

Education + Training Decision Making

Factors that impact Hoosiers' decisions to pursue education and training after high school.



INDIANA COMMISSION *for*
HIGHER EDUCATION

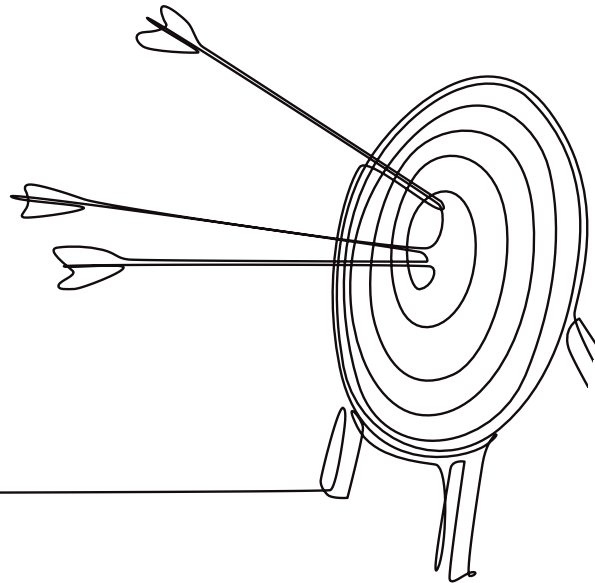




53%

Areas Explored

Across Audiences, Race/Ethnicity,
Income and more



Importance of Training
and Education

Motivations to Enroll
in Training and
Education

Priorities for
Messages that
Motivate

Barriers that Stand
in the Way

Information Needed
to Solve Barriers

Determining Factors
for Choosing Training +
Education

Mentoring + Advising

Beliefs About Cost and Aid

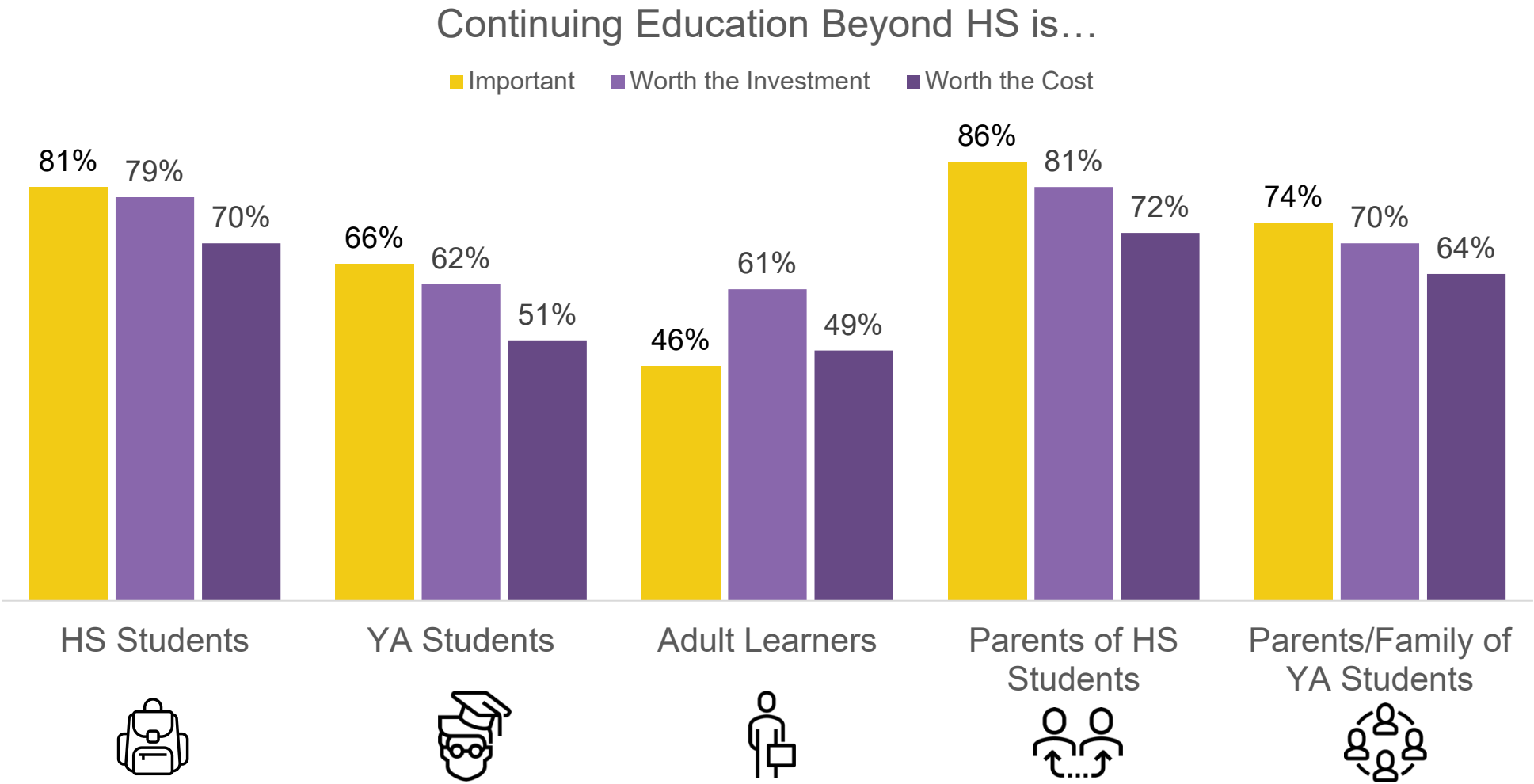
Awareness and Reaction to
CHE Programs + Initiatives

