

FACT SHEET:

ConnectHome: Coming Together to Ensure Digital Opportunity for All Americans

Today, the President will travel to Durant, OK, to announce [ConnectHome](#), a new initiative with communities, the private sector, and federal government to expand high speed broadband to more families across the country. The pilot program is launching in twenty-seven cities and one tribal nation will initially reach over 275,000 low-income households – and nearly 200,000 children – with the support they need to access the Internet at home. Internet Service Providers, non-profits and the private sector will offer broadband access, technical training, digital literacy programs, and devices for residents in assisted housing units.

[ConnectHome is the next step](#) in the President’s continued efforts to expand high speed broadband to all Americans and builds on his ConnectED initiative that is on track to connect 99 percent of K-12 students to high-speed Internet in their classrooms and libraries over the next five years. ConnectHome will help ensure that these students still have access to high-speed Internet once they are home.

Since the President took office, the private and public sectors have invested over \$260 billion into new broadband infrastructure, and three in four Americans now use broadband at home. Thanks to smart spectrum policies and world-leading technology, fast 4G wireless broadband is now available to over 98 percent of Americans — up from zero percent since 2009.

Despite this progress, a new [analysis released](#) today by the President’s Council of Economic Advisers (CEA) illustrates that some Americans are still unable to benefit from high-speed broadband, especially [America’s lower-income children](#). In fact, while nearly two-thirds of households in the lowest-income quintile own a computer, less than half have a home internet subscription. While many middle-class U.S. students go home to Internet access, allowing them to do research, write papers, and communicate digitally with their teachers and other students, too many lower-income children go unplugged every afternoon when school ends. This “homework gap” runs the risk of widening the achievement gap, denying hardworking students the benefit of a technology-enriched education.

President Obama is announcing ConnectHome to help close this gap and provide more Americans digital opportunity.

Specifically, ConnectHome is:

Building regional partnerships: The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), is collaborating with [EveryoneOn](#) and [US Ignite](#) who worked with private- and public-sector leaders to build local partnerships and gather commitments that will

increase access to the Internet for low-income Americans. These partnerships will bring broadband, technical assistance, and digital literacy training to students living in public and assisted housing across America. Mayors from Boston to Durham, and from Washington, DC to Seattle, have committed to reallocate local funds, leverage local programming, and use regulatory tools to support this initiative and the expansion of broadband access in low-income communities.

- Twenty-seven communities strong: The President and HUD Secretary Julián Castro announced today that HUD has selected the following twenty-seven cities and one tribal nation to participate in ConnectHome:

Albany, GA; Atlanta, GA; Baltimore, MD; Baton Rouge, LA; Boston, MA; Camden, NJ; Choctaw Nation, OK; Cleveland, OH; Denver, CO; Durham, NC; Fresno, CA; Kansas City, MO; Little Rock, AR; Los Angeles, CA; Macon, GA; Memphis, TN; Meriden, CT; Nashville, TN; New Orleans, LA; New York, NY; Newark, NJ; Philadelphia, PA; Rockford, IL; San Antonio, TX; Seattle, WA; Springfield, MA; Tampa, FL; and Washington, DC.

HUD selected these communities through a competitive process that took into account local commitment to expanding broadband opportunities; presence of place-based programs; and other factors to ensure all are well-positioned to deliver on ConnectHome.

- Helping deliver affordable connectivity: Eight nationwide Internet Service Providers have announced they are partnering with mayors, public housing authorities, non-profit groups, and for-profit entities to bridge the gap in digital access for students living in assisted housing units. For example:
 - In **Google Fiber** markets (including the ConnectHome cities of Atlanta, Durham, Kansas City, and Nashville), Google Fiber will offer \$0 monthly home Internet service to residents in select public housing authority properties and will partner with community organizations on computer labs and digital literacy programming to bridge the digital divide, especially for families with K-12 students.
 - In select communities of Choctaw Tribal Nation, **Cherokee Communications**, **Pine Telephone**, **Suddenlink Communications**, and **Vyve Broadband** will work together to ensure that over 425 of Choctaw's

public housing residents have access to low-cost, high-speed internet.

