschooled
- Not participating in school, preschool, or child care program

4. What grade do you expect your child will attend in September 2021?

- Preschool (including transitional kindergarten)
- Kindergarten
- 1st grade
- Other (please specify)
- 2nd grade
- My child will not be attending school
- My child is not old enough to attend Preschool
Please provide your contact information

*5. What is your name?

_____________________________________________________________

6. What is your email?

_____________________________________________________________

* 7. What is your cell phone number?

_____________________________________________________________

We have a few more quick questions. Please select whichever best describes you.

*8. Are you:

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ Non-binary

☐ Not sure

*9. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin or descent?

☐ Yes

☐ No
10. Please choose the race or races you consider yourself to be.

- White
- Black or African American
- Asian/Chinese/Japanese
- Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
- Mixed race/ethnicity
- Other (please specify)

11. Which is the last year of school that you completed?

- Some high school coursework
- High school graduate or GED
- Some college coursework
- Two-year associate degree from a college or university
- Four-year college or university degree/Bachelors degree
- Some postgraduate or professional coursework

12. Which best describes your current employment status (click as many as apply):

- Working full time (40+ hours per week)
- Working part time
- Homemaker/full-time caregiver
- Student
- Retired
- Currently unemployed
- Other (please specify)
Finally, we have a few questions about technology you may have at home.

*13. **Please check any items you have in your home:**

- A smartphone
- A laptop or desktop computer
- A tablet device (e.g. Samsung Galaxy Tab, iPad)
- *14. At home, do you access the internet using: (Choose all that apply.)*
  - High-speed internet service (wireless or wired)
  - Mobile data plan on a smartphone
  - Dial-up service
  - I do not have any kind of home internet access
  - Other (please specify)
15. Please select any issues you have encountered in the past 12 months with technology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too many people were sharing the smartphone or tablet so it was hard for everyone to get enough time</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Your cell phone service got cut off because it was hard to pay for</td>
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<tr>
<td>You reached the limit on your data plan for a mobile device, and couldn’t go online for a while</td>
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<tr>
<td>Your computer ran too slowly or didn’t work properly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Too many people were sharing the computer so it was hard for everyone to get enough time on it</td>
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<tr>
<td>Your Internet service got cut off at home because it was hard to pay for</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Internet service was too slow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>You had to move homes and didn’t have consistent internet access at some locations</td>
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Grupo de discusión de padres de familia y tutores

Bienvenidos

Muchas gracias por su interés en participar en este grupo de discusión. Hablaremos de temas relacionados a sus experiencias sobre el aprendizaje en el hogar durante la pandemia. Las siguientes preguntas nos servirán para determinar si es elegible para participar y tomará alrededor de 5 minutos responderlas.

Los padres de familia que sean elegibles recibirán un correo electrónico separado con un enlace de Zoom a un grupo de discusión de 1 hora que se llevará a cabo en abril.

Los participantes recibirán una tarjeta de regalo de $50 para agradecerles su participación.

*1. ¿Cuántos años tiene?

- <18
- 18-24
- 25-29
- 30-49
- 50-64
- 65+

*2. ¿Es usted el padre o cuidador principal de al menos un niño de 3 a 6 años?

- Sí
- No
* 3. ¿Cuál describe mejor la participación de su hijo en la escuela, el preescolar o el cuidado infantil durante los últimos 12 meses?

- Solo en persona
- Solo en línea
- Mezcla de en persona y en línea / remoto
- Educado/a en casa
- No participa en la escuela, preescolar o programa de cuidado infantil

* 4. ¿A qué grado espera que asista su hijo en septiembre de 2021?

- Prescolar (incluyendo transición a kindergarten)
- Kindergarten
- Primer grado
- Otro (por favor especifique)
- Segundo grado
- Mi hijo no asistirá a la escuela
- Mi hijo no tiene la edad suficiente para asistir a preescolar
Grupo de discusión de padres de familia y tutores Por favor provea la siguiente información para contactarlo/a Nota: Le estamos pidiendo su información de correo electrónico para mandarle una tarjeta de regalo para compensar su tiempo y participar en el grupo de discusión. Pero si no cuenta con una dirección de correo electrónico, no se preocupe. Solo déjenos saber y encontraremos la forma de asegurarnos de que reciba su tarjeta de regalo. También, por favor provea su número de teléfono si es que le gustaría recibir un mensaje de texto para recordarle con anticipación sobre el grupo de discusión. Su correo electrónico y su número de teléfono no serán compartidos con nadie.

