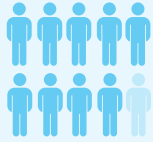




How America Plans for College 2026

In partnership with Ipsos

The Big Picture: Families believe in the value of higher education.



90% view higher education as an investment¹

44% of families are already planning for graduate school



19% plan to attend, but undecided

95% of students plan to pursue education after high school

14% career training or alternative program

62% are aiming for a 2- or 4-year college



73% would rather borrow than not attend

Families are planning earlier and saving more.

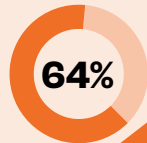


85% have taken steps to plan for higher education: (up from **77%** in 2020)

46% researched schools

33% met with a high school/college career counselor

30% visited a college campus



64% have a plan to pay for school

up from **54%** in 2020



60% of families considering higher ed have savings



Average savings: **\$42,307**, up from **\$26,266** in 2020

Where Families Still Need Support:

Planning gaps and misconceptions about paying for higher education persist

Fewer than **4 in 10** families discuss long-term outcomes:

38% salaries in the field of interest

28% career placement

28% earnings vs. cost of education

48%

believe scholarships are limited to students with exceptional grades or abilities

37%

understand that families typically pay less than the advertised sticker price

How Sallie™ Supports Students and Families

Explore tools and resources to help families plan, pay, and navigate the college journey:

[Scout™ College Search](#)

- Compare colleges and costs

[Scholly® Scholarships](#)

- Search for scholarships

[FAFSA® Guide](#)

- Get step-by-step FAFSA® guidance

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