Executive Summary

About College Success Foundation College Coaching

The College Success Foundation (CSF) provides an integrated system of services and scholarships to help students finish high school, graduate from college, and succeed in life. CSF serves students from groups that encounter the largest structural barriers preventing them from accessing and graduating from college at high rates: youth from households with low income, youth who are the first in their families to participate in higher education (“first-generation college students”), youth of color, and youth in foster care.

To meet the needs of students, CSF College Services offers coaching to 2- and 4-year college students throughout Washington State. In one-on-one or group meetings, coaches assess, prioritize, and teach skills and knowledge to help students achieve personal and professional goals. Coaches use a strengths-based perspective, fostering student ownership in the development of goals and actions. Currently, between 600 and 750 students are offered coaching each year.

Why Coaching?

- Coaching encompasses elements of multiple nonacademic supports such as academic advising and mentoring.\(^1\)
- Nonacademic supports are vital in fostering college achievement, helping students transition to higher education and enhancing their commitment to higher education.\(^2\)
- Coaching is repeatedly shown to positively impact college student outcomes, especially when the student has ongoing interactions with a coach over time.\(^3\)

92% of students said their coach impacted their ability to succeed in

My CSF coach knows a lot about the college process and life in general. It’s nice to have that wealth of knowledge to fall back on, because admittedly, college can be scary.”
Ultimately, coaches aim to support student persistence through higher education. As students continue on their college path, coaches impact them in varied ways that contribute to their ability to succeed in a college environment. Figure ES-1 depicts how coaches impact students in ways that contribute to their academic success.

Exhibit ES-1: Relationship Between College Success Foundation Coaching and Student Impacts

Academic Outcomes of Students Who Entered College in 2019-2020

**Persistence rates**
Most (85%) students who interacted with CSF coaches believed the coach played a role in their ability to persist term to term.

Coaching participants persisted at higher rates than the national average:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution supports</th>
<th>Students feel supported, connected</th>
<th>Students grow their skills, knowledge, and mindsets</th>
<th>Students build confidence in themselves</th>
<th>Students know of and feel comfortable navigating institution supports</th>
<th>College Success Foundation coaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-year college students who participated in coaching</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National average for 4-year students</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-year college students who participated in coaching</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National average for 2-year students</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stop out rates**
Coaching participants were less likely than other CSF students to stop out, or take a break of 4 or more months.

- Coaching participants: 14%
- Nonparticipants: 44%
- CSF students before coaching was offered: 39%
The most common college attended by CSF students is the University of Washington Seattle (UW Seattle). Coaching participants at UW Seattle had a higher retention rate than other CSF students at the same institution. Coaching participants also had a higher retention rate than their peers with similar characteristics, such as Pell Grant receipt or being a first-generation college student.

Nonacademic Impacts of CSF Coaching

90% of students trusted a coach after just one meeting. “It is so nice to know that I have someone to help me when I need help. Even when I don’t need help, [the coach] really listened to my concerns and thought about it makes me have a better outlook on what to expect in the future.”

82% of students agreed that their coach built confidence in their ability to take action. “I feel like [the coach] gave me with my decisions. I guess just knowing that [the coach] really listened to my concerns and thought about it makes me have a better outlook on what to expect in the future.”

96% of students reported growth in knowledge, skills, and awareness. “Not only is [the coach] just giving you the answer, but then [the coach] also is showing where you can find the answer in the future. [The coach is] both helping you succeed now and later.”

88% of students agreed that their coach taught them how to find support or resources. “Not only is [the coach] just giving you the answer, but then [the coach] also is showing where you can find the answer in the future. [The coach is] both helping you succeed now and later.”
Methodological Note

The data in this report were collected by RTI International, a third-party evaluator, and analyzed and interpreted in partnership with CSF staff and students over 3 years of program implementation.

All academic outcome data reflect students who entered college in the 2019–2020 academic year. Data on academic outcomes come from an analysis of National Student Clearinghouse records for CSF students between 2019 and 2022. Other data on CSF students come from administrative records, a survey of coaching participants in May 2022 (N = 131), and a series of focus groups with coaching participants between 2020 and 2022. Academic data on UW Seattle students were obtained from Public Profiles – Undergraduate Student Retention and Persistence. Academic data on national averages were obtained from National Student Clearinghouse estimates.