* 5. ¿Cuál es su nombre?
_____________________________________________________________

6. ¿Cuál es su correo electrónico?
_____________________________________________________________

* 7. ¿Cuál es su número de teléfono celular?
_____________________________________________________________

Tenemos algunas preguntas breves más. Seleccione la que mejor le describa.

* 8. Es usted:
- Hombre
- Mujer
- No binario/a
- No estoy seguro

* 9. ¿Es usted de ascendencia Hispana o Latina?
- Sí
- No
* 10. **Por favor seleccione la raza o razas que se considera ser.**

- Blanco
- Negro o afroamericano
- Asiático / chino / japonés
- Nativo americano / indígena americano / nativo de Alaska
- Nativo de Hawái y otras islas del Pacífico
- Raza / etnia mixta
- Otro (por favor especifique)

* 11. **¿Cuál es el último año escolar que completó?**

- Algunos cursos de escuela secundaria
- Graduado de escuela secundaria o GED
- Algunos cursos de la universidad
- Título asociado de dos años de un colegio o universidad
- Título universitario o de licenciatura de cuatro años
- Algunos cursos de posgrado o profesionales

* 12. **¿Cuál describe mejor su situación laboral actual? (haga clic en todos los que correspondan):**

- Trabajo a tiempo completo (más de 40 horas por semana)
- Trabajo a tiempo parcial
- Homemaker/full-time caregiver
- Ama de casa / cuidador de tiempo completo
- Estudiante
- Jubilado
- Actualmente desempleado
- Otro (por favor especifique)
Finalmente, tenemos algunas preguntas sobre la tecnología que podría tener en casa.

**13. Por favor, marque cualquier artículo que tenga en su hogar:**

- Un teléfono inteligente (smartphone)
- Una computadora portátil o de escritorio
- Un dispositivo de tableta o tablet (por ejemplo, Samsung Galaxy Tab, iPad, etc.)

**14. En casa, se conecta a Internet a través de... (Seleccione todas las que correspondan)**

- Datos en teléfono celular
- Servicio de acceso telefónico (Dial-up)
- Internet de alta velocidad (inalámbrico o con cable)
- No tengo ningún tipo de acceso a Internet en casa
- Otro (por favor especifique)
* 15. Seleccione cualquier problema que haya encontrado en los últimos 12 meses con la tecnología.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Sí</th>
<th>NO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demasiadas personas compartían el teléfono inteligente o la tableta, por lo que fue difícil para todos tener suficiente tiempo en él</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Su servicio de teléfono celular se cortó porque era difícil de pagar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alcanzó el límite de su plan de datos de un dispositivo móvil y no pudo conectarse durante un tiempo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Su computadora funcionaba lentamente o no funcionaba correctamente</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demasiadas personas compartían la computadora, por lo que era difícil para todos tener suficiente tiempo en ella</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Su servicio de Internet se cortó en casa porque era difícil pagar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Su servicio de Internet era demasiado lento</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuvo que mudarse de casa y no tenía acceso constante a Internet en algunos lugares</td>
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PARENT DISCUSSION GROUP PROTOCOL—ENGLISH

Introduction (3 minutes)

Thank you so much for being here and talking with us for the next hour. This talk is part of a project organized by New America, a non-profit and nonpartisan research institute, in conjunction with Rutgers University. We are looking forward to learning more about what this last year has been like for you, caregiving for young children during the pandemic. There are no wrong answers for any of these questions—we just really want to know what you think and what you’ve experienced.

While this session is being recorded, none of you need to worry about privacy. We will not share your identifying information with anyone, and any reports will keep what participants said anonymous. So please, feel like you can speak freely.

To thank you for your time, we’ll email you a $50 gift card within one week using the email you shared in the online survey.

Warm-up (5 minutes)

To begin with, I would like to go around and have everyone introduce themselves. Please tell us:

- Your name,

- How many children you have and what their ages are

- And what neighborhood you live in

School this year (15 minutes)

I know that you all have at least one child between 3 and 6. [For those that have more than one child between 3 and 6, ask them to pick a focal child (e.g. the older child or the youngest) to talk about throughout the discussion]. What is your child’s name?