Role of Influencers

Message Preference
+ Markup

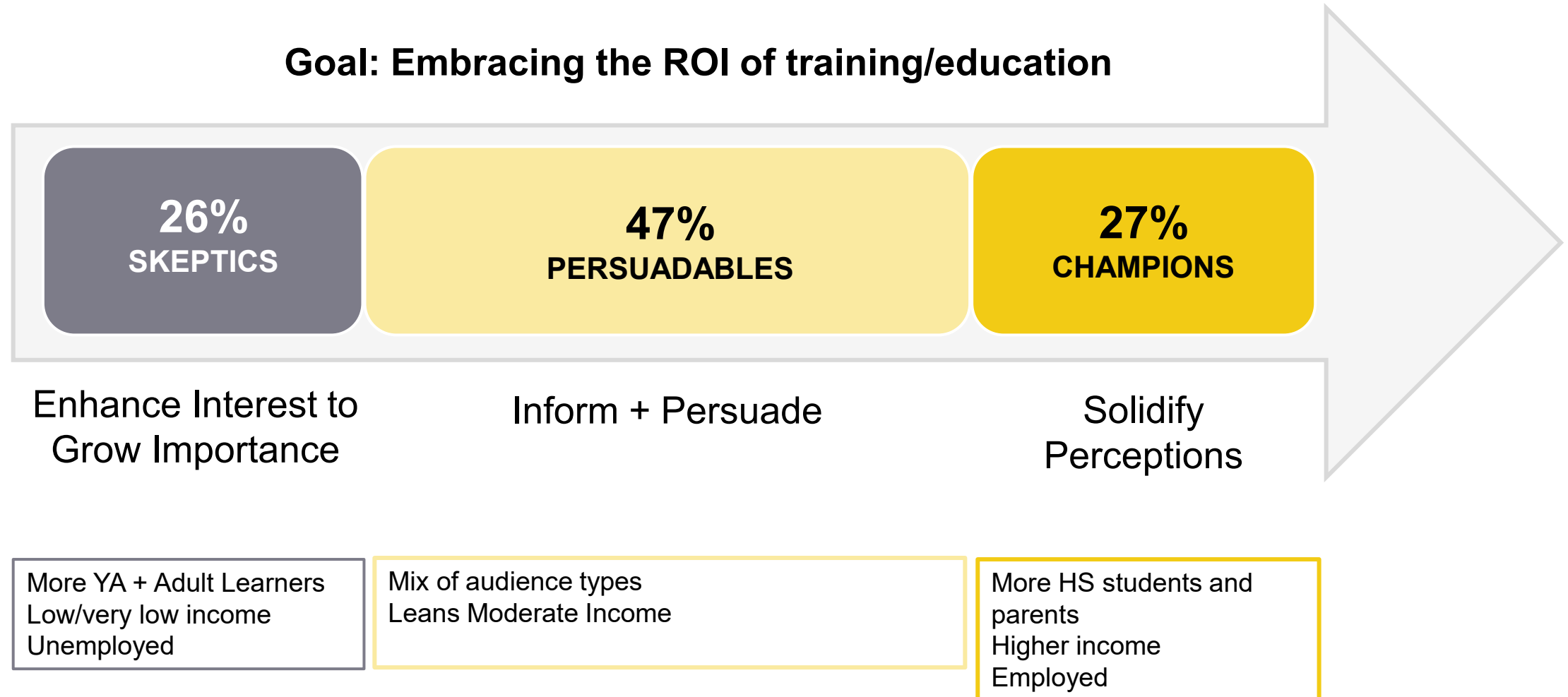
Motivating Facts

Hoosiers across audiences believe education beyond HS is important and worth the investment, ‘cost’ changes this



Variation in belief of the ROI of training and education provides a way to focus/target

Goal: Embracing the ROI of training/education



Values-Based Research

motivate by
emotion



Connect **emotionally**
by tapping into
individual values.

Personal Values

Stable, enduring,
personal goals

Emotional Benefits

Emotional or psychosocial
consequences derived from
the functional consequences

persuade by
reason



Values
research
ensures that
your “Brand” is anchored
upon the **core values**
of key stakeholders.

Rational Benefits

Functional consequences
derived from attributes

Attributes

Tangible features and
attributes



Students’ and Parents’ Post-Secondary Training and Education Values Ladder

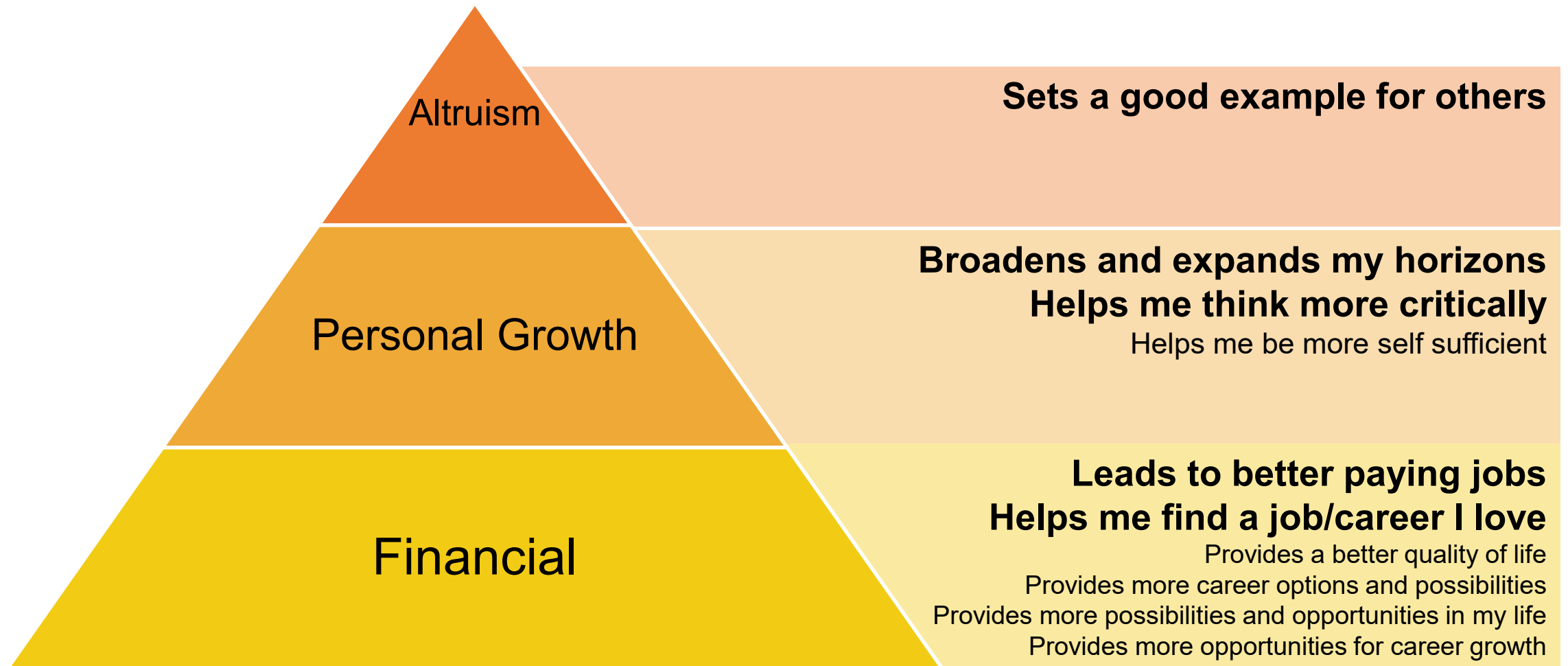
When you feel this way, what does it give you a sense of?

