

Myths About Financial Aid

Don't fall for these myths about federal student aid and the application process!

“My parents make too much money, so I won't qualify for aid.”

Reality: There is no income cut-off to qualify for federal student aid. Many factors besides income—from the size of your family to the age of your older parent—are taken into account. Your eligibility is determined by a mathematical formula, not by your parents' income alone. And remember: when you fill out the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA®), you're also automatically applying for funds from your state, and possibly from your school as well. In fact, some schools won't even consider you for any of their scholarships (including academic scholarships) until you've submitted a FAFSA. Don't make assumptions about what you'll get—fill out the application and find out.

“Only students with good grades get financial aid.”

Reality: While a high grade point average will help a student get into a good school and may help with academic scholarships, most of the federal student aid programs do not take a student's grades into consideration. Provided a student maintains satisfactory academic progress in his or her program of study, federal student aid will help a student with an average academic record complete his or her education.

“My ethnicity or age makes me ineligible for federal student aid.”

Reality: There are basic eligibility requirements (which you can find at [StudentAid.gov/eligibility](https://studentaid.gov/eligibility)), but ethnicity and age are not considered.

“I support myself, so I don't have to include parent info on the FAFSA®.”

Reality: This is not necessarily true. Even if you support yourself and file taxes on your own, you may still be considered a dependent student for federal student aid purposes. If you are independent, you won't need to include your parents' information on your FAFSA. But if you are dependent, you must provide your parents' information. The FAFSA asks a series of questions to determine your dependency status. You can preview the questions at [StudentAid.gov/dependency](https://studentaid.gov/dependency).

So what's next?

Go to fafsa.gov, fill out the application, and see what you get!

For more information about federal student aid, see [StudentAid.gov](https://studentaid.gov). For help with the FAFSA process, use the help screens or live chat functionality on fafsa.gov, or contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243); TTY: 1-800-730-8913; for inquirers without access to the toll-free number: 334-523-2691; e-mail: studentaid@ed.gov

Find this fact sheet at [StudentAid.gov/resources](https://studentaid.gov/resources) and share it with others!