

# Education News And Notes

## Never Too Old To Graduate

(NAPSA)—Helping adult college students complete their degrees could begin with asking their birth date.

Age influences how adults manage the stress of obtaining a bachelor's degree, according to a new report by Apollo Research Institute. Different support systems—from students' workplaces, their personal circle or the school they attend—also had varying effects on their decision to stay enrolled.

The stakes for reducing the dropout rate are high. Over half of all adults in four-year bachelor's degree programs quit before graduating. With 8 million U.S. adults pursuing higher degrees—a number projected to rise 20 percent by 2018—they're today's fastest-growing category of collegians.

“Higher education is critical to helping workers gain the skills they need to stay employable over a long career,” says Dr. Tracey Wilen-Daugenti, vice president and managing director of Apollo Research Institute. Up to 3.7 million jobs may go unfilled because U.S. workers lack the required education and skills.

More than 4,400 adult students participated in the Apollo Research Institute study to identify college-related stress factors that could interfere with graduating. Among the most common challenges that students face are anxiety and stress over the expense of college, not spending enough time with friends or loved ones, and worrying about whether they are smart enough to complete the coursework.

Students from different age groups—Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials—had distinct reactions to school-related stressors. After cost—a chief worry for all three groups—Baby



**Understanding how adult students cope with academic stress can help them reach their education and career goals.**

Boomers' second-highest cause of stress was worrying about their intellectual ability to do coursework, while for Gen Xers and Millennials, it was missing out on time with friends or family. Millennials were also most likely to worry that college-related stressors would lead them to drop out.

Support from spouses or significant others, faculty members and academic departments is most effective in convincing adults to finish school. By contrast, workplaces were graded less effective in supporting adult learners. “Because 63 percent of adult students work while enrolled, employers can play an important role in helping employees to map their educational goals to their career advancement,” adds Dr. Wilen-Daugenti.

Adults of all ages can cope with college-related stress by making a long-term financial plan, building a personal support network, and using academic resources, such as writing labs and online tutorials, to fill learning gaps. Among the rewards: Graduates can expect higher lifetime earnings and greater career options than nongraduates.

Learn more at [www.apolloresearchinstitute.org](http://www.apolloresearchinstitute.org).