When you see or experience this most important benefit, how does it make you feel personally?

Which of these benefits of training and education is most important to you?

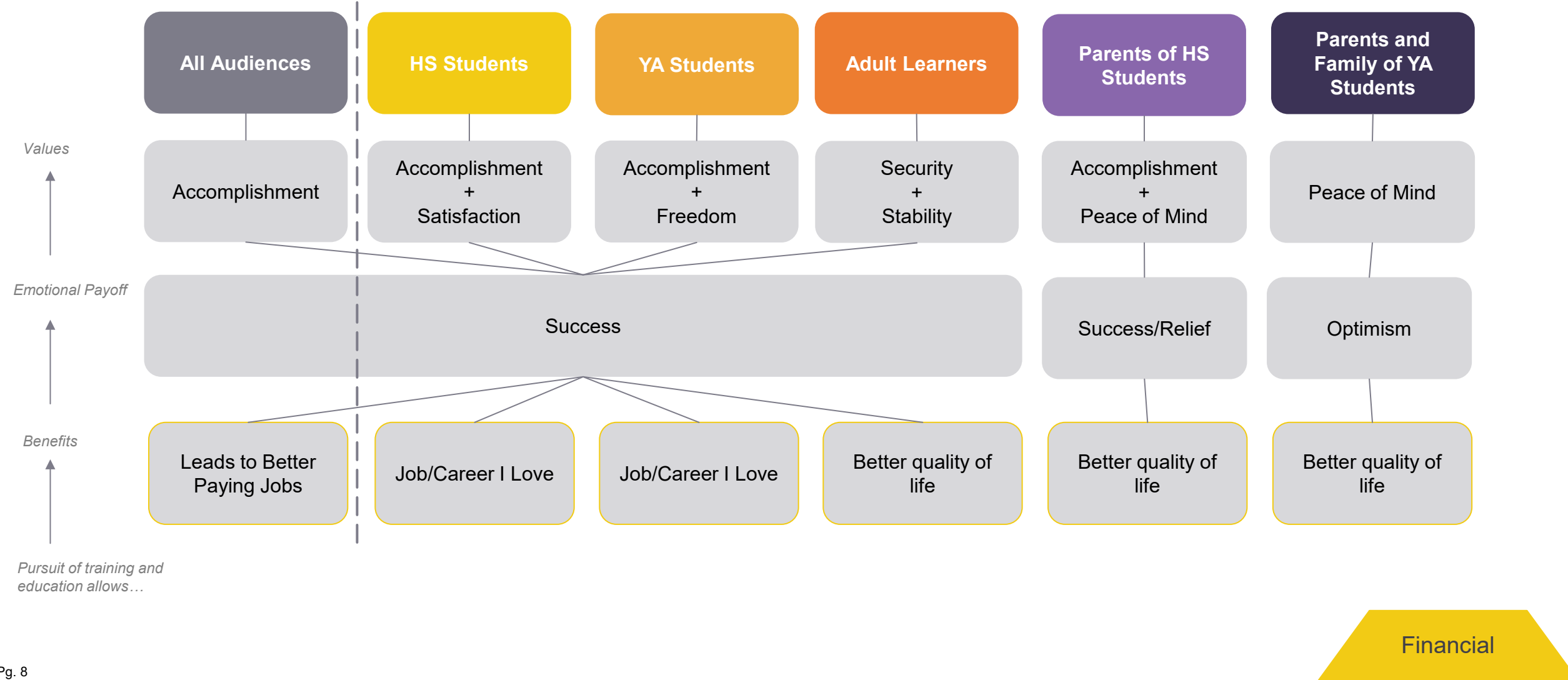
Here is a list of aspects or elements of training and education that may contribute to the most important benefit. Which of the following is most important to you?

Orientations validate qualitative learnings, with some important nuances by audience



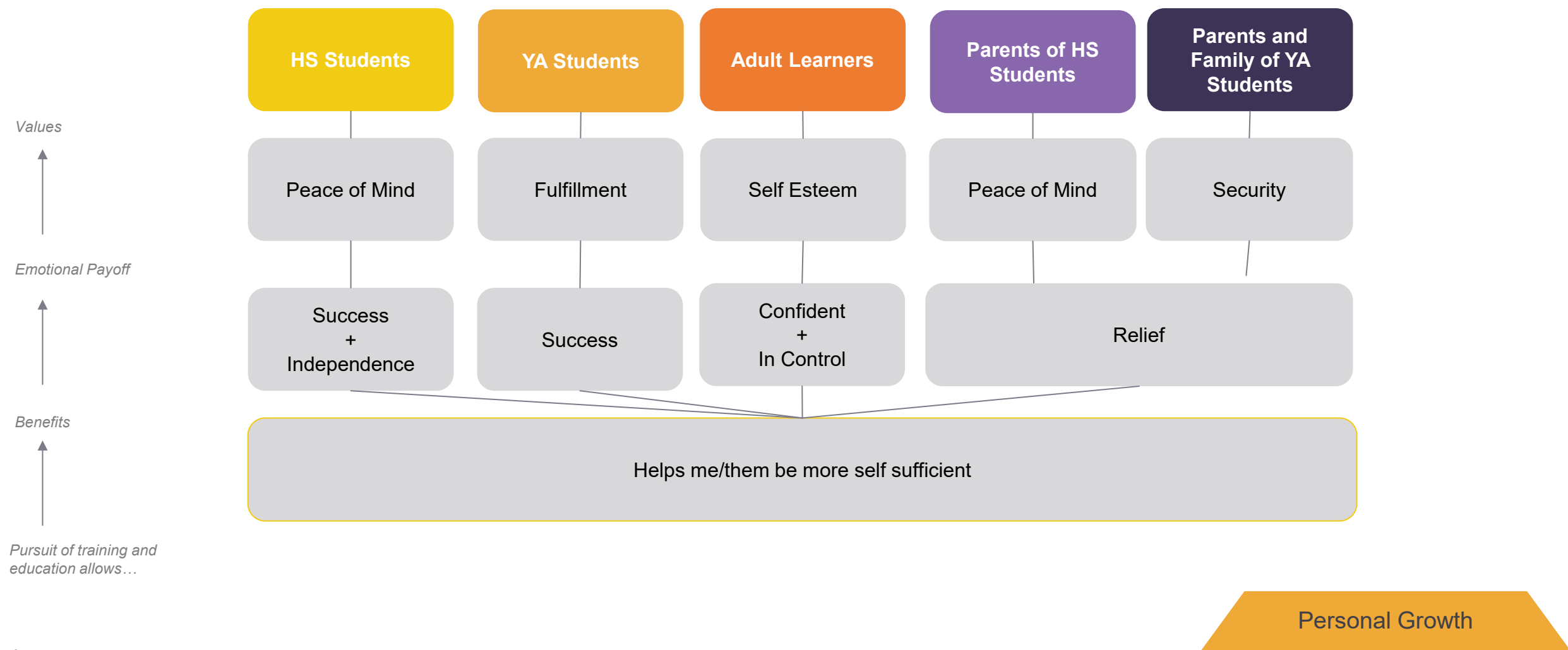
Feeling successful is derived from a career one loves, better pay and enhanced quality of life

