

Financial Illiteracy is the Big Bad Wolf Hounding the American Dream

BUDGET BRAINIACS Can Help You Make Sure Your Child/Grandchild Does Not Grow Up to Become One of Its Victims

Dear Parent/Grandparent,

1. Suppose you have \$100 in a savings account and the interest rate is 2% per year. After 5 years, how much would you have in your account if you left the money to grow?

- More than \$102
- Exactly \$102
- Less than \$102

2. Imagine that the interest rate on your savings account is 1% per year and inflation is 2% per year. After 1 year, how much would you be able to buy?

- More than what you can today
- Exactly the same as what you can today
- Less than what you can today

3. Buying a single company stock usually provides a safer return than a stock mutual fund.

- True
- False

Easy, right?

The answers: 1. a, 2. c, 3. b.

But nearly 1 in 2 adults 50 years or older got all 3 questions **WRONG!**

That means, 53.15 **MILLION** grownups don't know how to . . .

- calculate simple interest
- minimize financial risk
- protect their money from inflation, which cuts the wealth you have in cash by half every 8 or 10 years—\$100,000 in cash today will be worth no more than \$9,938 in just 3 decades!

In other words, millions of Americans are **financially illiterate**, let alone **unprepared for retirement**.

America's Financial Illiteracy Epidemic

Many Americans point their finger for their financial woes at Wall Street . . . the White House . . . politicians . . . the Federal Reserve . . . greedy business . . . secret societies . . . even an invasion by aliens.

The truth is . . .

" . . . many Americans are at blame for their own financial crises because of a lack of financial education."—Sharon Lechter, co-author of *Rich Dad, Poor Dad*

But what about the bankruptcies, layoffs, foreclosures and personal tragedies that followed the financial crisis of 2007-08?

"A close look at consumers helps explain why many became victims in a much larger economic meltdown. Consumers of financial products, particularly in the United States, contributed to the economy going off the rails."—John Bruce Bryant, Vice President of the President's Advisory Council on Financial Literacy

Here are some telling statistics about *America's financial illiteracy epidemic*:

- most Americans spend \$94.20 out of every \$100.00 they make
- nearly 7 out of 10 (no matter how much they make) live paycheck to paycheck
- fewer than 1 in 2 adults track their spending
- more than 1 in 5 don't monitor their overall spending at all and have no idea how much they spend on food, housing and entertainment
- nearly 4 out of 10 report they have no savings—and this number is rising
- nearly 1 in 2 workers has no clue how much they need to save for retirement—fewer than 2 out of 10 workers report being "very confident" about having enough money for a comfortable retirement
- 1 in 4 Americans takes out payday loans, applies for an advance on a tax refund or engages in some other form of expensive, non-bank borrowing
- 8 out of 10 say money matters are a significant cause of stress in their lives
- "money problems" is one of the top reasons why most marriages end in divorce
- 33 million households (including almost 55.30% Black and 48.70% Hispanic families) have few or no opportunities for savings, lending and basic financial services because they are unbanked or underbanked
- average household credit card debt is just \$1,100.00 away from reaching a level considered 'unsustainable'
- more than 5 out of 10 Americans say they are neither financially secure nor prepared for a financial emergency

As per a National Financial Capability Study conducted by the FINRA Investor Education Foundation, **'Americans demonstrate relatively low levels of financial literacy and have difficulty applying financial decision-making skills to real-life situations'**.

But what's really **tragic** is . . .

Most Americans Will Follow in the Footsteps of Their Families When It Comes to Their Own Financial Future

Because parents influence kids the most (twice as much as friends) in developing their financial attitudes & behaviors . . .

. . . the sons & daughters of financially illiterate Americans will most likely **repeat** the financial mistakes of their parents.

That means, they will be ill-prepared as adults to:

- **navigate the financial services marketplace**, which involves making increasingly complex decisions
- **make smart financial choices** when they enter the labor market because they lack practical money management knowledge & skills
- **protect themselves & their families** from scamsters, get-rich-quick "investment" schemes and expensive financial products & services
- **improve their financial capability** and may instead make a) financial decisions based on misinformation and b) costly financial mistakes at important stages of their life
- **secure a financially comfortable future** for themselves as well as their loved ones, employers/employees, business interests, even their communities & the nation

Imagine your child/grandchild running up \$5,000 in credit card debt while still in school . . . like 1 in 2 college students . . .

