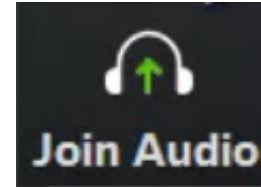# Bridging the Digital Divide to Increase Social Engagement

April 27, 2022

Webinar Instructions
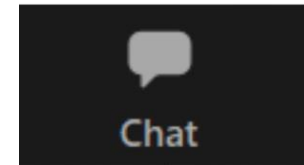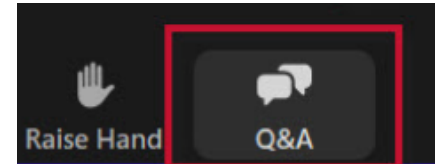
Audio Options
- Use your computer speakers, **OR** dial in using the phone number in your registration email.
- All participants are muted.

Questions and Answers (Q&A)
- You can submit questions for the panelists at any time during this presentation. On the Zoom module on the bottom of your screen, click the Q&A icon, type your question in the box and submit.

Chat Feature
- The Chat feature allows webinar attendees, the host, co-hosts and panelists to communicate for the duration of the webinar.

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Join Audio

Raise Hand   Q&A

Chat

CLICK HERE TO START CHAT

USAging

Accessibility and Support

- **Screen Reader Users: Reduce unwanted chatter**
  - Request speech on demand: Insert, Spacebar, "S"
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- **To get our attention if you need tech assistance:**
  - Raise or Lower Hand: Alt + Y

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- National effort to increase social engagement among older adults, people with disabilities and their caregivers
- Administered by USAging
- 18 Project Advisory Committee members: www.engagingolderadults.org/partnerships
- Funded by the U.S. Administration on Aging, which is part of the Administration for Community Living

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Presenters

Amanda Gimble
Director, Aging Connected
Senior Planet and Older Adults Technology
Services (OATS) from AARP

Anthony Butler
Consumer Education and Outreach Specialist,
Federal Communications Commission's
Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau's
Consumer Affairs and Outreach Division

Stacy Turner
Area Agency on Aging Director
Eastern Oklahoma Development District

Objective

Share how Aging Connected is connecting seniors to affordable high-speed internet and helping to reduce social isolation.

Agenda

- Introduce OATS and Aging Connected

- Discuss the digital divide and how we can narrow it

- Share details about free resources

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OATS | OLDER ADULTS TECHNOLOGY SERVICES
FROM AARP

Introduction to OATS and Aging Connected

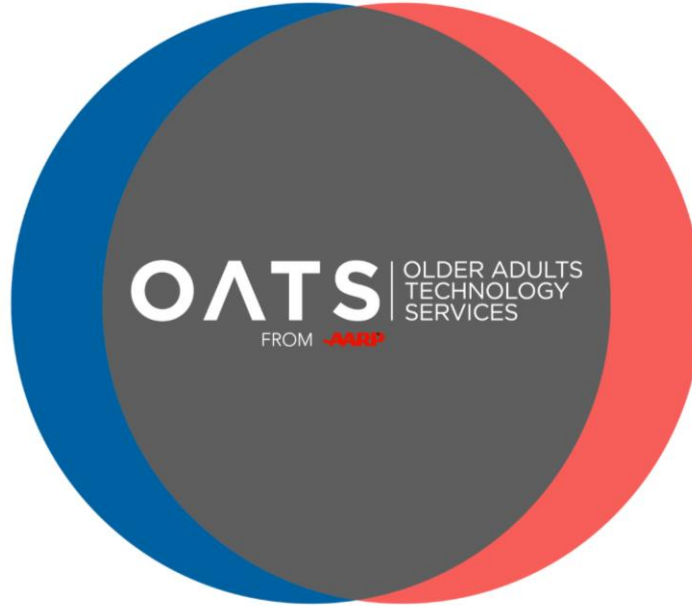# OATS: Designing the Future of Aging

OATS:

Realizing social impact through:

- Digital literacy and technology training

- Capacity building

- Outreach

AARP Affiliation

expertise | value | scale

Narrowing the Digital Divide

Sizing the Divide

- 22 million (42%) of older adults over 65 lack internet connections

- 39 million (35%) of older adults over 50 lack internet connections

Triggers and Obstacles

Triggers:
- Facebook, Zoom
- Play games
- Email
- Order food online
- Be part of the world

Obstacles
- Cost
- Fear

Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB)

- $3.2B pandemic-related subsidy program to help low-income households pay for broadband (Dec.'20)

- $50 for qualifying households/$75 for households in tribal lands

- Enrolled 9 million households; 40% older adults

- Alleviated cost burden of connected households

- Expanded outreach efforts needed

Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

Helps low-income households pay for internet

- $14.2bn program

- Increased numbers of eligible households

- Up to $30/month discount on Internet ($75 for Tribal Lands)

