

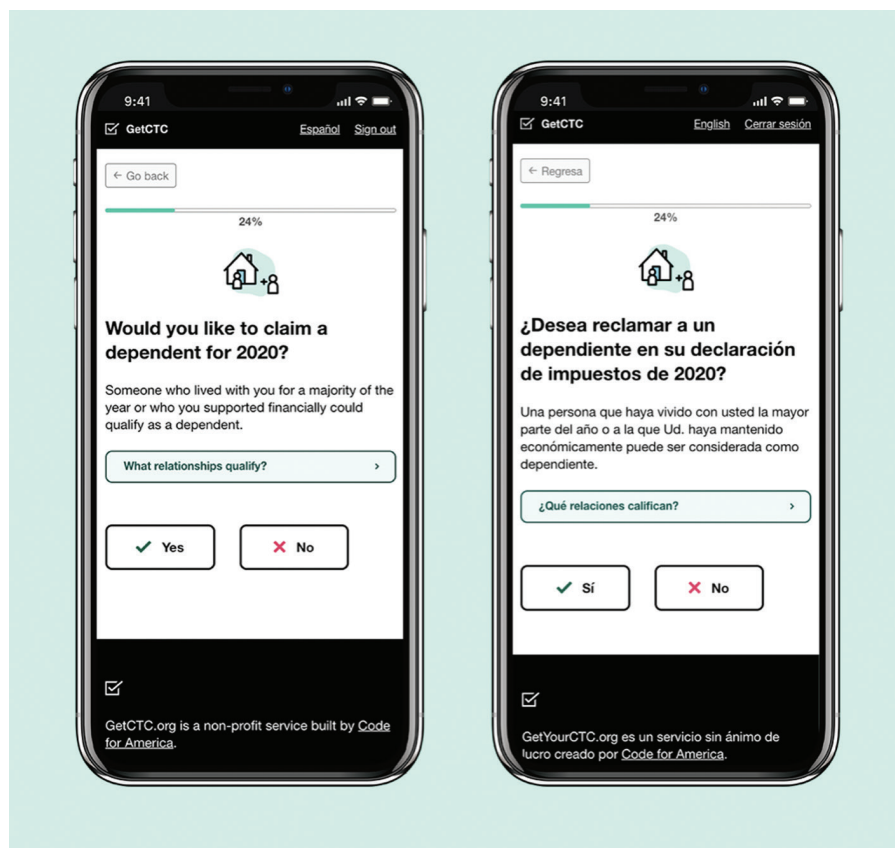
Child Tax Credit as a Prevention Strategy: Spotlight on Tech Tools Boosting the CTC's Reach

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 expanded the Child Tax Credit (CTC) to put more money in the pockets of parents and caregivers in the form of monthly payments until December 2021. The largest Child Tax Credit ever, this expanded CTC is primed to advance prevention strategies and support upstream approaches to achieving better health and well-being.

Advance CTC payments are already demonstrating positive effects on social determinants such as improved nutrition and decreased economic hardship, according to new Census data from the Household Pulse Survey. Food insufficiency and financial hardship immediately dropped after families received monthly disbursements, which overwhelmingly went to addressing unmet basic needs like putting food on the table, according to the same data.

Meanwhile, recent Urban Institute analyses estimate the expanded CTC could reduce child poverty by more than 40 percent. To realize this impact, it is essential that the CTC reach eligible individuals who do not normally file income taxes and therefore may not automatically be receiving the credit. Unfortunately, Treasury data from June 2021 reveal at least 2.3 million families could be missing out. Human services agencies serve many of these families every day and are well positioned to deploy resources on the ground to assist eligible individuals.

Technology-enabled, data-informed tools and resources are being rapidly developed to aid in this effort. To show what's possible and inspire continued



Screenshot of the GetCTC interface for families to file for child tax credit payment.

innovation, we feature two examples of new tools and highlight two instances of how health and human services agencies are using technology in creative ways to identify potentially eligible households and supporting families in filing for the credit.

Finding families most at risk of missing out on CTC

Developed by the Urban Institute-Brookings Institution Tax Policy Center, a map tool (<https://tpc-eitc-tool>

urban.org/eitc-population) visualizes where children are at risk of missing out on CTC. Free and available for public use, the easy-to-use tool allows users to zoom into zip-code-level views, and even download the full dataset for all states.

Helping families file for CTC

Launched in collaboration with the White House, U.S. Department

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of Treasury, the IRS, and Code for America, *getCTC.org* is a resource to help families who may qualify for the CTC. The tool is designed specifically for families who have not recently, or ever, filed taxes. With questions presented in plain language, the human-centered tool guides families through the filing process. Required information and documents are presented up front so users understand what is needed before starting. The tool also features a resource page for navigators to help families identify which forms they need, file a simplified tax return, update their data, or start the process of filing a full tax return.

State and Local Spotlights

State and local jurisdictions are using technology to connect with potentially eligible families by leveraging physical and digital spaces where these families already gather,

such as online screening portals and local food banks.

Leveraging existing eligibility screening tools: New York City


New York City leverages their online public screening tool, Access NYC (<https://access.nyc.gov/programs/child-tax-credit-ctc/#how-to-apply>), an existing resource that families already use to apply for benefits, to provide information on the child tax credit. By providing an easy-to-navigate, question-by-question guide, families can learn how the CTC works, determine eligibility with four simple questions, understand what is needed to include in their filing, and how to apply with a direct link to the filing site.