- What has school or preschool looked like for that child/children this year—have they been attending school in person, virtually, or some combination?

- What has that experience been like this year, for you and your family?

As needed:

- Did you have access to devices that were able to help your child learn remotely, as applicable? Did they have any challenges with adequate internet? (note: refer to survey data)
What was it like to oversee that remote learning—who oversaw their learning/care most, and how was that balanced with work/other responsibilities?

I'd like you to compare what you knew about this child and how they learned a year ago, before the pandemic, and now.

- If you think you have a better sense now about how your child learns after this year, tell me more -- what are examples of what you now know about what they learn easily and what is more challenging for them? Try to probe for details/stories

- [if child was at least partially remote, ask] Did you learn anything from watching their teacher that gave you ideas about how your child learns?

We also know this year has meant teaching children a lot of new things, about wearing masks, handwashing, staying home, and so on. Were there any programs, videos, or other resources that helped you to explain the pandemic to your child?

- If no: what would have helped?

**School next year (10 minutes)**

As you look forward to next year, how are you feeling about this child attending school in person in September?

- What grade do you expect they will attend?

- Are you making decisions about whether to repeat kindergarten or pre-K, or feeling unsure about what year they should be enrolled in? Can you tell us about that?

- What is forefront in your mind when it comes to your child being prepared for K or pre-K? [Probe for info about this thought process.]

- What are you hoping that school will help your child with most next year—what forms of support do you think they’ll need most after the challenges of how they have been learning this past year?
**Reading (10 minutes)**

Now, I’d like to ask you a bit about what reading you and your family may have done this year.

- Has the pandemic changed how you read with your children?

- Probe as needed: Can you tell me more about what changes have occurred? [Try to see why they’ve made these changes--less time, more time, less access to other options?]

- In general, has it been harder, easier, or about the same as before the pandemic to get books for your children to read? Have you been reading the same kinds of books, or finding new material?

- Are you using tablets or apps to help with reading? Has that been useful to you? If so, do you mind sharing some examples?

**Local Supports (5-8 minutes):**

This last year has been a real challenge for everyone, though everyone has had slightly different challenges to deal with.

- Have there been organizations you’ve been able to rely on for help when you needed it this year? How were they helpful?

- Are there supports that would have been really helpful for your family that you weren’t able to access?

**Closing question (5-8 minutes):**

I know there’s so much more we could talk about, about what this year has been like. To close, can I ask you all to take a couple of minutes and tell me anything you feel we should know about what this year has been like for you and child/family? This could be something we talked about today but a detail we missed/is very important, or something we should have asked you about, but didn’t?
PARENT DISCUSSION GROUP PROTOCOL—SPANISH

Introducción (3 minutos)

Muchas gracias por estar aquí y por hablar con nosotros durante la próxima hora. Esta plática es parte de un proyecto de New America, un instituto de investigación sin fines de lucro y apartidista, en conjunto con Rutgers University. Estamos entusiasmados por aprender más sobre cómo ha sido el último año para ustedes, los cuidadores de niños, durante la pandemia. No hay respuestas incorrectas para cualquiera de las siguientes preguntas, realmente queremos saber qué piensan y cuál ha sido su experiencia.

Mientras que esta sesión será grabada, no hay necesidad de preocuparse por su privacidad. No vamos a compartir información sobre su identidad con nadie, y cualquier reporte mantendrá anónimo lo que dijeron los participantes. Así que por favor, siéntanse libres al hablar.

Para agradecerles por su tiempo, les mandaremos un correo electrónico con una tarjeta de regalo de $50 dentro de una semana, usando el correo electrónico que compartieron durante la encuesta en línea.

Calentamiento (5 minutos)

Para empezar, me gustaría ir con cada uno y pedirles que se introduzcan. Por favor digan:

- Su nombre,
- Cuántos niños tienen y cuáles son sus edades
- En qué vecindario viven

La escuela este año (15 minutos)

Yo sé que todos ustedes tienen al menos un pequeño de entre 3 y 6 años [Para quienes tengan más de un niño o niña de entre 3 y 6 años, pide que se enfoquen en uno (por ejemplo, en el más joven o el más grande) para hablar durante la discusión]. ¿Cuál es el nombre de su niño o niña?