- In Seattle, and across its coverage footprint, **CenturyLink** will make broadband service available to HUD households, via its Internet Basics program, for \$9.95 per month for the first year and \$14.95 per month for the next four years.
- In Macon, Meriden, Baton Rouge, and New Orleans, **Cox Communications** will offer home Internet service for \$9.95 per month to eligible K-12 families residing in public housing authorities.
- As part of its existing ConnectED commitment, **Sprint** will work with HUD and the ConnectHome program to make its free wireless broadband Internet access service program available to eligible K-12 students living in public housing. This builds upon the free mobile broadband service previously committed to low-income students by AT&T and Verizon, for ConnectED.
- Making internet access more valuable: Skills training is essential to effectively taking advantage of all the Internet offers. HUD is collaborating with non-profits and the private sector to offer new technical training and digital literacy programs for residents in assisted housing units.
 - **Best Buy** will offer HUD residents in select ConnectHome demonstration project cities, including Choctaw Tribal Nation, the computer training and technical support needed to maximize the academic and economic impact of broadband access. Best Buy will also offer afterschool technical training, for free, to students participating in ConnectHome at Best Buy Teen Centers in Atlanta, Los Angeles, New York City, San Antonio, and Washington, DC.
 - The **James M. Cox Foundation**, a Cox Communications-affiliated Foundation, will make 1,500 discounted tablets, pre-loaded with educational software, available for \$30 to students and their families participating in ConnectHome, in Macon.

- **GitHub** will provide \$250,000 to support devices and digital literacy training to HUD residents in ConnectHome cities.

- **College Board**, in partnership with **Khan Academy**, will offer students and families in HUD housing in all ConnectHome communities free, online SAT practice resources, and contribute \$200,000 over three years to fund digital literacy and personalized college readiness and planning training in Cleveland, Los Angeles, New York, San Antonio, Washington, DC and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

- **80/20 Foundation** will provide \$100,000 to fund digital literacy training in San Antonio.

- **Age of Learning, Inc.** will make its ABCmouse.com online early learning curriculum available, for free, to families living in HUD housing in ConnectHome communities.

- The **Public Broadcasting Service (PBS)** will produce and distribute new educational, children's, and digital literacy content via participating local PBS stations tailored for ConnectHome participants.

- The **American Library Association** will lead a collaboration with local libraries in all the ConnectHome communities to deliver tailored, on-site digital literacy programming and resources to public housing residents.

- **Boys & Girls Clubs of America** will provide digital literacy training for HUD residents in ConnectHome communities that have a Boys & Girls Club, including in Durant, OK, part of Choctaw Tribal Nation.

- **Southeastern Oklahoma State University** and the **Durant Independent**

School District will provide digital literacy courses, for free, to HUD residents in Choctaw Tribal Nation.

- Ensuring HUD assisted housing integrates broadband: The **Department of Housing and Urban Development** is also taking major steps to provide communities across the nation tools to improve digital opportunity for its residents. Today, Secretary Castro announced that HUD will:
 - Begin rulemaking that **requires HUD-funded new residential construction and substantial rehabilitation projects to support broadband** internet connectivity.
 - Provide communities with **the flexibility to spend portions of their Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grants on local broadband initiatives** and associated connectivity enhancements, including approximately \$150 million dedicated to the current competition.
 - Begin rulemaking to **include broadband planning as a component of the Consolidated Planning process**, which serves as a framework for a community-wide dialogue to identify housing and municipal development priorities.
 - Supply **guidance and share best practices with HUD-funded grantees** on how to more effectively utilize HUD funding to support broadband connectivity.
 - Integrate **digital literacy programming and access to technology into related initiatives.**
- Supporting Promise Zones: ConnectHome is launching in Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, and includes Camden, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and San Antonio – all of which were designated Promise Zones, where the Administration works in partnership with local leaders in high-poverty communities to achieve their educational and economic goals. President Obama has also called on Congress to cut taxes on hiring and investment in Promise Zones to attract businesses and create jobs.