. . . or having more than \$10,000 in credit card debt . . . like 1 in 3 college students.

Fewer than 1 out of 10 students is now saving money for college. And **student loan debt EXCEEDS credit card debt!** Many eligible students are not even aware of Pell Grants or other more affordable & flexible federal aid alternatives to private loans.

Imagine your child/grandchild being burdened with a five-figure student loan debt that will take them 8 years or more to pay off . . . like more than 6 out of 10 college students are today . . .

. . . or saving little or nothing at all . . . like more than 6 out of 10 Americans ages 18 to 24 years do today . . .

. . . or moving back home with you after college . . . like most college grad job seekers have done following the Great Recession.

Yes, 81% of parents feel it is their responsibility to teach their kids about money and savings.

But many parents are simply unsure about when and how to talk to their children about money matters.

And that's a big problem because 87 out of 100 school students say parents are their main go-to people for information about personal finance & money management.

To make matters worse, only about 1 in 5 students **actually** talks frequently with their parents about money issues. And about 2 out of 5 say they "occasionally" ask their parents questions about personal finance.

But . . .

. . . don't America's schools help?

Financial Education is NOT AT ALL a Part of the School Curriculum in Many States!

There's no doubt that financial literacy will **always** be at least as important as (if not more than) schooling. Because sooner or later it influences everything from household wealth to retirement planning and spending habits to pension contributions.

And there's also no doubt that most Americans (82%), including 89% of the nation's teachers, think personal finance should be taught to all students at least from high school.

But get this:

Only 12 States require students to take a personal finance course either on their own or in an economics course as a high school graduation requirement. And no fewer than 41 States have absolutely **no formal requirements** to assess the financial literacy of their students.

In fact, fewer than 25 of the 50 States score an 'A' or 'B' on the personal finance education options available to high school students—60% score a 'C' or worse.

Worse still, financial literacy classes have become a **luxury** most schools cannot afford. That's because of budget cutbacks and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001—the federal spending law that supports K-12 schooling programs.

That means, most students are not receiving a practical financial education . . .

. . . because schools lack qualified financial education teachers . . . teach outdated money lessons . . . and/or have been forced to cut down non-core courses like financial education from their curriculum.

So, it doesn't surprise me then that while nearly 4 out of 10 parents give schools an 'A' or 'B' in safe sex education, over half with kids in high school/college give schools below-average or failing grades in teaching kids responsible spending.

"I Wish Someone Had Taught Me That When I Was Growing Up . . ."

Embarrassed by their poor financial literacy in everyday situations, many American adults wish someone had taught them early in life how to do things like . . .

- stay financially afloat
- avoid unnecessary debt
- pay yourself first
- establish savings
- open and manage savings & checking accounts
- build up a nest egg
- pick & vet charities
- create & manage a budget
- invest
- pay for high college costs
- manage a credit card, car loan and cell phone contract
- stay on the road to financial stability

But the cold hard truth is many young Americans, like the generations before them, will learn their money lessons from the School of Hard Knocks.

"Young people often fail at their first consumer purchase, saving, banking, or credit experience, and may continue to make bad financial decisions into adulthood. Habits that begin at a young age may carry on to adulthood and can cause financial problems."—Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education

As the mother of two tweenagers, I have no doubt in my mind that introducing kids to financial education at an early age will encourage responsible financial behavior as they become young adults.

Researchers say early financial education also boosts the chances that such children will seek out more financial education in the future, including via non-formal methods like books, magazines, courses and seminars.

However . . .

Finding a Good Financial Education Program For Your Child/Grandchild is a Challenge in Itself

According to the Department of the Treasury, individuals who take a personal finance education course go on to **save more, be worth more and make larger 401(k) contributions**.

This supports the findings of most studies, which say that those who lack a financial education are almost certain to experience tougher financial circumstances.

But . . .

. . . most financial education programs have one BIG drawback.

Most of the teachers, volunteers and bankers that these programs rely heavily on to deliver their material are either **poorly trained or never receive any training at all**.

Not only do they report feeling awkward, nervous, uncertain, ineffective, even scared . . . they are also forced to deliver the material in ways youngsters DO NOT relate to.