Success taps into desired feelings of Accomplishment, Freedom, Security and Peace of Mind.



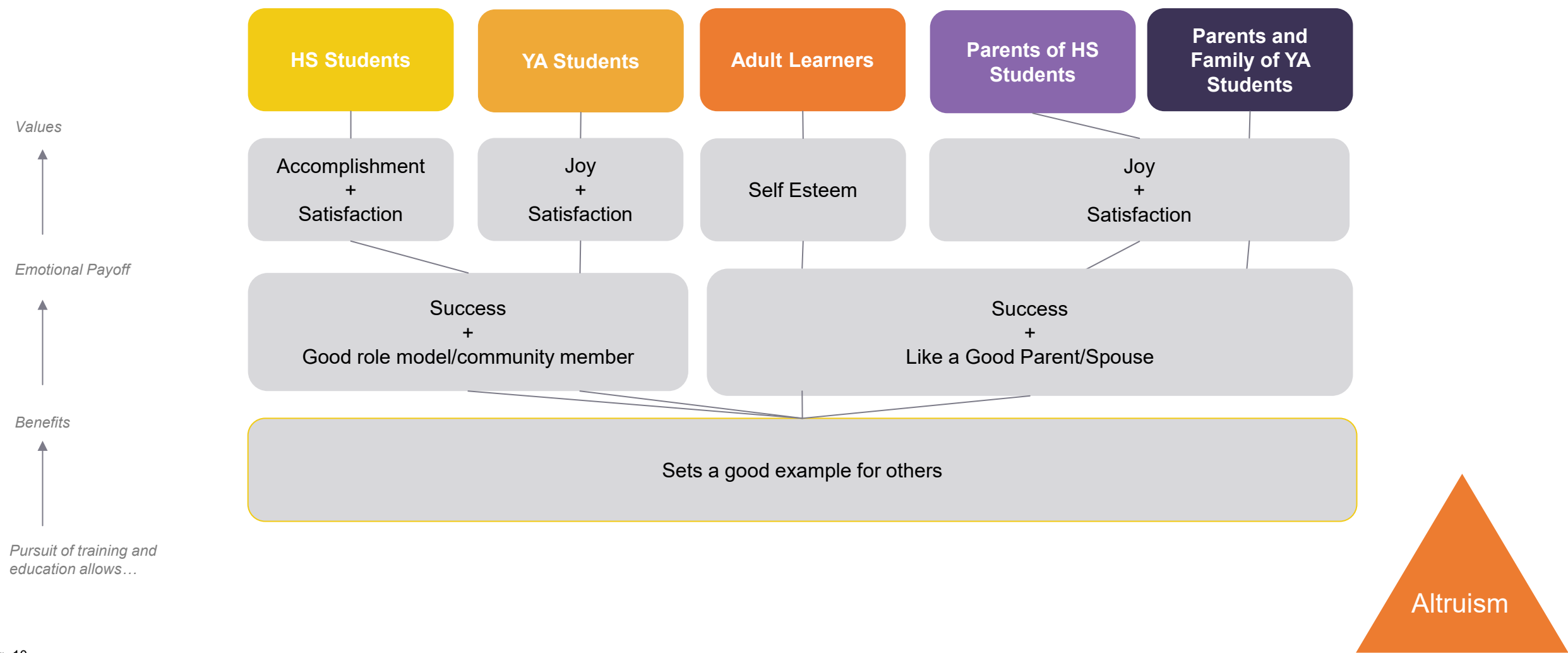
Enhanced self-sufficiency is the core element of the Personal Growth orientation

The importance of self-sufficiency triggers different values by audience.



Being a role model for others helps contribute to feelings of success

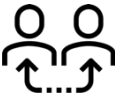
This orientation is more important to underserved populations, but very niche-focused.



Cost leads but is not the full barrier story

					
	HS Student	YA Student	Adult Learners	Parent of HS Student	Parents and Family of YA Students
 Most Impactful	COST of tuition, books, other expenses	COST of tuition, books, other expenses	COST of tuition, books, other expenses	COST of tuition, books, other expenses	COST of tuition, books, other expenses
2 nd Most Impactful	Knowing what career path to pursue	COST of housing	Time away from work /Earning less	Knowing what career path to pursue	Knowing what career path to pursue
3 rd Most Impactful	Personal anxiety or fears	Knowing what career path to pursue	Personal anxiety or fears	Personal anxiety or fears	Personal anxiety or fears

If costs are excluded, a trend of uncertainty and anxiety emerges

	 HS Student	 YA Student	 Adult Learners	 Parent of HS Student	 Parents and Family of YA Students
 Most Impactful	Knowing what career path to pursue	Knowing what career path to pursue	Time away from work /Earning less	Knowing what career path to pursue	Knowing what career path to pursue
2 nd Most Impactful	Personal anxiety or fears	Personal anxiety or fears	Personal anxiety or fears	Personal anxiety or fears	Personal anxiety or fears
3 rd Most Impactful	Time away from work /Earning less	Time away from work /Earning less	Knowing what career path to pursue	Lack of interest	Time away from work /Earning less

