



Adult-Serving Programs and Policies at New England's Institutions

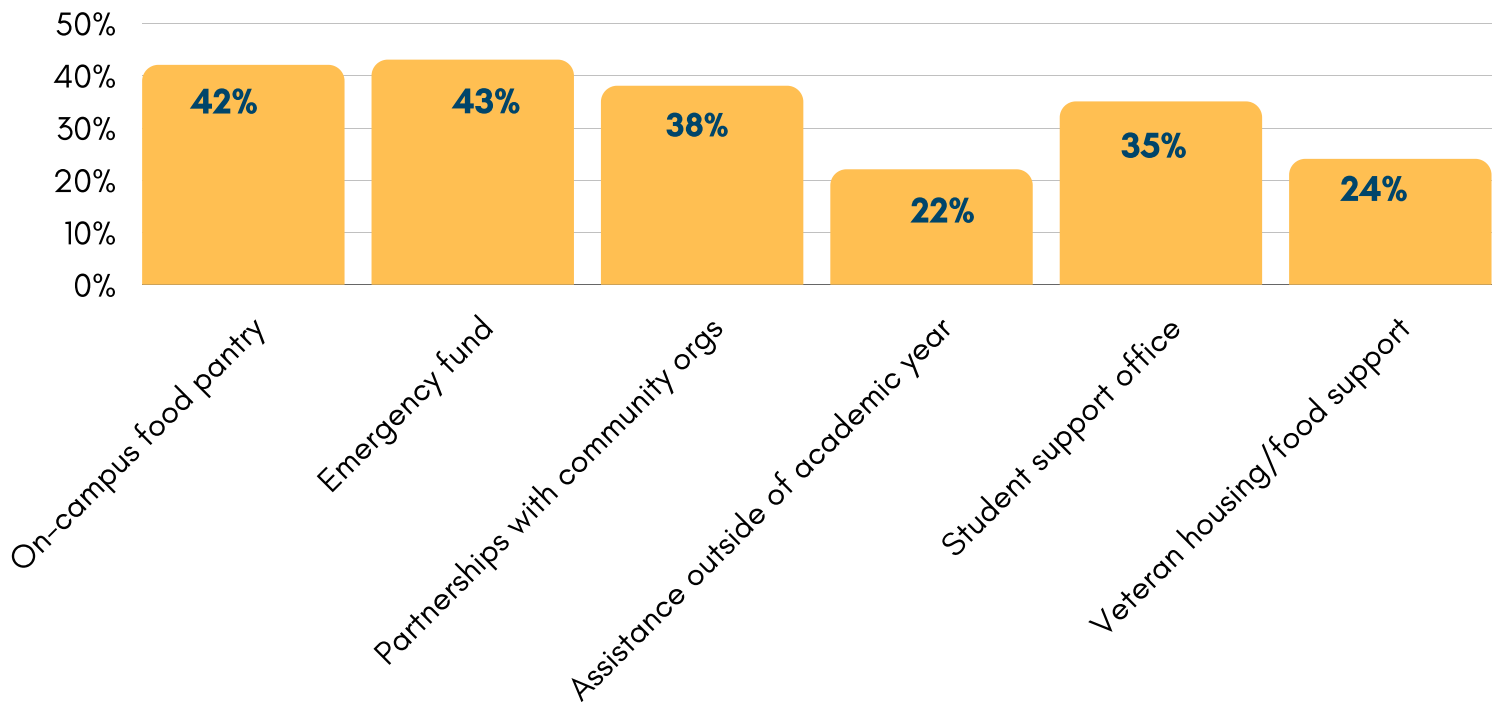
Results from NEBHE's Guide to Adult-Serving Colleges and Universities Survey: Non-academic Support

Adults over 25 years old represent approximately one quarter (25.6%) of New England's enrolled undergraduate population. However, New England's colleges and universities are largely perceived as traditionally structured, serving students aged 18-24. While four-year institutions, in particular, are geared more toward younger students, many institutions in the region are implementing programs and policies to better serve adult learners who hold additional professional, personal and familial responsibilities.

In August 2021, NEBHE surveyed the region's nearly 185 undergraduate institutions about programs, policies and services available to our adult learner population. This was the second iteration of what will be a biennial survey. So far, 73 institutions have responded (a near 40% response rate).

Below are data related to **non-academic supports**. While these items are also available to traditionally-aged undergraduate students, they provide additional security for adult learners juggling work, life and academic commitments.

Two-thirds (66.7%) of responding institutions offer some kind of non-academic support to students

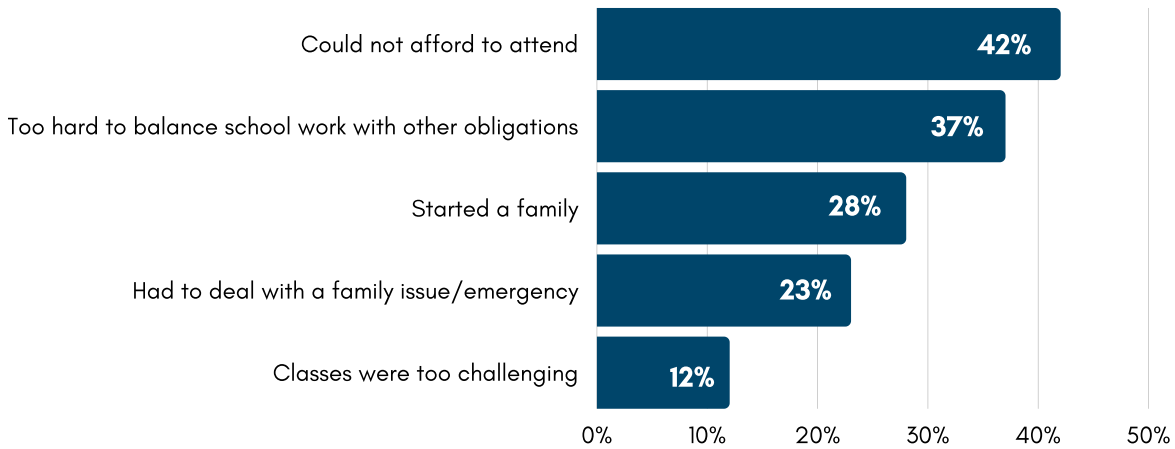


OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH

Only 13% (9) institutions offer on-campus childcare to students with children.

Offering low- or no-cost childcare on-campus would allow more students with children to attend classes, complete assignments, and complete a degree.

In spring 2020, NEBHE, in partnership with Maguire Associates, administered the [Adult Learner Survey](#). When asked why they stopped taking courses in the past, very few respondents (individuals with prior learning assessment (PLA) experience) cited academic reasons. By a significant margin, most individuals stopped taking courses due to financial or personal circumstances.



If more institutions in New England offered policies and programs like those included above (i.e. childcare opportunities, emergency funds to be used for students in need, year-round assistance with housing or food insecurity), adult learners would not be forced to choose between pursuing academics and balancing additional responsibilities. While these challenges will always persist, institutions that provide these support structures, particularly for adult learners, will be more likely to see higher attainment rates of this population (while helping add balance to their students' lives).

Did you know...

Community colleges and flagship institutions in New England are the most likely to offer comprehensive non-academic support to their students.

[See more survey results here!](#)

[Explore NEBHE's Adult Learner Fact Sheets here](#)