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CONSUMER
INSIGHTS

Public Viewpoint: COVID-19 Work and Education Survey

The New Education Consumer: What's Driving Americans' Interest
in Short-term and Virtual Skills Training Options?

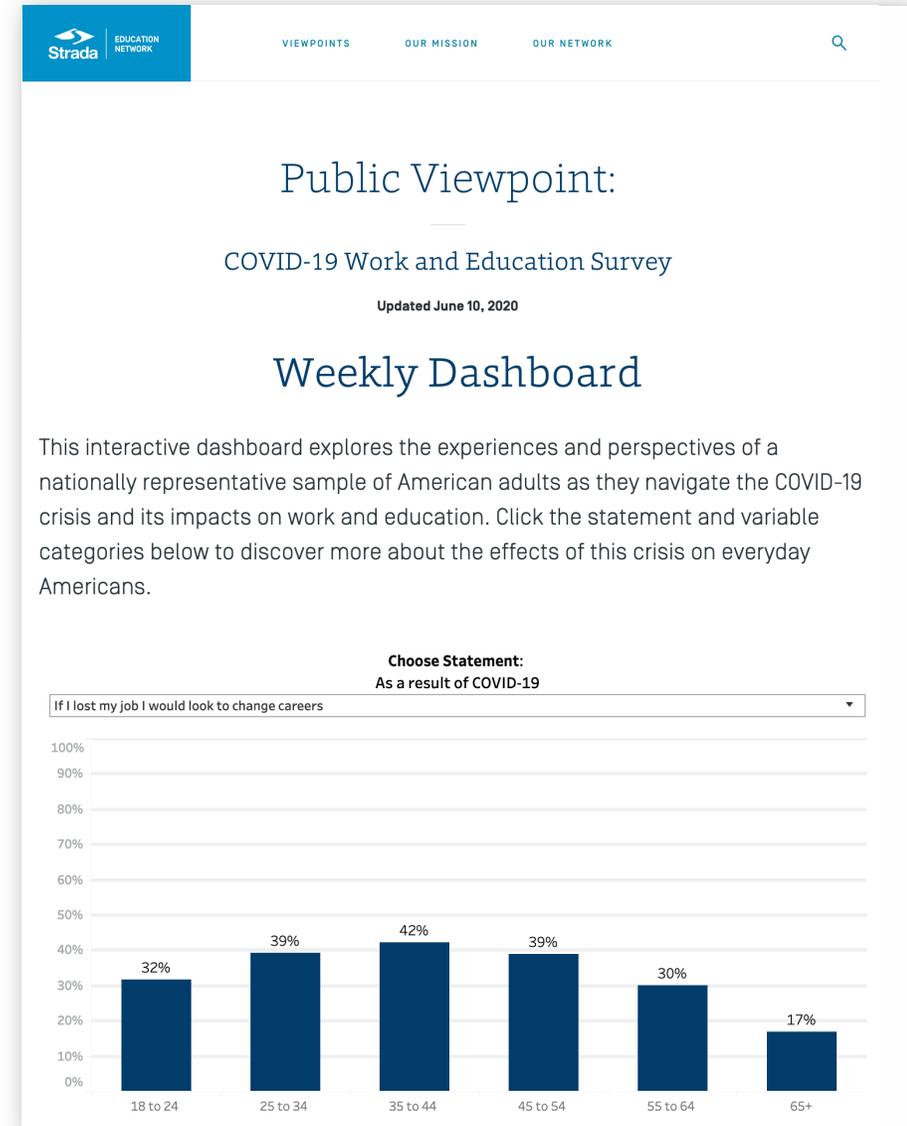
Aug. 26, 2020



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Public Viewpoint

- A weekly survey of 1,000 American adults that is representative of the population by age, gender, educational attainment, race/ethnicity, and nine geographic census regions
- 16,000+ responses from March 25 to Aug. 20
- Weekly surveys, March 25-May 28
- Biweekly surveys, June-October