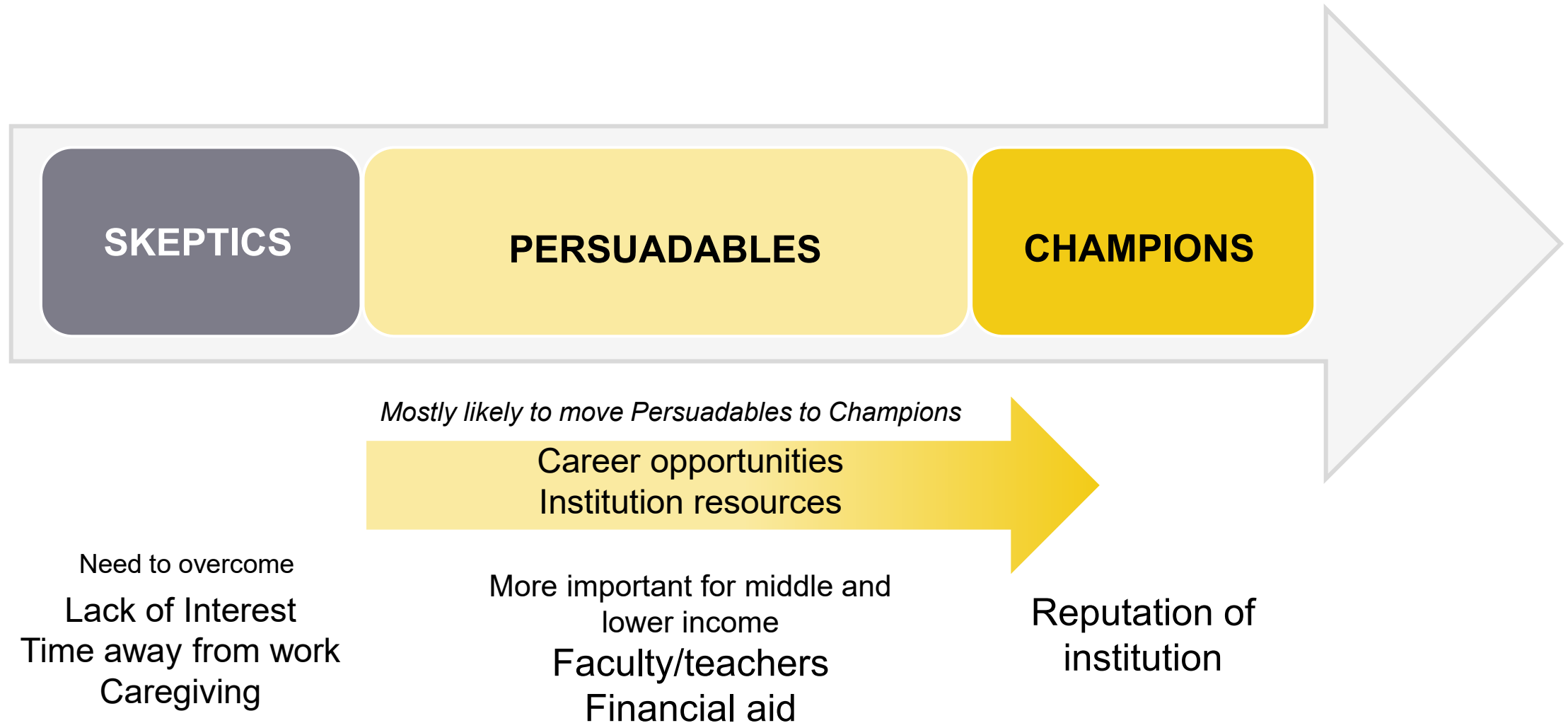
Information needed to overcome key challenges goes far beyond financial



Knowing My Path	Financial	Accessibility + Accommodations	Behavioral Health
• Support choosing an education focus • On-the-job experience • Supportive faculty • How do I find a job I love? • Availability/placement • Pros and cons of career path • Mentoring/advising opportunities	• Monetary support and knowledge building • Financial counseling • Financial aid options • Grants • Affordable housing support • Continued availability of financial aid	• Flexible classes • Online courses availability • Accommodations for special needs • Childcare support • Transportation accessibility	• Encouragement and confidence building • Balancing work/life • Managing stress • Motivation and focus • Time management

Professional audiences are aligned with these as solutions to barriers but worry some may be adverse to government delivering (some audiences may not perceive as trustworthy).

Some factors and challenges cluster within each worthiness segment



Parents dominate student circles of influence, and they rely on educational expert support

				
	HS Student	YA Student	Parent of HS Student	Parents and Family of YA Students
 Most Relied Upon	Parents 72% Extremely/very influential	Parents 47% Extremely/very influential	Counselors Teachers/Coaches	Their parents
2 nd Most Used	Teachers/Coaches Counselors	Teachers/Coaches Friends Counselors	Their parents Reps: training & educational institutions	Teachers/Coaches Counselors
3 rd Most Used	Community orgs Faith communities Social media	Reps: training & educational institutions	Community orgs Faith communities Employers	Reps: training & educational institutions Employers

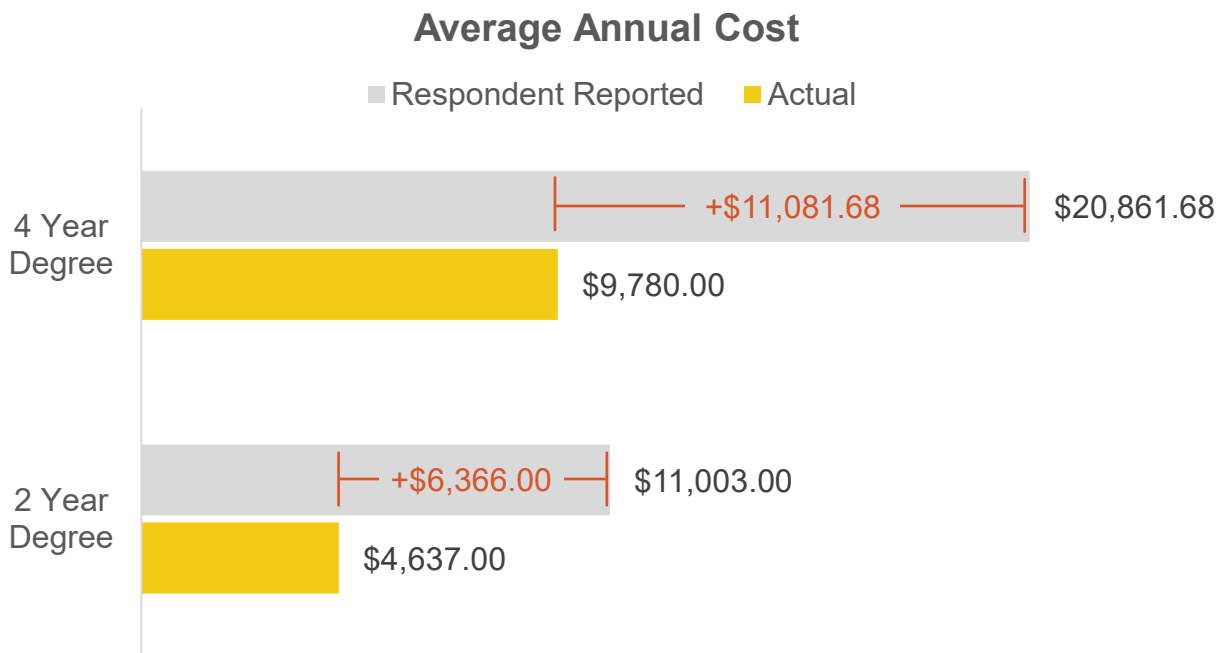
In-state tuition costs are over inflated

Actual costs viewed with skepticism

About 1 in 3 people surveyed do not believe reported In-state tuition numbers.



