



56% of Parents with Young Children Are in Debt Due to Coronavirus

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LendingTree survey shows that parents have spent over \$1,000 on average on distance learning supplies, some dip into college savings to cover expenses

CHARLOTTE, N.C., May 19, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- A [new LendingTree survey](#) shows that the financial fallout from the Coronavirus pandemic is particularly difficult for American parents with children. According to the survey of over 1,000 parents with children under the age of 18, 56% said they are in debt due to the added financial strain of the pandemic all while balancing distance learning for children and working from home.



Key findings

- **56% of parents have gone into debt due to coronavirus-related circumstances.** Four in 10 added credit card debt, and 15% had to turn to a personal loan.
- **Single parents are struggling more to pay bills amidst the coronavirus pandemic.** Nearly 1 in 5 parents who are single, divorced or separated couldn't pay their credit card bill last month, versus 9% of married parents. Fifteen percent couldn't pay their rent or mortgage in full.
- **36% of parents tapped their child's college fund** to help cover expenses due to the financial strain caused by the COVID-19 outbreak.
- **6 in 10 parents had to spend money for their child's distance learning.** On average, they spent a little over \$1,000 on supplies ranging from iPads and laptops (48%) to office furniture (15%).
- **Parents said the hardest part of the coronavirus pandemic has been trying to work from home while taking care of kids (31%).** They're also struggling to manage their child's distance learning (19%) while dealing with financial strain caused by income loss (18%).

"The truth is that even before the outbreak hit, most Americans' financial margin for error was tiny," said Matt Schulz, chief industry analyst at LendingTree and parent of an 8th grade son. "That means that even minor changes can have a major impact on the family budget. Then, when you consider how many parents are dealing with job losses or medical problems while also struggling to make sure their kids stay on track with school, it makes this time even more challenging financially."

Additional Expenses

Nearly half of parents of young children had to buy a computer or similar device (like a laptop or tablet) to assist their children in distance learning. **Along with headphones, software and other school supplies, parents spent \$1,018.50 on average turning their homes into virtual classrooms.**

But it's not just learning supplies that are draining the wallets of parents across America. Three in four parents agree that they're spending a lot of money to keep their kids entertained while stuck at home. Gaming systems like the \$300 Nintendo Switch have been flying off shelves since the pandemic began, as parents (many of whom are working remotely) grasp at a few moments of respite from working, teaching and parenting.

Tapping College Funds

During the coronavirus pandemic, anything more than a few months into the future seems distant, and that includes their children's college plans. For 36% of parents, immediate financial needs caused by the coronavirus pandemic have led them to tap their children's college fund. Another 15% of those surveyed said that they don't have a college fund for their kids at all.

Stimulus checks cover groceries and other necessities in a pinch

As part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, certain parents and children may be entitled to stimulus checks from the government: \$1,200 for adults and \$500 for each child. **Most (82%) parents we surveyed received a stimulus check, and 37% of those parents said they plan to spend their check on groceries.** Just over a quarter said they would use the stimulus check to pay for household bills.

For the full survey results and additional information, please visit: <https://www.lendingtree.com/personal/parents-in-debt-due-to-coronavirus-survey/>

Methodology

LendingTree commissioned Qualtrics to conduct an online survey of 1,005 parents of children under the age of 18. The sample base was proportioned to represent the overall population, and the survey was fielded April 28-May 1, 2020.

About LendingTree

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