Library Hotspot Lending Extends Opportunity for All

From research for term papers to completing the GED online, an internet connection powers educational opportunity. Yet one in five U.S. households lack home broadband access, creating a learning gap for millions of people.

- 20% of US adults lack access to home broadband internet services
- 45% of US adults with a high school education or less lack access to home broadband
- 23M Number of households that could lose their connections as the Affordable Connectivity Program winds down

America’s public libraries have long worked to bridge digital divides with more than 17,000 technology-enabled and convenient locations with trusted staff to guide and connect people with needed resources and skills.

More recently, libraries are extending their digital reach with technology outreach and device lending.

| % U.S. Public Libraries that report internet hotspots for patron use offsite |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2023                    | 2020                    |
| 46.9%                   | 32.6%                   |

Urban 69.4% Rural 39.2% Urban 51.8% Rural 25.5%

*Source: Public Library Association: ala.org/pla/data/plasurveys

Hotspot lending programs power learning

- Supports commuter students who may not have access to home internet.
- Extends learning opportunities into nights and weekends when libraries and schools aren’t open.
- Encourages online learning by granting access to students from all backgrounds with tools.
- Fosters job training, college and career readiness, and digital literacy and equity for adult learners and jobseekers.

“Hotspot lending programs give families and individuals flexibility in using resources for education, work, and telehealth on their schedule.”

Lauren Abner
State E-rate Coordinator, Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives

American Library Association
Showcasing Libraries & Library Hotspot Lending Programs
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Hotspot lending provides flexibility to individuals who may lack home internet or who may not have sufficient access for the needs of the household.