

Go To College? Get a Job? A Parent's Influence on Their Student

Young adults age 18–25 strongly believe in the value of higher education. According to a recent survey, this is true for most African-Americans, Asian-American, Hispanic/Latino, and white young people. They feel that a college education will help them:

- Gain respect,
- Prepare for the real world,
- Get a job,
- Decrease their need to depend on a social support program, and
- Live fuller and happier lives.

In fact, studies do show graduates from a 4-year program earn more money and have less unemployment.

Most of the young adults in the Public Agenda survey said that their parents had a big influence on their decision to attend college. About 60% said their parents *strongly expected* them to go to college. Also, most had a teacher, coach or mentor who took an interest in them and encouraged them to go to college.

Parents and interested adults have a deep effect on their children and the decisions they make.

About 1 in 3 young Americans does not choose to go onto any higher education. Most said that college was not for them. Instead, they were anxious to find work and make money.



About 50% of the African-American and Hispanic youth believed lack of money kept one from going to college. Asian-American and white students believed that most people who were qualified to attend college could find a way to pay for it.

College is not for everyone.

Compared to young people with a 2 or 4 year degree, however, those without a degree were:

- Less happy in their work,
- Took a job without thinking about their future.

Lack of parental encouragement seemed to play a role in why young people chose to work rather than attend college. Many that did not attend college said that their parents were not their major source of guidance.

Large numbers of the young adults surveyed believed that their high school teachers and classes could have done more to prepare them for college. They also said they could have studied harder while in school. Many wanted more counselors in their high schools. About half of the kids said their counselors usually tried to get to know them. The other half felt like “just another face in the crowd.”

Students in high school need guidance. They hope for a bright future. Adults play an important role in the planning of a child's future. Parents, however, *are a child's number one source of influence, support, hope and encouragement.*

 For more information log onto www.publicagenda.org

Call the Parent Help Line. We listen. We can find you help.

1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. , 7 days a week.