While all tend to over inflate the cost of annual in-state tuition.



Base: All Respondents
Weighted: HS Students (n=817); YA Students (n=497); Adult Learners (n=301); Parents of HS (n=798); Parents and Family of YA (n=298)
Q805A/B. Indiana has both public and private colleges and universities. What do you believe the annual cost of tuition and fees for in-state residents at an Indiana college or university is? This is the cost that someone who does not receive any financial aid would pay. Do not include books or room and board in your response.
Base: Believe Cost Is Barrier
Weighted: HS Students (n=320); YA Students (n=151); Adult Learners (n=71); Parents of HS (n=307); Parents and Family of YA (n=84)
Q810_A. How believable is this information to you? "As of 2021-22, the average annual cost of in-state tuition to a 4-year public college or university in Indiana was \$9,780. During the same year, it was \$4,637 at a public 2-year institution. This is the cost that someone who does not receive any financial aid would pay."

When presented with actual tuition costs, most believe they can find a way to pay



Over 80% of **HS Students and their parents** believe that they could find a way to pay for their/their student's choice of training and education.



Dropping to about 70% of **YA Students and their parents** believe that they could find a way to pay for their/their student's choice of training and education.



Dropping further to under 60% for **adult learners**.

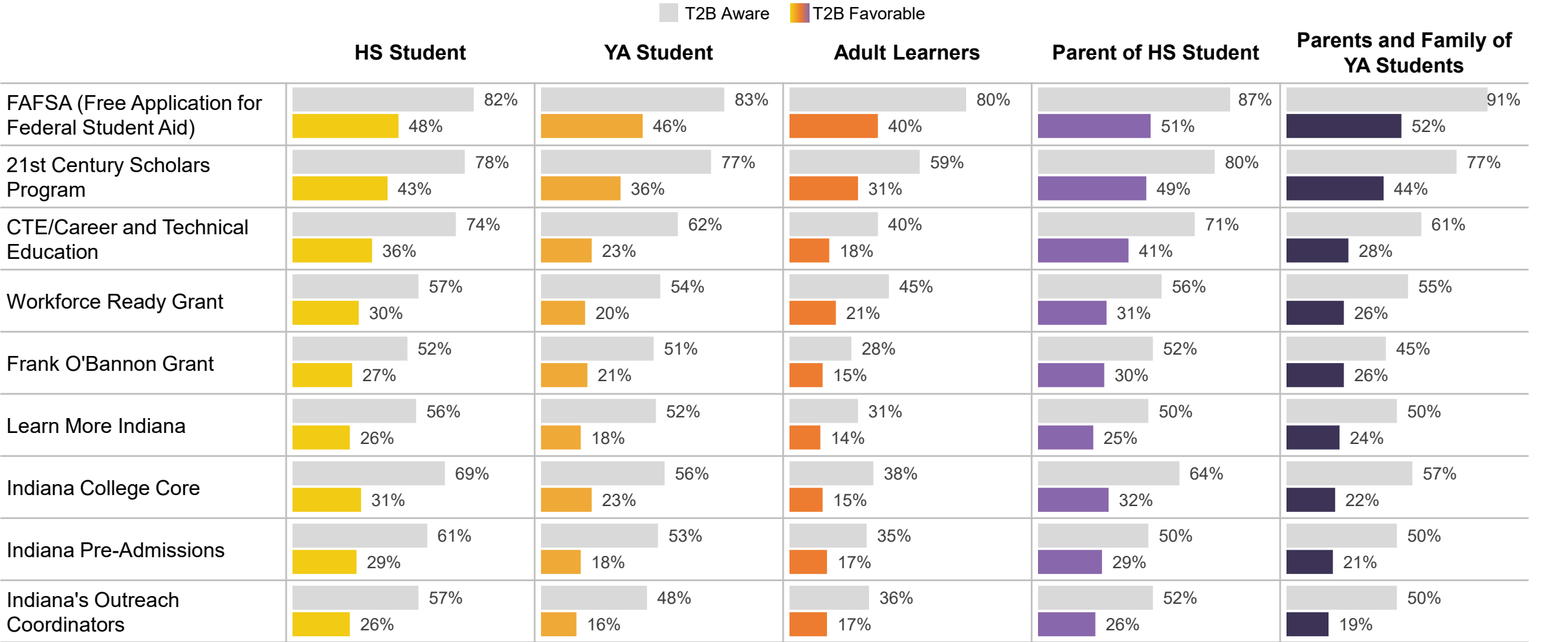
Base: All Respondents

Weighted: HS Students (n=817); YA Students (n=497); Adult Learners (n=301); Parents of HS (n=798); Parents and Family of YA (n=298)

Q810_B. Regardless of your choice for additional training and education beyond a high school diploma, do you believe that this is a cost that you are able to find a way to pay for (out-of-pocket and/or with financial aid)?

Opportunity to enhance awareness and utility of CHE initiatives

Awareness vs. Favorability of IN Programs That Support Additional TE



Base: All Respondents
 Weighted: HS Students (n=817); YA Students (n=497); Adult Learners (n=301); Parents of HS (n=798); Parents and Family of YA (n=298)
 Q715. How favorable are you toward each of the following?

Imperatives and Opportunities



THE FOUNDATION

(exists but lacks broad awareness;
needs to grow & cross-pollinate)

Existing Programs

Financial Aid
Scholarships
Counseling
Community
Faith Based
Employer

THE MISSING MIDDLE

(need to cross the chasm)

**Awareness of
possibilities**

+

**Exposure to relevant
opportunities**

+

**Belief and Support so
I Can Thrive**

THE MESSAGING

(where we're headed)

**Motivational and relevant
messages on how to achieve
what matters to me**

(will only be credible and received if coupled
with the belief of what is possible and "I can
get needed support")

Messaging Imperatives



Demonstrate the 'fit' between future employment and the most appropriate training and education pathway.