- ¿Cómo ha sido la escuela o preescolar para el niño/niños este año? ¿Han estado atendiendo a la escuela en persona, remotamente o alguna combinación?
- ¿Cuál ha sido su experiencia este año, para usted y su familia?

En caso de ser necesario:

- Si aplica ¿Tuviste acceso a dispositivos que fueran capaces de ayudar a que su niño aprendiera
remotamente? ¿Tuvieron obstáculos para conseguir un internet adecuado? (nota: referirse a data del sondeo)

- ¿Cómo fue supervisar el aprendizaje remoto? ¿Quién supervisó más su aprendizaje/cuidado? ¿Y cómo fue balanceado con responsabilidades de trabajo o de cualquier otro tipo?

Me gustaría ver si pueden comparar lo que sabían de su niño y cómo aprendían hace un año, antes de la pandemia, y ahora.

- Si crees que tienes una mejor idea sobre cómo aprende tu niño después de este año, platicanos más sobre eso. ¿Cuáles son algunos ejemplos de algo que sabes ahora sobre qué es fácil aprender y qué es difícil aprender para los pequeños? [Intenta pedir detalles y anécdotas o historias]

- [Si el niño tenía educación parcialmente remota, pregunta] ¿Aprendiste algo al ver al maestro o maestra, que te haya dado ideas sobre cómo aprende tu niño?

También entendemos que este año significó enseñarle muchas cosas a los niños, sobre el uso de cubrebocas, lavarse las manos, quedarse en casa, y cosas de ese estilo. ¿Había algún programa o video u otro tipo de recurso que ayudara a explicar mejor la pandemia a su hijo?

- Si no, ¿qué hubiera ayudado?

**La escuela el siguiente año (10 minutos)**

Conforme vemos hacia el año entrante, ¿cómo se están sintiendo sobre su hijo atendiendo a la escuela en persona durante septiembre?

- ¿Qué grado esperan que atienda su hija o hijo?

- ¿Están haciendo algún tipo de decisión sobre la posibilidad de repetir el kinder o pre-K, o se sienten inseguros sobre cuál grado debería de ser el que su hijo está inscrito? ¿Nos pueden decir más de eso?

- ¿Qué es lo primero que viene a su mente cuando piensan en cómo debe estar preparada su hija o hijo para atender a kinder o pre-K? [Pide detalles para entender el proceso intelectual para esta conclusión]

- ¿Qué esperas que haga la escuela para ayudar a tu hijo el próximo año? ¿Qué formas de apoyo crees que tus hijos necesitan más después de ver los obstáculos para su aprendizaje en este último año?
**Lectura (10 minutos)**

Ahora me gustaría preguntar un poco más acerca de las lectura que usted y su familia han hecho este año.

- ¿La pandemia ha cambiado cómo leen con su niño o niña?

- Pide detalles conforme se vayan necesitando: ¿Me puedes decir un poco más sobre los cambios que ocurrieron? [Intenta ver por qué hicieron estos cambios: ¿tenían menos tiempo o más, menos acceso a otras opciones?]

- En general, ¿ha sido más difícil, más sencillo, o más o menos igual que antes de la pandemia, conseguir libros para que sus hijos puedan leer? ¿Han estado leyendo el mismo tipo de libros o han buscado nuevo material de lectura?

- ¿Están usando tablets/tabletas o apps para ayudar con la lectura? ¿Ha sido útil para ustedes? De ser útil, ¿podrían compartir algún ejemplo?

**Apoyos locales (5-8 minutos):**

Este último año ha sido un verdadero cambio para todos, aunque cada quién ha tenido diferentes tipos de obstáculos con los cuáles debe lidiar.

- ¿Ha habido alguna organización en la que te has apoyado para obtener la ayuda que necesitas este año? ¿Puedes decir cómo fue que ayudaron?

- ¿Hay algún tipo de apoyo que habría sido de mucha ayuda para su familia que no fue posible acceder?

**Preguntas de cierre (5-8 minutos):**

Yo sé que hay mucho más de lo que pudimos haber hablado sobre cómo fue este año. Para cerrar, ¿les podría pedir que se tomen unos minutos y me digan cualquier cosa que ustedes crean que debemos saber sobre cómo ha sido este año para ustedes, sus hijos y familias? Esto podría ser en relación a algo de lo que ya hablamos el día de hoy pero algún detalle que nos faltó y que sea importante, o ¿hay algo que debimos haber preguntado pero no lo hicimos?
Question Set

ARE THE FAMILIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY UNDER-CONNECTED?