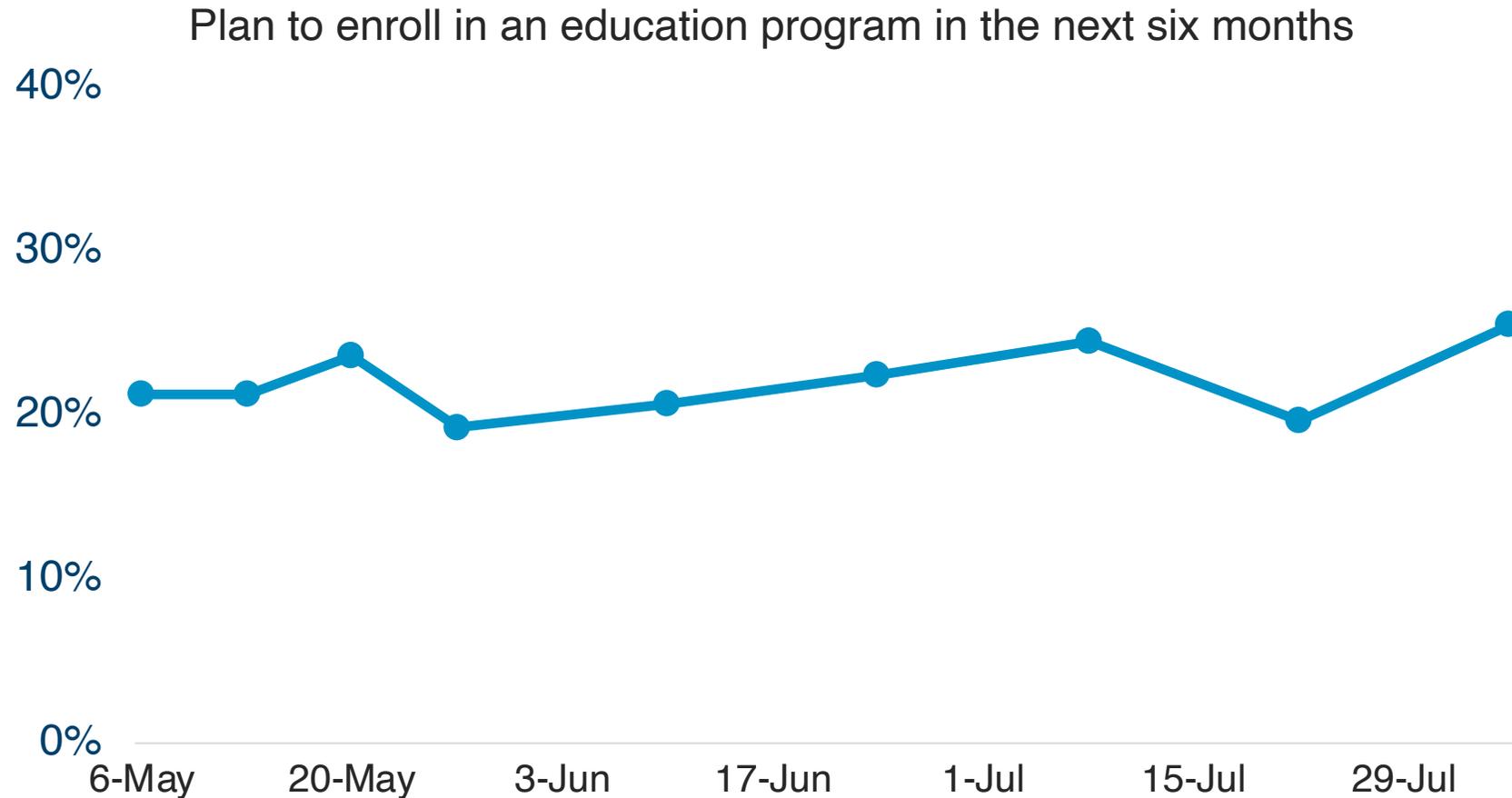
Perspective From a Learner

“I was so unsure of myself before. There was a part of me who didn’t think I could be successful. But now I want to go as high as I can go.”