Normalize different pathways in pursuit of training and education and that they do not have to be linear.



Target messaging to tap into critical emotional drivers of decision making of each audience.



Amplify and target parents as they have an outsized influence on choices and decisions of their children coupled with near universal wants and needs for them to be happy, self-sufficient and lead a better, more fulfilling life.



Intentionally connect the 'why' and the 'how': connect the importance of training and education with the pathway and the specifics of what is available to Hoosiers to support and facilitate achievement, whether they are (or will be) high school graduates, are considering pursuing training and education after work/break, or at an important transition point.

Messages that Motivate

HS Students	YA Students	HS Parents
Find what you love, love what you do. Ever wondered how your choices today could empower your tomorrow? Here's how continuing learning after high school helps: ✓ Build confidence to make your own decisions ✓ Set yourself up to stand on your own by boosting your talents ✓ Gain skills to handle life's future challenges ✓ Live life your way, not someone else's It's not just about finding a job or making money. It's about creating an independent life AND doing something you love. Short training courses that build a specific skill, trade or professional certifications, 2- or 4-year college - whatever fits your plan. Each step builds your skills and gives you more control over your future. Remember: What you learn now empowers you to do your own thing later.	Build the life you want. Continued education and training is the key to a more financially stable and independent future. Here's why it matters: ✓ New skills can lead to better job and career opportunities that match your passions ✓ Each step in learning increases your earning potential and enhances your stability ✓ It's all about creating a future built on options ✓ Trade and professional certificates and short courses, not just degrees, make a difference Whether you're working, balancing family responsibilities, or tried additional/more education before, there are flexible options to fit your life. It's not just about the money. It's about building a career that provides more security while pursuing meaningful work. Your skills are your greatest asset. Keep investing in yourself.	Encourage your child's future. As a parent, one of your greatest rewards is seeing your child grow into an independent adult. Encouraging training and education after high school is a powerful way to help them amplify their talents and become truly self-sufficient. Here's how: ✓ Practical skills: Further training and education equips them with tools to navigate adult challenges. ✓ Career readiness: Training provides the experience and connections to employers that fuels passion for a career. ✓ Decision-making abilities: Learning builds confidence to make informed choices without having to rely on someone else. ✓ Financial stability: Advanced skills lead to better job prospects and economic security. By encouraging post-high school learning - whether through training in a skilled trade, professional certifications, or college degrees - you're empowering their ability to stand on their own. Start the conversation with your child about their educational options and help set the foundation for a lifetime of independence and success.

Engage Professionals for Greater Traction

This group holds a lackluster view of the state of education in Indiana, yet see multiple dimensions...



POSITIVES (leverage)

- ✓ Quantity of education and training alternatives and options available
- ✓ Those representing HS and higher education cite financial aid and scholarship funding
- ✓ Employers talk about programs that link training and education with workforce needs
- ✓ Youth serving organizations appreciate CTE programs



NEGATIVES (address)

- X Actual cost of college
- X Lack of understanding of cost
- X Lack of understanding of financial aid availability
- X Timeline for developing plans for future (*"Senior year is too late"*)
- X Education-job mismatch among employers (*"pushes 4-year degree where trade may be better option"*)
- X Perceived lack of support and resources for students and families
- X Parental/student lack of awareness and understanding of resources
- X Pressure and expectations on counsellors (vs. parents as moral support)
- X Overwhelming logistics load and ratio of students to counselors

Talking About the Cost of Training and Education

- **Remember the context:** media narrative, personal experience and 'cost to me'
- **Explain the numbers:** Don't just use a single number without explanation; include and explain 'gross' and 'net'
- **Consider all costs:** Remember that, for many, tuition and fees are just part of the equation. Books, supplies, housing, transportation, food and other living expenses, as well as lost wages, are critical for many.
- **Resources to understand information:** Link to resources that can help make this information more understandable and accessible (e.g., tuition calculators and other in-person support).
- **Resources to navigate barriers:** Link to support and resources that can help navigate other cost-related barriers.
- **Dissemination:** Create mechanisms for sharing with professional audiences.





THE FOUNDATION

(exists but lacks broad awareness;
needs to grow & cross-pollinate)

Existing Programs

Financial Aid
Scholarships
Counseling
Community
Faith Based
Employer

Ways to Strengthen + Broaden Foundation

- Broaden access to career direction/path
- Parents as a target AND advocate
- Career coaching as important as academic
- Arm the sphere of influence

THE MISSING MIDDLE

(need to cross the chasm)

Awareness of possibilities
+
Exposure to relevant
opportunities
+
**Belief and Support so I
Can Thrive**



THE MESSAGING

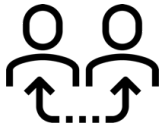
(where we're headed)

**Motivational and relevant
messages on how to achieve
what matters to me**

(will only be credible and received if coupled
with the belief of what is possible and "I can
get needed support")

Key Findings

Most Hoosier high school students and parents, around 80 percent, believe continuing education beyond high school is worth the investment.



1. Parent/Guardian Engagement

Parents/Guardians are more influential in their students' decisions than they perceive themselves to be, especially for male students.

2. Career Coaching and Navigation

Understanding and selecting a career path is a top challenge cited by students and parents, leading to a growing need for career coaching and navigation resources and work-based learning opportunities for students to explore career options earlier.



