Key Findings from the NFCC 2018

CONSUMER FINANCIAL LITERACY SURVEY

The 2018 Consumer Financial Literacy Survey, conducted online by Harris Poll on behalf of the National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC), provides a snapshot of consumers’ financial knowledge, as well as behavioral and attitudinal trends associated with personal finance.

CONCERNING FINANCIAL FINDINGS

1 in 4 (24%) find it difficult to minimize debt due to unexpected financial emergencies.

25% of adults in the U.S. admit they do not pay all their bills on time.

Overall, 8% of adults have debts in collections, while 13% of adults ages 18–34 (Millennials) have debts in collections.

HOMEOWNERSHIP

Those residing in the Northeast, South, and Midwest are less likely than those residing in the West to bemoan increasing home prices.

49% of those who have tried to purchase a home have faced barriers.

TOP 5 BARRIERS TO HOME OWNERSHIP

- 18% Rising home prices
- 17% Lack of funding for the down payment and/or closing costs
- 14% Existing debt
- 14% Limited housing options within budget
- 13% Poor credit history/low credit score

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CREDIT CARD DEBT

61% of adults have had credit card debt in the past 12 months and most have done nothing to obtain a lower interest rate for their credit card debt.
Nearly 2 in 5 Millennial women (39%) do not pay all their bills on time compared to 1 in 4 Millennial men (25%).

Millennial women are 2x as likely as Millennial men to say they would take out a payday loan if they needed $2,000 for an emergency.

Younger adults, particularly Millennials (41%), are more likely than older adults 65+ (16%) to say they are now saving more money compared to one year ago.

Older adults ages 65+ are most likely to say they pay all their bills on time.

Nearly 1 in 3 Millennials (32%) feel not at all or not very knowledgeable about how their credit score is determined.

47%, almost half of Millennials, have a budget and keep close track of how much they spend.

Millennials are more likely than older adults to be saving more than last year.

About 1 in 4 U.S. adults (24%), or almost 59 million Americans¹, would reach out to a professional non-profit credit counseling agency for help if they were having financial problems related to debt.

¹ Calculation based on U.S. Census Bureau’s 2016 Current Population Survey (CPS), which estimates there are 244.81 million adults ages 18+ residing in the United States: 244.81M x 0.24 = 58.75M.