Felecia Cannon, 31
Software support specialist in Dallas

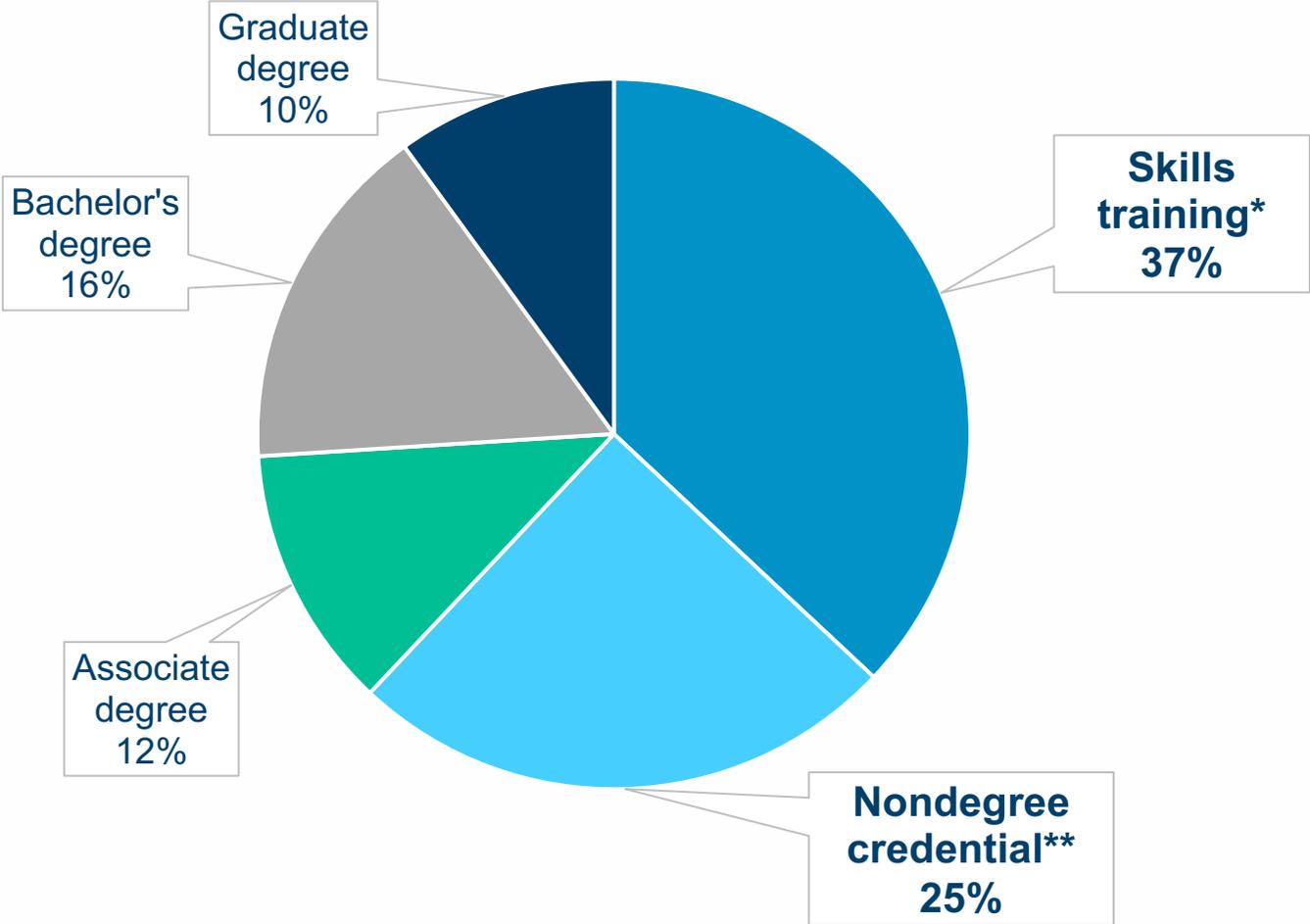


Since May, 1 in 5 Americans have said they plan to enroll in an education program in the next six months.



Since the onset of the pandemic, Americans have expressed a consistent preference for **nondegree** and **skills training** options

Preferred education option (six months)



Strada Center for Consumer Insights Public Viewpoint survey, April 15-Aug. 6. Base: adults ages 18 and older, n=5,272.

*Courses for skills training or personal development. **Certificate, certification, or license.



Reasons for Preferences: Degree Versus Nondegree

Four primary categories: value, streamlined, relevance, and stackability

How important are the following reasons for your preference for skills training, nondegree programs, or degree programs over the alternatives?

