How to Spread Awareness of a New Program From the Ground-Up

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The Project

- Spread awareness of PHLConnectED in community-based locations through phone calls and local tabling/flyer distribution
- Develop PHLConnectED year 2 strategies by synthesizing available research and data, and collecting and analyzing new data.

Challenges

- Developing and gaining community trust.
- Schedule changes day to day/week to week made every day tasks something new.
- Understanding how to keep citizens attention when speaking with them.
- Difficulty in working and weaving through bureaucratic obstacles
- Many people don't believe you when you say you're offering free services.

PHLConnectED Overview

- PHLConnectED is the City's initiative to connect pre-K-12 households in need of free internet for digital learning,
- The goal of the program is to identify and implement affordable, simple and reliable digital solutions for all residents.
- The program provides digital skills training and support to participants.

Three Key Strategies

1. Ensure K-12 school students have consistent access to the technology, internet and tech support required for remote learning.
2. Reimagine public technology centers in the context of a constrained municipal budget, social distancing requirements, and increased distance learning demands on students
3. Provide Philadelphians with affordable and reliable internet access so they can participate fully in the workforce, education, training, healthcare, public benefits, and essential online services.

Takeaways

- Community trust is essential to overcome perceived/existing power differential within the community and city
- Consistency when conducting outreach is important
- School-based outreach helps inspire community members to take action because the message is coming from people with authority and credibility within the community.

Lessons Learned

- Spreading awareness includes of many legal hoops and obstacles
- In-person outreach is more conducive to establishing trust and creating relationships,
- Reliable data is crucial to accurately show the effectiveness of your outreach.