- One-time discount of up to $100 on a device

ACP - Subscribers

- 10.3 million (first three months)

- Adults:

  - over 50: 40% of subscribers

  - over 65: 15% of subscribers

- 2/3 of unconnected older adults are eligible for ACP

NYCHA Tablet Program Experience

- Reach socially isolated, low-income older adults living alone in public housing

- 10,000+ Internet-enabled Tablets

- Instructional materials in the box

- Outreach (direct mail & calls) to 10,000+ households

- 1,800 training program participants

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NYCHA Tablet Program Results

- Provided a lifeline to critical resources during pandemic

- Improved mental health, loneliness and social wellbeing

NYCHA Tablet Program Best Practices

- Live calls + robocalls

- Simple, quick start-up instructions

- Immediate outreach following distribution to recipients

- Prioritization of calls based on activity data

- Open lab + training programs

- Clearly articulated eligibility criteria

- Massive advance communications through all channels

Resources

Resources

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FROM AARP

+ **AGING**connected

Digital literacy & technology training

- Senior Planet Virtual & In-person Programs

- Tech-tip videos

- National Technology Call Center Hotline
  888-713-3495

Capacity building

- Licensing: Senior Planet programs & Affordable Connectivity Program lecture and workshop

Outreach

- Tele-town Halls (ACP)

- Partnerships

- Aging Connected National Call Center Hotline:
  877-745-1930

- Agingconnected.org/acp/

- ACP Video (coming soon)

- Digital Inclusion Report

- Report on Impact of connectivity and training on older adults (coming soon)

Thank you

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agingconnected.org

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Affordable Connectivity Program

What is the benefit?

Who is eligible?

How can households apply?

Agenda

- The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) – Program Description and Design Overview

- Who is eligible for the ACP?

- Consumer Protections Within the Program

- Be A Local Outreach Partner

- Contacts and References

Ask Questions!

"A prudent question is one-half of wisdom." -- Francis Bacon

What is the Benefit?

The Affordable Connectivity Program is a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Program that provides a discount on monthly broadband bills for qualifying low-income households. Eligible households can receive:

- Up to $30/month discount for broadband service and associated equipment rentals;

- Up to $75/month discount for households on Tribal lands, and;

- A one-time discount for $100 for a laptop, desktop, or tablet purchased through a participating provider. Participating consumers pay a $10 to $50 co-pay

Affordable Connectivity Program
Helping Households Connect

A Household is Eligible if:

Household income is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, or

If a member of the household meets at least *one* of the criteria below:

- Participates in certain assistance programs, such as SNAP, Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, SSI, WIC, or Lifeline;

- Participates in Tribal specific programs, such as Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, Tribal TANF, or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations;

- Participates in the National School Lunch Program or the School Breakfast Program (Including the Community Eligibility Provision);

- Received a Pell Grant in the current award year;

- Receives Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit; or

- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating provider's existing low-income program.

Two Steps to Enroll

1. Go to ACPBenefit.org to apply, or print out a mail-in application; and

2. Contact your preferred participating provider to select a plan and have the discount applied to your bill.

Some providers may have an alternative application that they will ask you to complete.

Eligible households must **both apply for the program and contact a participating provider to select a service plan.**

How Does the ACP Protect Consumers?

The rules protect Affordable Connectivity Program recipients by:

- Empowering consumers to choose the service plan that best meets their needs (including a plan they may already be on);
- Ensuring consumers have access to supported broadband services regardless of their credit status;
- Prohibiting providers from excluding consumers with past due balances or prior debt from enrolling in the program;
- Preventing consumers from being forced into more expensive or lower quality plans in order to receive the ACP benefit;
- Reducing the potential for bill shock or other financial harms;
- Allowing ACP recipients to switch providers or broadband service offerings; and
- Providing a dedicated FCC process for ACP complaints.

Become an Outreach Partner

- The FCC is mobilizing people and organizations to help share important consumer information about the new Affordable Connectivity Program.

- **Request A Speaker:** Send a speaker request to ACPspeakers@fcc.gov.

- **Become A Partner:** Send an email to outreach@fcc.gov.