VALUE

- Better value
- More benefit to my job or career advancement

STREAMLINED

- Faster
- Cheaper
- More convenient

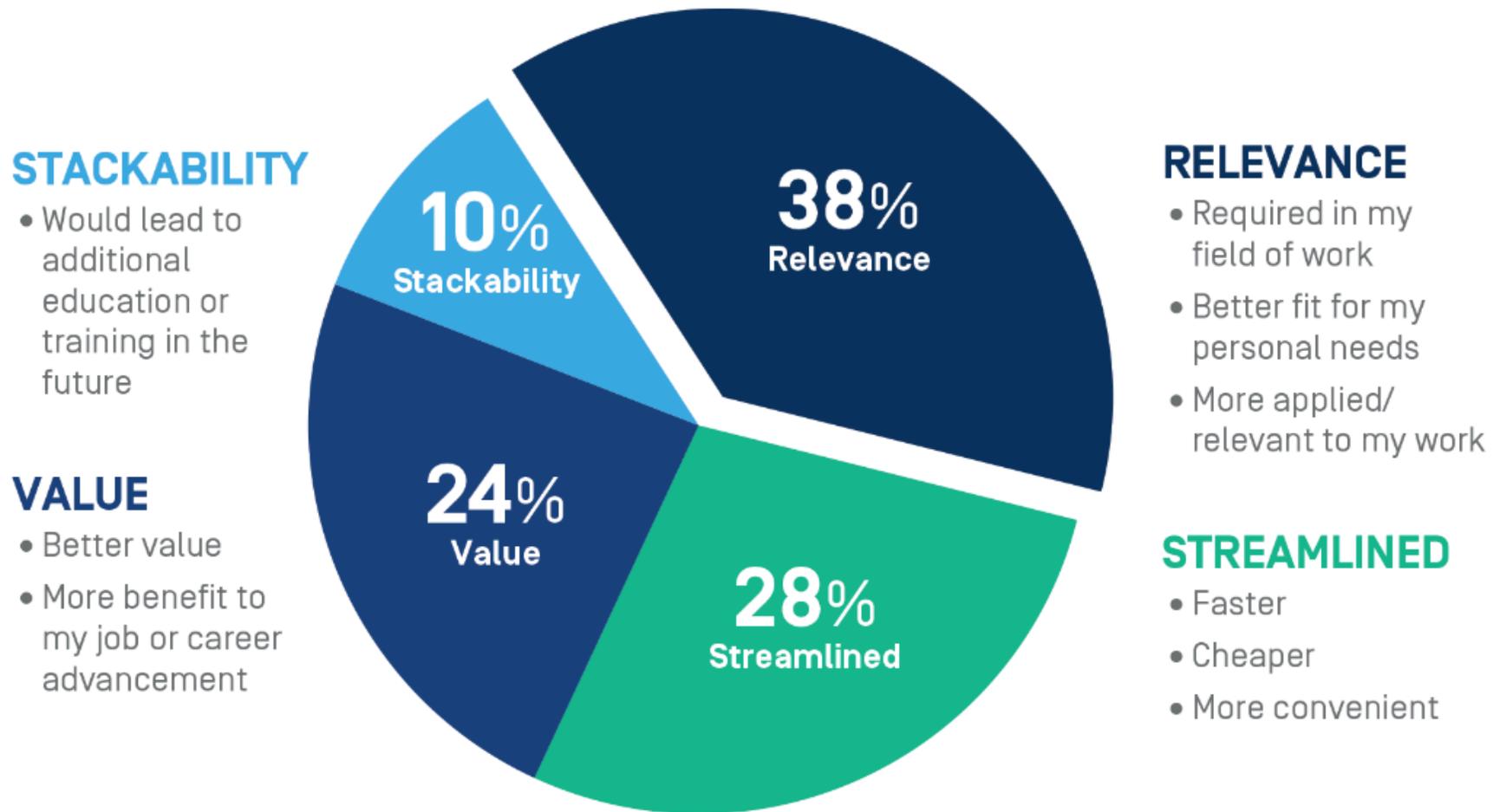
RELEVANCE

- Required in my field of work
- Better fit for my personal needs
- More applied/relevant to my work

STACKABILITY

- Would lead to additional education or training in the future

Americans' preferences for degree or nondegree opportunities are most commonly being driven by **relevance**



Americans who prefer nondegree programs or skills training place more emphasis on value

Top reasons Americans prefer nondegree training or degree programs

Prefer nondegree/skills training

1. **Better value**
