

TEENS FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE & MOTIVATED TO OBTAIN HIGHER EDUCATION

Today's teen is focused on the future. Commonly stereotyped as the generation that 'worries about today' and 'lives for the moment'; research reveals teens are planning further ahead than one would think. From a young age, youth have been bombarded with messages of the importance of higher education and thus, the majority are committed to getting an education. Research shows that over 90% of teens are definitely planning on or at least considering getting post-secondary education.

“Post-secondary education is an opportunity to find who you truly are and a way to kick start the rest of your life.”

- Teen Respondent

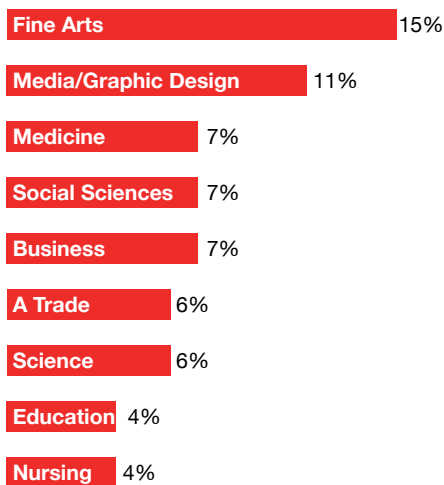
This report examines teens' motivation for obtaining higher education and the influencers and criteria used for choosing a post-secondary institution.

INSIGHTS ABOUT TEENS'S MOTIVATION & PLANNING FOR THEIR FUTURES

Who's Planning on Going....	Most teens. And the decision is theirs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65% of Canadian teens plan on or are getting post-secondary education, and an additional 27% are considering it. Of the 9% who are not considering getting post-secondary education, 27% are simply not interested in studying any more and 20% feel they can get a good job without higher education. 52% of teens say their parents are encouraging, but not forcing/pressuring them to get post-secondary education, and 68% say their parents let them choose their own area of study.
Why Post-Secondary Education...	For rational reasons. But for various emotional reasons too.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a strong balance of emotional and rational drivers that encourage teens to get post-secondary education (see chart: <i>Dominant drivers for getting post-secondary education P2</i>).
What & Who are the Influencers...	Rational & emotional drivers guide them to choose a school, -not people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rational & emotional drivers have the greatest impact on teen's decision on where to attend post-secondary school (programs offered, location of school, and cost of school ranked the highest). Influencers (such as parents & teachers) do not have a significant impact on their decision. (see chart: <i>Influencers P2</i>).
Where They Plan on Attending...	They are planning on studying close to home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority (68%) plan on attending post-secondary school in their home province, 35% plan on attending post-secondary school in their home city. 11% plan on attending post-secondary abroad (either in the US or another country). The majority of those respondents fall between the ages 12 to 14. The older the respondent, the more likely they are to want to study near their home. 59% plan on attending a university and 29% plan on attending a college.
Pre-Post-secondary School Planning...	They are doing their research before choosing a school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 55% indicate doing research before choosing a post-secondary school is very important. The internet is the primary tool for doing research on schools, with 63% using the internet, followed by 14% relying on teachers/ school counselors for information, and 12% relying on college/ university orientations.

When They Plan on Attending...	Half are taking a break first. The other half are getting their schooling over with.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 38% plan on attending post-secondary school right after they graduate from high school. 20% plan on relaxing and traveling for a year or two first, and 18% plan on working for a year or two to save money for their studies.
What are they Planning on Studying...	Their program interests are diverse, but somewhat concentrated in two main areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While there are a broad range of programs of interest, fine arts and media, and the sciences dominate as most preferred areas of study (see chart: <i>Where teens plan on attending post-secondary school P3</i>). The fine arts are particularly popular among young teens (ages 12 to 15).
How Are They Paying...	Parents, government, and hard work (in that order).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 31% of teens indicate their parents are going to help pay for education. 22% of teens will rely on student loans, 20% plan on working part-time while attending school, and 13% plan on receiving scholarships to pay for education.

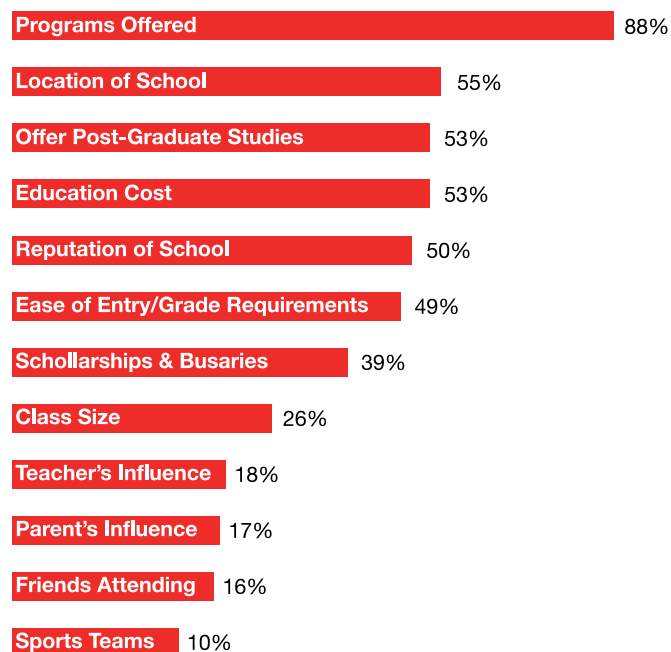
Top Ranking Programs of Interest For Canadian Teens



