



## About WE Connect

Established by California First Lady Maria Shriver in 2005, the WE Connect campaign is a public/private partnership designed to help the nation's working families become more financially secure by connecting them to important programs and resources. Many of these programs, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Women, Infant and Children's Program (WIC), are available to individuals and families, but are not fully taken advantage of. This nationwide campaign connects those eligible with the information and tools they need to access these valuable resources, empowering them to live their dreams.

During this challenging economic downturn, WE Connect is bringing together community organizations and businesses, government agencies and state leaders, congregations and schools as partners in responding to the needs for the millions of individuals and families who are struggling to make ends meet.

WE Connect offers everyone an opportunity to become part of the solution by becoming a 'Connector,' someone that helps to spread the word about important resources and volunteer opportunities to serve in their communities.

### Campaign Elements

As one of the most innovative nationwide efforts promoting public and private programs for low-income individuals, WE Connect uses all available channels to reach out to the millions eligible families in the United States who currently are not claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit while connecting them with other key programs and services. The campaign partners with community organizations, statewide programs and major corporations to reach working families where they shop, eat, work, live and learn.

To achieve this, the WE Connect campaign includes the following components:

#### [www.WEconnect.net](http://www.WEconnect.net)

Our website is a one-stop-shop connecting the nation's individuals and families to programs and services for which they may be eligible. The site now houses an all-inclusive nationwide resource map, the first of its kind in the country, which connects visitors to locations within their county which offer free tax assistance, job fairs and other valuable events. The campaign also highlights programs such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Federal Child Tax Credit (CTC), food stamp programs, discounted utilities, car insurance and low-income health care programs.

#### [WEb Connector](#)

The WEb Connector, our exclusive online tool developed by our partner- the Intuit Financial Freedom Foundation- for this campaign, helps working families determine exactly which Federal programs they may be eligible for and how to apply - all with the click of a mouse. This tool can be accessed through the WE Connect website from the convenience of their home, at the WE Connect community events and through our partnering community-based organizations across the nation.



## WE Connect Supplement

Through a partnership with La Opinion, the nation's largest Spanish-speaking newspaper in the country, WE Connect has developed a 24-page, full color, bi-lingual supplement that has been distributed to nearly 26 million individuals and families in need. The supplement contains pertinent information on all of the programs and services that the campaign covers and highlights success stories of those who have benefited from the resources provided.

## WE Connect Events

WE Connect Events take place in partnership with a network of partners providing free tax preparation for eligible working families and individuals with one-on-one assistance. Families can learn about and apply for key services and programs while having the opportunity to have their taxes prepared for free.

## WE Connect Neighborhood Center

With our partners, WE Connect has opened permanent WE Connect Neighborhood Centers that serve millions more, helping to add to the savings already realized by the nation's struggling families. These centers will provide a more holistic approach to helping and empowering families, giving them access to computers and volunteers who will help them navigate the WE Connect website and WEb Connector tool to learn about programs they may be eligible for. The Centers provide year-round support to families who need it most and an opportunity for WE Connect to become a more permanent part of our communities.

## WE Connect Sunday

WE Connect Sunday, an annual event, allows WE Connect to reach out to congregations as a unique way of connecting families to information that could significantly improve their lives. WE Connect is able to spread the word to over 3,000 places of worship reaching millions through bulletin inserts and the distribution of our bilingual supplements - all free of charge. Pastors, priests, rabbis and other religious leaders are also encouraged to include WE Connect's message in their sermons, reaching out on a more personal level to their worshipers.

## Connecting Working Families in the Workplace

WE Connect reaches out to working families through their workplace by providing valuable information to a network of small businesses, business associations, unions and small business development centers. Our goal is to engage small business owners in educating their employees about important resources that may help them. Materials available include "Connector" tool kits, workplace posters, brochures and email blasts.



## About the Programs

### Money

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Women, Infant and Children's Program (WIC) help working families put money in their pocket and build their savings. Applying for the EITC alone can mean anywhere from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars. Further, discounted utility programs can help working families save on their monthly bills. Finally, housing resources help families deal with foreclosure issues and learn about ways they can keep their home.

### Opportunity

Job resources and educational tools provide working families with the best opportunities to get ahead. The US Department of Labor and Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) are just some of the most helpful resources for information about job training opportunities and paying for a better education.

### Dreams

WE Connect provides the programs and services that can help families get ahead and reach their dreams. The success stories of working families touched by these programs and this campaign are an essential part of the WE Connect efforts and working families are encouraged to share their story.

## Become a Connector

WE can do better together. Connecting working families to resources that matter is something anyone can do. WE Connect is an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors. Those who want to get involved can join Maria and so many others who are helping to get word out by becoming a Connector. To learn more about becoming a Connector through service opportunities, visit [www.WEconnect.net](http://www.WEconnect.net).

## About the WE Connect Partners

The WE Connect campaign partners with community organizations, statewide programs, unions, small businesses and major corporations to connect with working families. WE Connect partners include: Intuit Financial Freedom Foundation, The Governor and First Lady's Conference on Women, La Opinión, Legal Aid Society, AmeriCorps, United Way, ClearChannel, SEIU, AFSCME, Save the Children, AT&T, Visa, Inc., and Wal-Mart, among thousands more.

## For More Information

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