2. Better fit for my personal needs (relevance)
3. **More benefit to my job and career advancement (value)**

Prefer degree programs

1. More benefit to my job and career advancement (value)
2. Better fit for my personal needs (relevance)
3. More applied/relevant to my work (relevance)

Americans with a high school education or less say it is more important that education programs are stackable

Top reasons for education and training preferences by education level

High school education or less

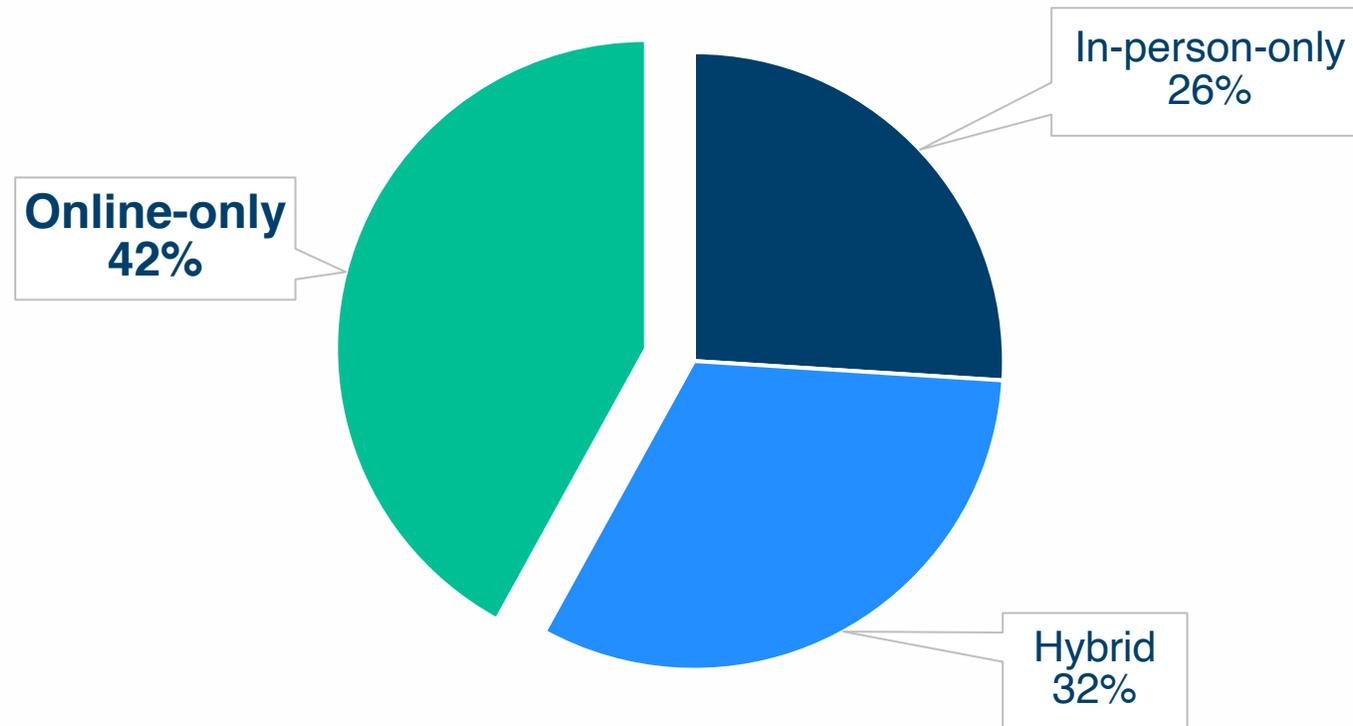
1. More benefit to my job and career advancement (value)
- 2. Would lead to education or training in the future (stackability)**
3. Better value

