

# UNDER-CONNECTED IN AMERICA:

Digital Equity Challenges for Lower-Income Families<sup>1</sup>

Most children (ages 6 to 13) growing up with parents who earn below the median U.S. household income have access to the internet and devices that connect to it.



## 94%

of surveyed families have some kind of internet connection, and most have at least one device that connects to the internet.



**81%** own either a desktop or laptop computer



**80%** have at least one smartphone

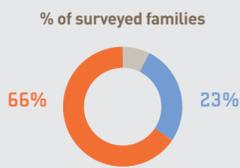


**67%** have at least a tablet

## But that's not the full story.

Many surveyed families are "under-connected," in that the quality or consistency of their access is lower than they would like it to be.

In the past 12 months, families with **home broadband access**<sup>1</sup> and with **mobile-only access**<sup>2</sup> report that:



Their service was cut off due to inability to pay



Too many people share the computer or mobile device to have enough time on it



Their internet service is too slow



They have exceeded their plan data limits



## Mobile-only access is a form of under-connectedness.

Parents and children who only have internet access via a smartphone or tablet go online less often and for a smaller set of activities, as compared with families who have broadband access and a computer at home.

### Parents with mobile-only access are less likely to go online to...

...look for information



...keep up with local news



...bank or pay bills



...shop



...apply for jobs and services



### Children (ages 6-13) with mobile-only access are less likely to...

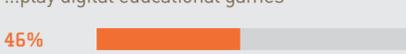
...use the internet or computers on a daily basis



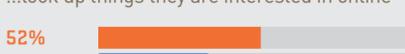
...do homework on the computer or internet\*



...play digital educational games



...look up things they are interested in online

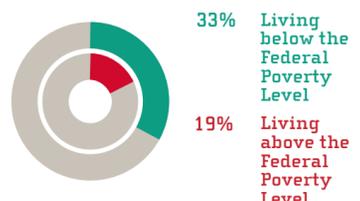


\*only asked of parents with children ages 10-13

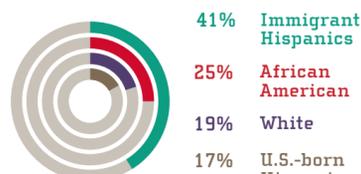
## Mobile-only access is associated with other family challenges.

Mobile-only families are more likely to be:

### Living below the Federal Poverty Level



### Immigrants



And since parents with computers use the internet for a broader range of tasks than those who are mobile-only, it is significant that more educated parents are more comfortable using computers, even among parents who have access to both devices:



**79%** College-educated parents are more confident using computers than a mobile device



**39%** compared with those with less than a high school education