If you lead a school district or community organization and you’re concerned about whether your students and families have adequate, consistent access to the internet and digital devices, this quick set of questions can identify which families require support, and what kinds of support they need most.

These questions were developed as part of nationally representative surveys we conducted with lower-income U.S. parents with school-aged children about technology use and learning experiences. Our report of survey findings from 2015 can be downloaded here, and the 2021 report can be downloaded here. These full set of survey questions from the 2021 survey is available here.

This page is your guide to using these questions in your own community. The next page has been designed to be easily distributed to your community members.

HOW TO USE THESE QUESTIONS

Questions 1 and 2 provide information on the kinds of access that families have to digital devices (Question 1) and the Internet (Question 2) at home. These questions provide an immediate guide to which families require assistance with securing devices or a broadband internet connection.

Question 3 includes seven questions that will enable you to identify which families are under-connected, because their access is too inadequate or inconsistent to meet their needs. Because these questions ask about families’ experiences over the past year, they will help you identify families who answered “yes” to Questions 1 and 2 today, but who have struggled in the past with being under-connected and may face challenges again in the future.

The under-connected questions in Question 3 can either be tallied as a score out of seven possible points (with higher scores indicating more struggles with being under-connected), or used to identify specific ways to support families who have struggled with their mobile devices, computers, and/or internet access in the past 12 months.
1. Please tell me whether your family has the following items at home:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>If yes: How many of this device do you have in your household?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laptop computer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desktop computer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smartphone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet device</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Please tell me whether you have the following kinds of internet at home:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind of Internet</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadband internet (e.g., cable, Fios, fiber optic)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dial-up via a home telephone line</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data plan on a smartphone or tablet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have internet at home, but I’m not sure what I have</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t have any internet connection at home right now</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Many people have issues with technology sometimes. Please tell us whether you have encountered each of these issues in the past 12 months.

**Do you have a smartphone or tablet at home?** If yes, please answer these questions about your experiences with these devices in the past 12 months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too many people were sharing the smartphone or tablet so it was hard for everyone to get enough time on it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You reached the limit on your data plan for a mobile device, and couldn't go online for a while</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your cell phone service got cut off because it was hard to pay for</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Do you have a computer home?** If yes, please answer these questions about your experiences with these devices in the past 12 months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your computer ran too slowly or didn't work properly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too many people were sharing the computer so it was hard for everyone to get enough time on it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Do you have internet at home?** If yes, please answer these questions about your experiences with your internet connection in the past 12 months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your Internet service got cut off at home because it was hard to pay for</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Internet service was too slow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
About the Project

This toolkit accompanies the national Learning at Home While Under-Connected project, which features a national report based on a telephone survey of more than 1,000 lower-income parents across the United States as well as three community briefs based on parent discussion groups. We are grateful to our funders who made this project possible, including Noggin, Overdeck Family Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Grable Foundation, and the Silicon Valley Community Foundation. We thank our collaborators, Lisa Guernsey and Aaron Loewenberg of New America, Vikki Katz of Rutgers University, and Victoria Rideout of VJR Consulting. We also thank Michelle Sioson Hyman of Raising A Reader for helping to conceptualize the project, supporting us throughout, and connecting us with the following community partners: Brilliant Detroit, Reading Ready Pittsburgh, FIRST 5 Santa Clara County, and Grail Family Services. We thank Sabrina Detlef, Riker Pasterkiewicz, and Fabio Murgia for their editorial and publication support.

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About the Author

Laura Zimmermann is the founder and president of Tech Play Collaborative and a research fellow at the Bay Area Discovery Museum. She is a recognized expert in child development, playful learning, and learning from media having published articles in both lay and peer-reviewed journals. Providing both formative and summative research, Zimmermann consults with organizations in the education and children’s media spaces. She conducts applied research with children and adults that support them in partnership with museums, schools, community centers, and research labs. In addition to independent consulting and peer-reviewed research, Zimmermann previously worked as a leading education expert at an international non-profit where she conducted quantitative and qualitative research projects. Zimmermann was an Institute of Education Sciences Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Child’s Play, Learning, and Development Lab at the University of Delaware. She holds a PhD in Psychology from Georgetown University with a concentration in Human Development and Public Policy.