Associate degree, certificate, or some college

1. Better fit for my personal needs (relevance)
2. More benefit to my job and career advancement (value)
3. More applied/relevant to my work (relevance)

Since the onset of the pandemic, Americans have expressed a consistent preference **online learning** options

Preferred education mode (six months)



Strada Center for Consumer Insights Public Viewpoint survey, April 15-Aug. 6. Base: adults ages 18 and older, n=5,272.

*Courses for skills training or personal development. **Certificate, certification, or license.

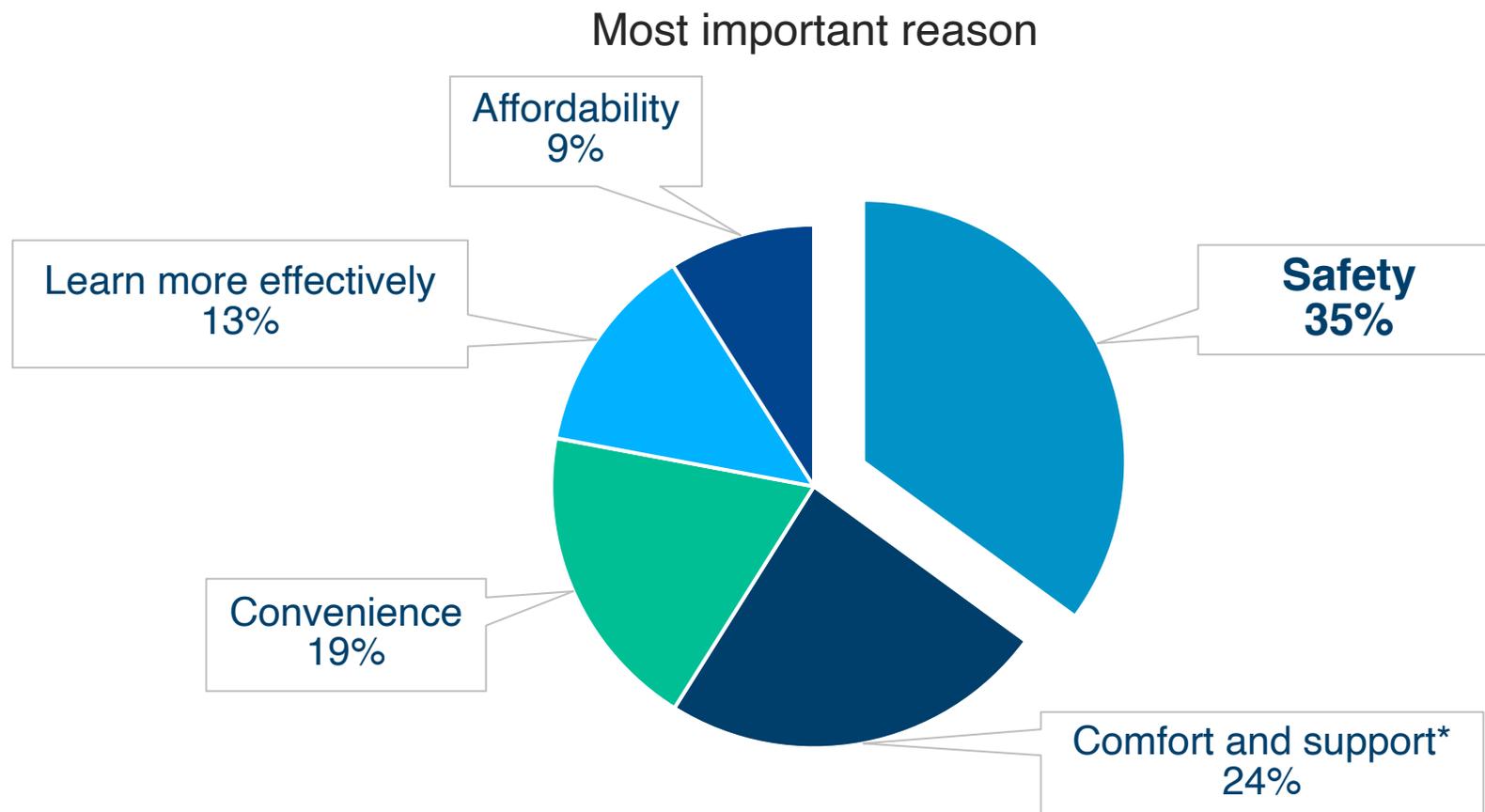


Reasons for Preferences: In-person, Hybrid, or Online



Americans are most likely to cite **safety** as the most important factor in deciding among online, hybrid or in-person education options

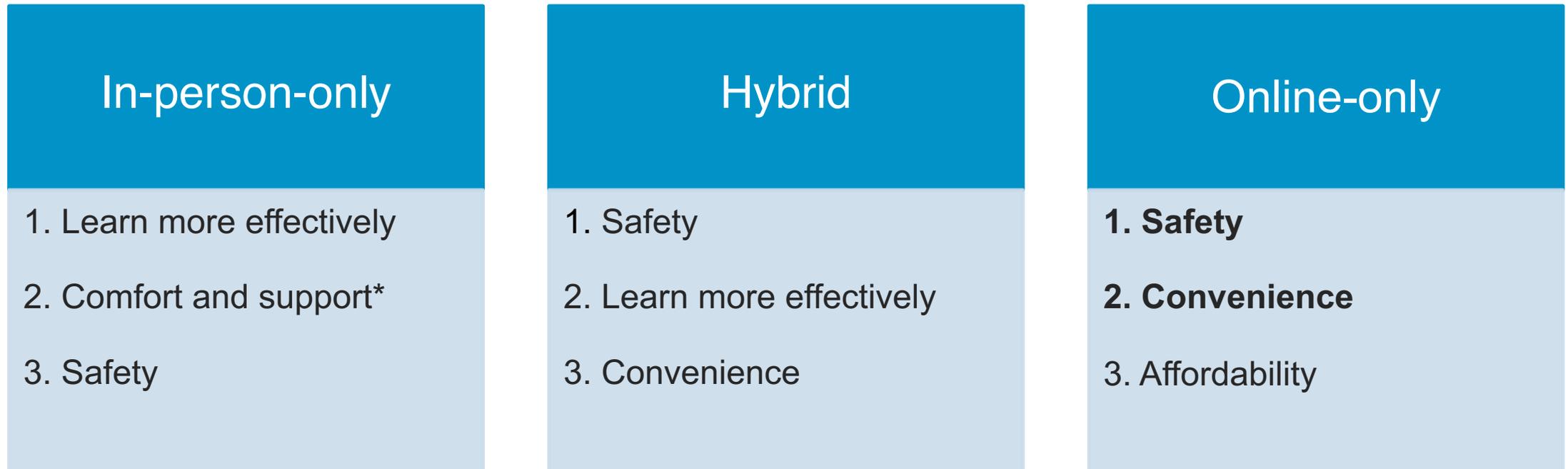
How important are the following reasons for your preference for in-person-only, hybrid, or online-only education over the alternatives?



Strada Center for Consumer Insights Public Viewpoint survey, Aug. 5-6. Base: adults ages 18 and older, n=491. *Aggregated field that includes “feel more comfortable,” “more supportive environment,” and “easier to make friends with classmates.”