Partnering with Community Organizations: Colorado

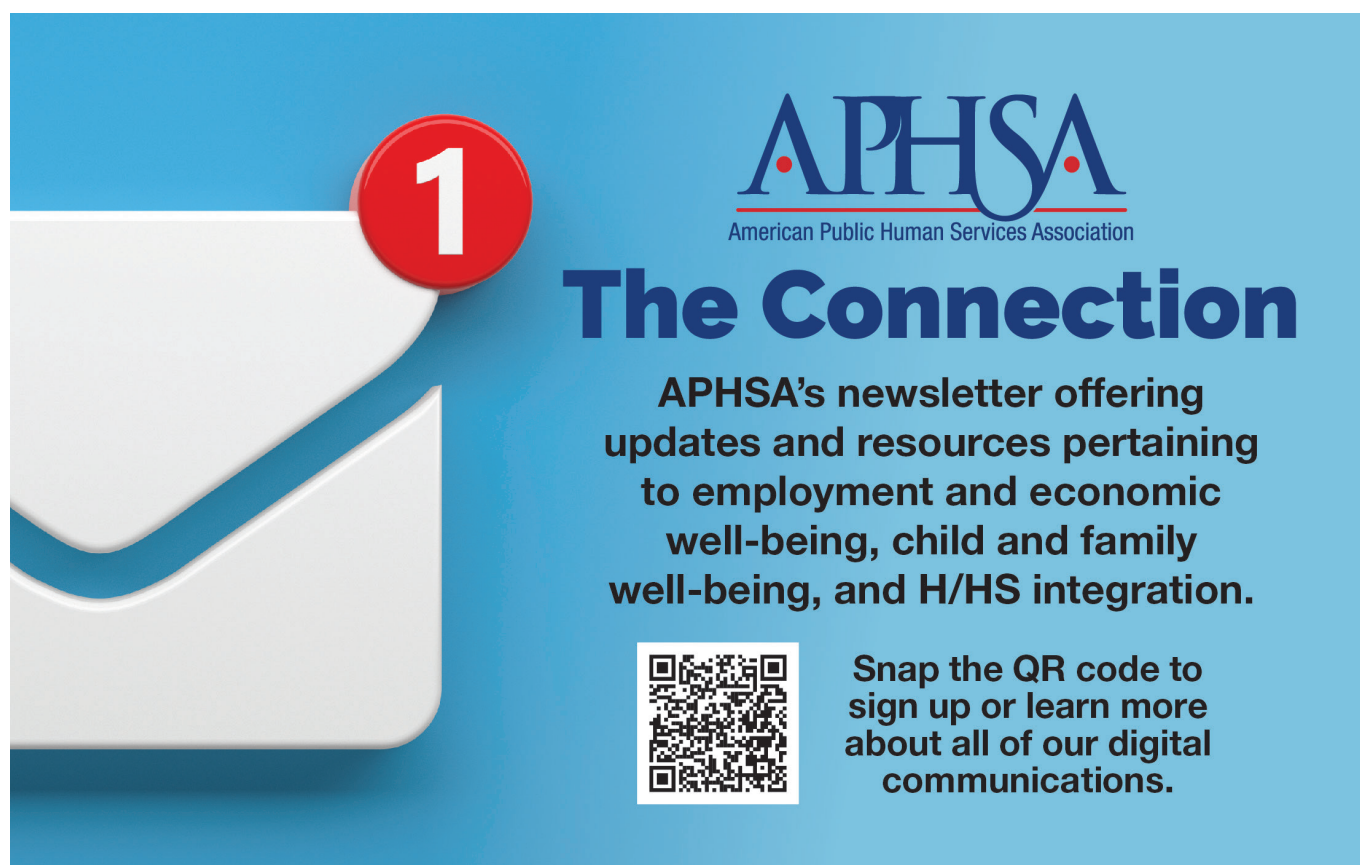
The State of Colorado is partnering with local food banks in their outreach efforts. Flyers containing QR codes,

which provide information about CTC in English and Spanish, are stapled to pantry boxes. In addition to providing guidance on how to apply, Colorado's information-sharing approaches also address concerns about how immigration status can affect eligibility and whether receiving the tax credit will reduce other government benefits.

A Call to Action

If your state or locality is leaning into innovative approaches to targeting CTC outreach and facilitating enrollment for eligible families using data and technology, the APHSA team would like to hear from you. Please send promising practices, ideas, and questions to ctc@aphsa.org. 

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The graphic features a large white envelope icon on the left with a red circle containing the number '1' on its top flap. To the right of the envelope is the APHSA logo, which consists of the letters 'APHSA' in a large, blue, serif font, with a red dot above the 'A' and 'S'. Below the logo is the text 'American Public Human Services Association' in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font. Below the logo and text is the title 'The Connection' in a large, bold, blue, sans-serif font. Underneath the title is a paragraph of text: 'APHSA's newsletter offering updates and resources pertaining to employment and economic well-being, child and family well-being, and H/HS integration.' Below this text is a QR code. To the right of the QR code is a paragraph of text: 'Snap the QR code to sign up or learn more about all of our digital communications.'

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APHSA
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The Connection

APHSA's newsletter offering updates and resources pertaining to employment and economic well-being, child and family well-being, and H/HS integration.



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