Affordable Connectivity Program
Helping Households Connect

ACP Outreach Toolkit

<u>Social</u>	<u>Printables</u>	<u>Videos and PSAs</u>
Logos	Fact Sheet	ASL Video
Social Media Images	Flyer	Overview Video
Draft Posts	9" x 5" Info Card	Audio PSAs
Newsletter Insert	¼ Page Handout	
Draft Press Release	Poster/Infographic	

Affordable Connectivity Program
Helping Households Connect

Resources

FCC's ACP Consumer Hub: www.fcc.gov/ACP

Help Line: Call the ACP Support Center at (877) 384-2575 or send an email to ACPSupport@usac.org

Consumer FAQ: https://www.fcc.gov/affordable-connectivity-program-consumer-faq

Toolkit: https://www.fcc.gov/acp-consumer-outreach-toolkit

Accessibility: FCC504@fcc.gov

To apply: www.ACPBenefit.org

Contact: ACPinfo@fcc.gov

CREATING BROADBAND EVENTS FOR OLDER ADULTS

➤ What We Did

➤ What Happened Next

➤ What We Learned Along The Way

➤ What We Would Do The Same

➤ What We Would Do Differently

EODD *Regional Solutions*

STACY TURNER, DIRECTOR

EASTERN OKLAHOMA DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT AREA AGENCY ON AGING

WHAT WE DID

- Proposal to SUoA for:
  - Programmatic
    - Proposed Events as Outreach E&T
    - Activity Set-Up in database to reflect correct funding stream/activity
  - Fiscal
    - Verify CARES-B – pay admin fee (60+)
    - Consumable Supplies – pay for tablet (60+)
- Shared Info Collected with all AAAs through Oklahoma Association of Area Agencies on Aging (O4A)

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- Partnered with Lifeline providers to set up events through approved carrier (limited in Oklahoma)
  - AAA Venues for Events:
    - ✓ Annual Title III In-Service Training (May)
    - ✓ Council on Aging (May)
    - ✓ Nutrition Sites in 5 of 7 EODD Counties (June)
- Eligibility & documentation flyer
- How I&A made announcements:
  - Resource meeting email lists
  - Facebook posts beginning 3 weeks prior to event
  - Quarterly Newsletter
  - Public Service Announcements (PSA) in local newspapers where events were scheduled

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT

- OUTREACH at events:
  - Presentations at each re: T3 services
  - Collected T3 Intakes for all 60+
  - Made Appropriate Referrals if needed
  - Distributed all T3 program brochures
  - Distributed EODD Resource Directories
  - Counted as E&T Presentation units and met Management Plan goal/objective

- CARRIER at events:
  - Intake/Eligibility Info Verified Online
  - Wait for Online Approval
  - Calls to Customer Service
  - Provided Handouts
    - Carrier's flyer announcing program
    - Step-by-step instructions on how to use the tablet
    - Technical Assistance on-site

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WHAT WE LEARNED ALONG THE WAY

- About Older Adults 60+:
  - eager to have connectivity!
  - eager to learn how to use technology!
  - quick learners and willing to try!

- About the Events:
  - Scheduled too close together
  - Needed more AAA staff to assist

- About the Carrier:
  - Internet connection was overloaded
  - Needed more on-site staff for verification, set-up, technical assistance
  - Needed more Customer Service staff at home office to field calls
  - Better prepared as events went along
  - Able to better respond at later events
  - Connectivity online improved and approvals were faster

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WHAT WE WOULD DO THE SAME

- OFFER THE SERVICE! (Older Adults LOVED it!)

- HOLD THE EVENTS!

- Partner with Lifeline providers

- Count all the units possible
  - Outreach (initial contact when applicable)
  - Outreach E&T
  - Management Plan Goals/Objectives

- Use social media, PSAs, email lists to announce events

- Include event info in all I&A, Outreach & Caregiver presentations

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WHAT WE WOULD DO DIFFERENTLY

- Be sure the carrier was prepared for events and demand we saw

- Spread the events out more
  - Give carrier time to restock, reevaluate
  - Bigger draw – word of mouth

- Coordinate for Intergenerational Interaction
  - HS/Vo-Tech students to assist
    - How to use tablet/phone
    - Download apps, use FB, etc.

- Coordinate with Long-Term Care Facilities, wireless carriers, and residents in need of social connection to provide them tools to stay connected

EODD *Regional Solutions*

HOW TO CONTACT US:

Stacy Turner, Director
EODD Area Agency on Aging

sturner@eoddok.org

918-682-7891

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engAGED Resources

- Social Engagement Innovations Hub
- Toolkits and template materials
- Videos
- Consumer brochures
- Newsletter and blog
- Resources and research links
- Information on upcoming events

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Connect With Us!

- www.engagingolderadults.org
- Facebook: @engAGEDCenter
- Twitter: @engAGEDCenter
- info@engagingolderadults.org

Commit to Connect

- ACL campaign working to combat social isolation through:
  - Network of champions
  - Connection to resources
  - Establishment of partnerships
  - Sharing of successful initiatives

https://committoconnect.org/

Thank You!

- Please complete the survey which will be displayed in your browser after Zoom closes. There is also a brief 3-month survey.

- The recording will be available on www.engagingolderadults.org.

- Thank you for attending today's webinar!