

California is Failing Adult Learners; Harming Today's and Future Workforce



**Affordable and Flexible 100% Online College Programs Are Key to Opening the Door to Higher Education for Former Foster Youth
Nearly One of Every Two California Former Foster Youth Plans to Pursue Higher Education in the Near Future**

California is last in the nation for adults in need of education... We Can Do Better

- California ranks last in the nation with over half of adults (57%) needing more adult education according to a 2018-2019 Strada-Gallup Education Consumer Survey of adults 18-65 with less than an associate degree and who were not currently enrolled in college courses.
- California faces a shortfall of over two million degrees and certificates to meet employers' needs and promote economic mobility for its residents. [Source](#)
- 65% of Californian former foster system adult learners have some college, but no degree – while over a third of California adult learners wanted to pursue adult education, but never got the chance.

California former foster youth are seeking higher educational opportunities

- Nearly half (49%) of former foster youth have only completed their first two semesters of post-secondary education according to a 2018 CalYOUTH study. [Source](#)
- Nearly one of every two (47%) California former foster youth who do not have a college degree are likely to pursue adult education in the near future.*
- 80% of former foster youth surveyed said they are interested in pursuing higher education because it will lead to a better job and higher income.*
- More than half (62%) of former foster youth surveyed who were negatively impacted by the pandemic are considering going back to college or some kind of adult career education (higher compared to other adult learners).*

Increased access to financial aid for online learning will help more former foster youth return or enroll in a college program.

- The large majority (64%) of former foster youth surveyed would be interested in some kind of college or adult career education if barriers such as affordability and flexibility were removed.*
- 81% of former foster youth surveyed stated that financial aid or scholarships would help with the costs of education and 80% needs an affordable college program due to tight budgets.*
- 63% of former foster youth face food insecurities on college campuses, highlighting the need for more affordable options. [Source](#)

Increased access to flexible online courses is key to helping more former foster youth return or enroll in a college program.

- The single most common reason cited for having stopped pursuing higher education was difficulty balancing studies and work at the same time for adults ages 25 to 64 with some college background but no degree. [Source](#)
- 70% of former foster youth surveyed said that a flexible course schedule to fit into their own schedules is a priority making it easier to attend a college program.*
- 67% of former foster youth are likely to enroll into a 100% online college program.*

Join CAL Network: Support Creating New Higher Educational Opportunities for Parents & California Adult Learners

CAL Network (California Adult Learners Network) is a coalition advocating for a new state grant program for California adult learners who need financial support and the flexibility of online courses to attain higher education for more lucrative and rewarding careers while strengthening California's skilled workforce. For more information, go to www.CAL-Network.com.

* Heart+Mind Strategies completed n=1065 interviews with a representative sample of Californians with some or no college matching age, gender, and ethnicity of the US Census for California. Additional oversample interviews were conducted with key groups, including: veterans, single mothers/fathers, foster children, rural residents, low-income rural residents, Asians, 1st and 2nd generation immigrants. Respondents participated via an online survey conducted June 15 to July 20, 2021.