How America Pays for College 2017: A national study by Sallie Mae and Ipsos

Terms:

Now in its 10th year, “How America Pays for College,” the national study by Sallie Mae and Ipsos, examines how families view college, how much they spent on higher education, and the sources they used to pay for it. The 2017 edition reports the results of 1,600 telephone interviews Ipsos conducted in March and April 2017 of 800 parents of undergraduate students and 800 undergraduate students between the ages of 18 and 24.

“How America Pays for College 2017” found that students and parents shared paying-for-college responsibilities equally in academic year 2016-17, with each contributing about one-third of the expense, and scholarships and grants covering most of the rest. The average amount families spent on college in 2016-17 was about the same as in 2015-16 ($23,757 vs. $23,688).

Scholarships and grants covered the largest share of college expenses in the report’s 10-year history, and parents funded the second-largest share.

Students and parents equally share responsibility for paying college costs

Scholarships and grants cover the largest share in a decade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Scholarships &amp; grants</th>
<th>Parent income &amp; savings</th>
<th>Relatives &amp; friends</th>
<th>Student income &amp; savings</th>
<th>Parent borrowing</th>
<th>Student borrowing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost all families — 98 percent — took proactive measures to reduce college costs, and fewer than half (42 percent) borrowed to pay for college.

While most families said they always expected their child to attend college, only four in 10 said they have a plan to pay for it. When asked if paying more for college equals a better education, 55 percent of families said paying more always or sometimes yields better quality, while 45 percent said cost has no relationship to quality.

Families want their children to go to college, but they’re divided about cost vs quality

A regional view revealed that families across the U.S. approach paying for college differently, depending on where they live.
Amounts spent and attitudes vary across the country

The average amount families spent on college in 2016-17:
- West: $19,181
- Midwest: $21,577
- Northeast: $35,431
- South: $20,953

Most likely to attend 4-year private colleges:
- Midwest

Most likely to attend college in their home state:
- South

Read the full report for a complete look at the 2017 findings.

Don’t miss the How America Pays for College 2017 infographic

A snapshot of how American families are making college happen

View infographic

Language: English

Source URL: https://news.sallie Mae.com/research-tools/america-pays-2017