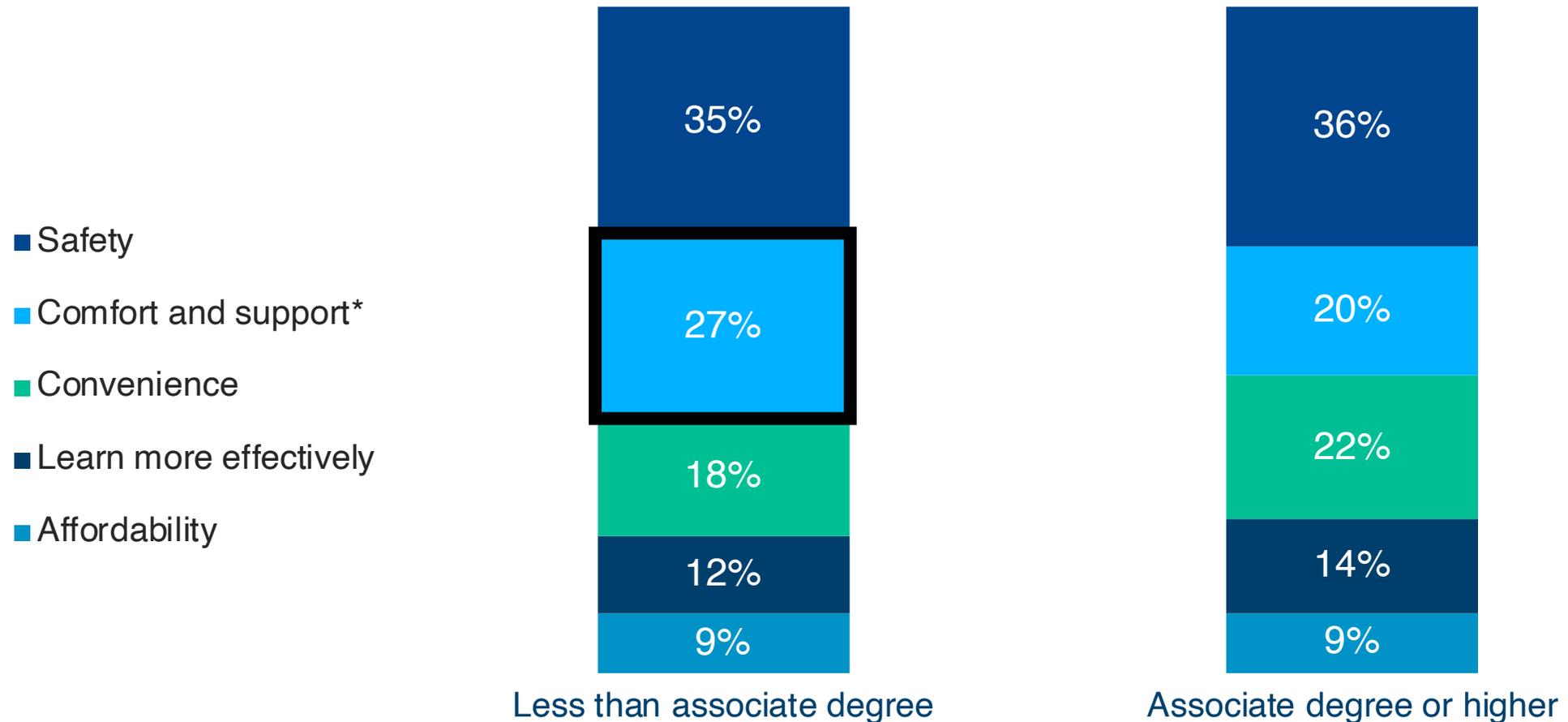
Americans who prefer online-only programs are more likely to say **safety** and **convenience** were motivating factors