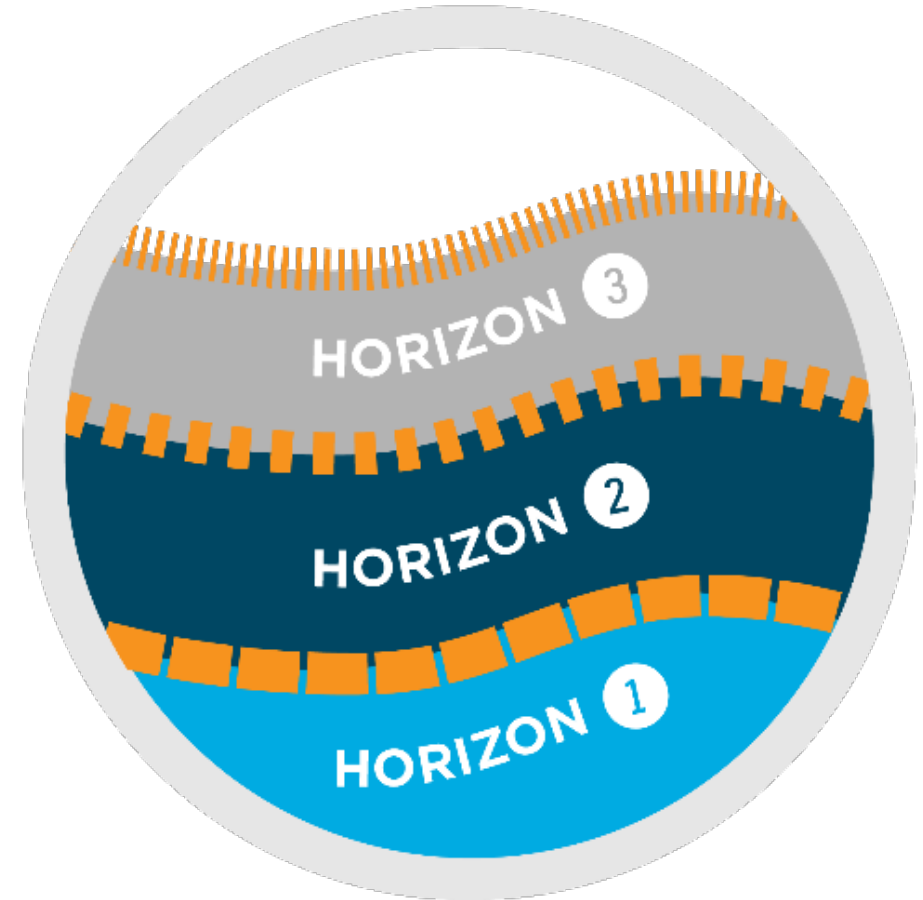
3. Cost Perception and Investment

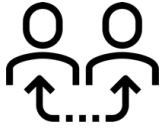
While cost is still cited as the largest barrier to education beyond high school, students and parents over-estimated the cost of tuition by over 100 percent.

Implementation Horizons

The Commission has categorized each key finding into three horizon levels based on current and future opportunities for implementation.

- **HORIZON 1:** Initiatives are already implemented and are being evaluated for improvement opportunities.
 - Example: 21st Century Scholars
- **HORIZON 2:** Initiatives are either in the beginning stages of implementation or will be implemented soon.
 - Example: Career Discovery Meetings
- **HORIZON 3:** Concepts for new initiatives have been identified and the feasibility of their implementation is being discussed.
 - Example: parent outreach and marketing





1. Parent/Guardian Engagement

Parents/Guardians are more influential in their students' decisions than they perceive themselves to be, especially for male students.

- **HORIZON 1:** Beginning in 2023, the Commission began sending letters to graduating high school seniors and families informing students about higher education options in Indiana through ***Indiana Pre-Admissions: Your Path to College***. The Commission is working to include all Indiana high schools and institutions in this initiative.
- **HORIZON 2:** In early 2025, the Commission will send letter to all current **9th-11th grade students** and families to provide information on post-high school options and notifying them on the upcoming ***Indiana Pre-Admissions*** letter they will receive their senior year.
- **HORIZON 3:** Through the **Partnership Pentagon**, the Commission has discussed engaging parents/guardians in focus groups and feedback discussions, and through **Learn More Indiana outreach** with informative presentations. The Commission will continue to expand outreach and strategy efforts to include parent/guardian presence.



2. Career Coaching and Navigation

Understanding and selecting a career path is a top challenge cited by students and parents, leading to a growing need for career coaching and navigation resources and work-based learning opportunities for students to explore career options earlier.

- **HORIZON 1:** In 2023, the administration of **Career and Technical Education (CTE)** was transferred to the Commission to better align postsecondary options under one agency.
- **HORIZON 2:** Recent legislation has enhanced the Commission's ability to deliver career exploration, engagement, and experience activities to students in grades Pre-K to 12. **Career Coaching grants, Career Discovery Meetings, and Career Scholarship Accounts** were all implemented in the past year.
- **HORIZON 3:** Citing Strada's *State Opportunity Index*, Indiana is categorized as "foundational" in quality coaching opportunities to **connect students to employers**. The Commission will continue to build and adapt new initiatives to bring access to these resources to all students.



3. Cost Perception and Investment

While cost is still cited as the largest barrier to education beyond high school, students and parents over-estimated the cost of tuition by over 100 percent.

- **HORIZON 1:** Indiana ranks **3rd in the Midwest and 8th in the nation at awarding need-based financial aid, 6th in the nation at holding the line on tuition costs** for public institutions, and was **the only state to maintain FAFSA completions** in 2024 from the previous year. Despite this, many Hoosiers are unaware of the resources available (21st Century Scholars, Frank O'Bannon, etc.)
- **HORIZON 2:** In 2023, Indiana introduced automatic enrollment for the **21st Century Scholars program**, enrolling over 20,000 additional students into the program each year. While this has officially launched, those students are still a few years away from graduating and enrolling in college. Additional support at the institutional level to accommodate the increased cohort size as well as reallocated resources that previously went to enrollment efforts will need to be refined. Legislation impacting Indiana College Core expansion and FAFSA requirements will also require additional efforts.
- **HORIZON 3:** The Commission has begun discussion around a **program review** for all degree programs offered at Indiana public institutions, as well as to work with Indiana public and private institutions to develop a **standardized financial aid award letter**. The Commission has also discussed how to begin **shifting language** from “**cost**” to “**investment**” when talking about college expenses, especially with younger audiences. The Commission will further these discussions with our partners and in outreach efforts to students and parents.

Key Findings Horizons

	HORIZON 1	HORIZON 2	HORIZON 3
1 Parent/Guardian Engagement	<i>Indiana Pre-Admissions: Your Path to College</i>	Letters to 9th-11th grade students/families	Parent engagement in Partnership Pentagon and Learn More Indiana outreach
2 Career Coaching and Navigation	Career and Technical Education (CTE)	Career Coaching Grants Career Discovery Meetings Career Scholarship Accounts	Connection to employers and work-based learning opportunities
3 Cost Perception and Investment	Need-Based Financial Aid Tuition Holding FAFSA Completions	21st Century Scholars automatic enrollment Indiana College Core FAFSA Requirement	Program Review Standardized Aid Letter Shifting from “cost” to “investment”



HOPE

Hoosier Opportunities and Possibilities
through Education



Agenda



Thank
You