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the task of the previous decade,” said Rideout. “Getting wired at home is the task of the current decade.”

While low-income families may appear connected, they come across obstacles that undermine access to information. For the survey, 1,191 parents with children ages 6 to 13, considered lower-income or “low- and moderate-income families,” were asked questions about how they use technology.

Families don't sign up for discounted services

Schools can inform families about discounted services

The researchers found that only 6 percent of families with incomes that qualify for discounted Internet services had ever signed up for such programs. A combination of lack of services provided, hurdles in qualifying for discounts (such as having no missed payments), and a lack of awareness of discount programs often stood in the way. Schools can have a role in educating families about discounted Internet programs, said Vikki Katz, co-author of the report .

“We found some really interesting differences between what happens when the school focuses on the relationship and uses tech to expand the relationship, and some districts that put the technology first,” Katz said. School districts that had stronger relationships with families were able to better inform families about discount programs.

Of the parents surveyed, 33 percent of those living below poverty level and 23 percent of those living below median-income level rely on mobile-only Internet access. And keeping their mobile devices connected is a struggle, as 24 percent of that group had their service cut off because of payment issues. Of those surveyed who do have home Internet, 20 percent have had their Internet cut off due to