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New Report Finds Parenting Students Are More Engaged but Face Steep Barriers to Success

AUSTIN, TX – The Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE) has released *Multiple Responsibilities, Single Mission: Understanding the Experiences of Community College Parenting Students*, a national report examining the realities of community college students raising children while pursuing higher education.

About half of all undergraduate student parents attend community colleges. These students demonstrate extraordinary dedication but face significant financial, time, and resource challenges.

Key findings include the following:

- One-third of parenting students disagreed when asked if their college supports them as a parent or caregiver.
- Parenting students reported spending more hours preparing for class and were less likely to skip class than non-parenting students.
- Seventy-one percent of parenting students said caring for dependents could cause them to withdraw from college, and almost three-quarters reported that a lack of finances could cause this.

- Parenting students reported greater food and housing insecurity than non-parenting students, yet very few said they received the support they needed.
- Many parenting students said they are in college to change careers, but 60% never used career counseling services.

“Parenting students are among the most engaged learners on our campuses, but they face barriers that too often derail their progress,” said Linda García, CCCSE’s Executive Director. “But when colleges take intentional steps to support them, the impact is not only on students, but on their children and communities.”

The report highlights innovative practices from colleges across the country, including child-care partnerships, targeted financial assistance, and holistic support programs that integrate academic, personal, and family resources.

The full report is available at cccse.org/parenting-students/report.

[CCCSE](#) is a service and research initiative in the College of Education’s Department of Educational Leadership and Policy at The University of Texas at Austin.