Top three reasons for preference by preferred mode of education



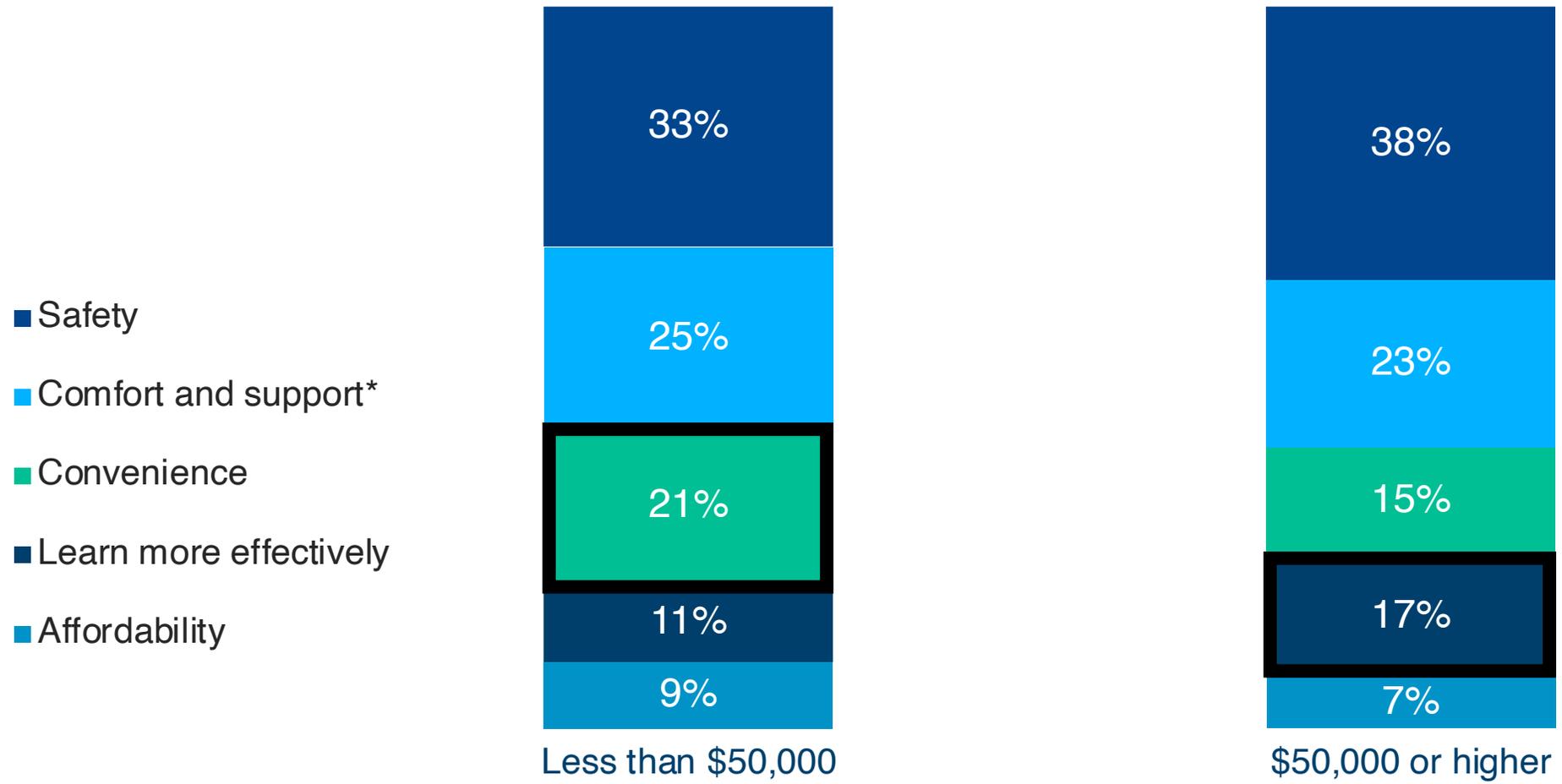
Americans without a college degree are more likely to identify comfort and support as the most important factor in deciding among in-person, hybrid and online options

Most important reason by educational attainment



Low-income Americans place more importance on convenience and less importance on safety and the mode that helps them learn most effectively

Most important reason by personal income



Key findings

Reasons for preference: degree, nondegree, or skills training

1. **Relevance is the most common factor linked to preferences for degree, nondegree, or skills training.** Nearly 40 percent of Americans say the most important factors in deciding among degree and nondegree education options are whether a program is related to their work and suited to their personal needs.
2. **Americans who prefer nondegree education options place greater priority on value.** Those who prefer degree programs, by contrast, say the top reasons are that degree programs are a better fit for their personal needs and would help advance their career.
3. **Americans with a high school education or less say it is more important that education programs are stackable.** While Americans with at least some education beyond high school place less value on whether an education program leads to further education, those with a high school education or less say it is the second-most important factor in deciding among degree and nondegree options.

Reasons for preference: in-person-only, hybrid, or online-only

4. **Americans who prefer online-only programs say safety is the chief reason, followed by convenience and cost.** By contrast, Americans who prefer in-person education are more likely to say they prefer it because they learn more effectively through in-person experiences.
5. **Americans with less education place greater value on educational experiences that make them feel comfortable and supported, while low-income Americans are more likely to value convenience.** One in 4 Americans with a high school education or less and 1 in 4 low-income Americans say being in an environment where they feel comfortable is the most important factor in deciding among in-person, hybrid, and online education options.

Learn more at
StradaEducation.org/PublicViewpoint
or email
consumervoice@stradaeducation.org

Methodology

- Public Viewpoint is a regular tracking survey of education consumers' perceptions of COVID-19's impact on postsecondary education and work in the United States, completed by Heart+Mind Strategies on behalf of Strada Center for Consumer Insights.
 - Online survey of Americans ages 18 and above.
 - Representative of the general population in age, gender, geographic region, educational attainment, and race/ethnicity.
 - Current database size from March 25 to August 19: n = 16,110.
 - A theoretical margin of error based on a probability sample of size 1,000 would be +/- 3.1 percent at 95 percent confidence. This is not a probability-based sample, and a margin of error cannot be estimated. Based on experience, we believe the sampling error would be at least this number.
- Please contact Strada Center for Consumer Insights with questions or information requests at consumervoice@stradaeducation.org or learn more at StradaEducation.org/PublicViewpoint.