Nexopia Survey n=1007

Influencers:

Factors that impact decisions on where to attend post-secondary school



Nexopia Survey n=1007

DOMINANT DRIVERS FOR GETTING POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

RATIONAL Drivers for Attending Post-Secondary	Success 44%	Intelligence 31%	Money 30%		
The majority of post-secondary schools' communication focuses on these rational drivers for attending post-secondary and doesn't tap into the more emotional drivers for attending post-secondary school.					
EMOTIONAL Drivers for Attending Post-Secondary	Follow My Dreams 36%	Open my Mind & Grow 15%	Freedom/Independence 12%	To Find & Define Myself 8%	World at my Fingert Tips 7%
When asked why they plan on attending post secondary education, without being probed teens' responses lean heavily toward the emotional drivers for attending post-secondary school. These emotional drivers were then quantified using Nexopia polls to determine which are the most compelling for teens.					



LEARNINGS, STRATEGIES, & IMPLICATIONS:

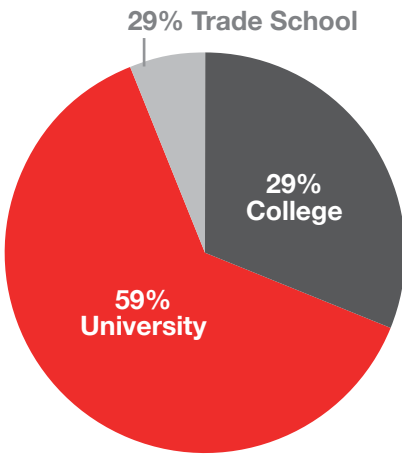
Take Communication Beyond Rational Messaging.

The post-secondary education category is riddled with rationally driven, copy heavy communication. Rarely does post-secondary education communication go beyond messages of rational benefits: Get an education so you can have Success, Intelligence, and Financial Security. As teen's revealed (without probing) in the open-ended responses, there are powerful emotional benefits associated with higher education. Aligning your school with both emotional and rational benefits of an education will not only set your brand apart, it will strongly resonate with the youth segment. Having a balance of emotional makes the communication more distinctive and more compelling.

Make Communication Interactive.

As mentioned above, the post-secondary education category has very rational, copy heavy advertising - neither of which are strong at grabbing teen's attention. Consider moving to more interactive, viral types of communication to get their attention. For example, creating a "Me-Grown Up" viral piece, that allows teen's to upload a picture of their face, pick a career, answer a few questions about what they want to be 'when the grow up' and it will generate a picture of them mocked up in the future (that they can send to their friends, post on their social networking site, etc). Viral ideas such as this can help increase awareness and interest in the institution, while also driving traffic to your homepage.

WHERE TEENS PLAN ON ATTENDING POST-SECONDARY SCHOOL



When asked what the difference is between university and college, 35% indicate types of programs, 22% say job opportunities when you graduate, and 20% say quantity of education

Nexopia Survey n=1007

Be Simple.

Teens are always looking for short cuts- to simplify their lives. Doing research on post-secondary schools is no exception. Ensure your school's website and navigation is a smooth, streamlined experience. Make your website a one-stop-shop for all of their university/ college research needs. For example, have an easy to digest 'how to get a student loan section'. Or partner with a local housing company and have a "find cheap housing" section, or have a "living calculators" that help them budget for school, living, beer drinking, and other fun stuff.

Focus Media Buys Regionally.

Given that almost 70% of teens plan on studying in their home province, it makes strategic and economic sense to focus on regional media buys for enrollment specific communication (communication to increase enrollment levels). This doesn't mean abandoning national level PR initiatives and awareness marketing- but focus recruitment marketing primarily at a regional level to get the most bang for your buck.

"It's (education) just absolutely necessary. Necessary to live the life you want."

- Teen Respondent

About the survey

Results are based on a survey launched in October 2009 (n= 1007) and homepage polls with a sample size averaging n=14,000: Key demographics: 42.6% male, 57.4% female 76% aged 13-18, 11% aged 19-23

Want more?

Nexopia is the leading Canadian social networking site for youth. We reach into the minds of young people- tapping into their attitudes and values, lifestyles and trends, media, products and brands. Our exploratory research includes quantitative surveys and in-depth qualitative research (focus groups, observation, teen panels). These reports are distributed to key Canadian advertising and marketing decision makers with the intent to demystify this niche market and assist with developing relevant and effective communication & marketing strategies.

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