Why else would students of financial education programs report being "tuned out" and "bored"?

Studies say that even semester-long high school courses don't help.

On the flip side . . .

. . . several factors make long-term financial education extremely **expensive**.

For example, take the speed with which financial products & industry practices change.

You would need a lot of money (and time) to stay up to date.

It comes as no surprise then that most financial education programs barely scratch the surface of America's financial illiteracy epidemic.

The fallout?

Financial habits remain unchanged.

And that's **UNACCEPTABLE** because **our children & youth alone spend about \$211 BILLION every year**.

The Right Financial Literacy Program Can Mean the Difference Between Your Child/Grandchild Struggling with Money Issues and Achieving Financial Success as an Adult . . .

That's why I want to introduce you to a financial literacy program that's designed to guide your child/grandchild toward financial literacy & success into their young adulthood.

It's called **BUDGET BRAINIACS**.

BUDGET BRAINIACS is neither a classroom program nor works like one.

10 created and **BUDGET BRAINIACS** is first & foremost a fun web-based program your child/grandchild can access as often as they like (from any device) to gain critical financial knowledge and learn important financial skills & habits.

BUDGET BRAINIACS is the only online program designed to reach your child/grandchild in a way they will relate to at precisely the exact time when they are forming their financial habits.

And because **BUDGET BRAINIACS** grows with your child/grandchild . . .

. . . your child/grandchild can expect to use the program to learn everything from how to save, spend & invest smart starting right now to how to apply for federal student aid or their first job years from today.

BUDGET BRAINIACS arms your child/grandchild with several critical concepts & skills:

CONCEPTS: Banking . . . Budgets . . . Buying . . . Careers . . . Choices . . . Consumers . . . Credit . . . Debt . . . Exchange . . . Expenses . . . Income . . . Interest rates . . . Investments . . . Money . . . Opportunity costs . . . Saving . . . Scarcity . . . Spending . . . Social security . . . Standards of living . . . Taxes

SKILLS: Analysis . . . Applying information . . . Budgeting . . . Cause and effect . . . Critical thinking . . . Computation . . . Data collection . . . Decision making . . . Filling out forms . . . Following directions . . . Graphing . . . Interpersonal communication . . . Interpreting data . . . Listening . . . Negotiation . . . Observation . . . Planning . . . Problem solving . . . Reading . . . Research . . . Role playing . . . Taking responsibility . . . Teamwork

BUDGET BRAINIACS lets your child/grandchild have fun learning about money while it gets them ready to take control of their financial future even before they leave high school and/or college.

BUDGET BRAINIACS is endorsed by several child welfare authorities, academic institutions, financial planners, banks, credit companies, insurance companies, even the Oval Office:

" . . . it is more important than ever to be knowledgeable about the consequences of our financial decisions. Budget Brainiacs is a step in the right direction."—President Barack Obama

"[Budget Brainiacs] offers skills not taught in school."—*The New York Times*

" . . . a great way to provide kids help just before important financial decisions are to be made."—Prof. John G. Lynch, Jr., University of Colorado

"Budget Brainiacs gets across to kids—the idea that money is a tool that they need to know how to manage to succeed in life."—Jean Chatzky, Financial Editor, NBC's "Today" show

At an introductory price of \$29.00 (less than a dollar a day), a 30-day **BUDGET BRAINIACS** membership is a great value.

By the way, your child/grandchild can "earn" up to 29 Brainiac Dollars every month as a reward for doing well in the quizzes, games & other **BUDGET BRAINIACS** activities and exercises.

Your child/grandchild can use Brainiac Dollars to buy cool, useful stuff from the **BUDGET BRAINIACS** online store . . .

. . . or to partly/fully pay their **BUDGET BRAINIACS** membership dues. (That means your child/grandchild could be funding their own **BUDGET BRAINIACS** membership for days on end!)

Your child/grandchild can now try **BUDGET BRAINIACS FREE for 30 days** with our compliments . . . but only if you sign them up before **31 July 2015**.

Simply mention this Unique \$29.00 Savings Code when placing your order online or by toll-free phone:

As a co-creator, I can tell you that **BUDGET BRAINIACS is a great opportunity for parents/grandparents to help future generations start making a better life than they themselves could**.

And I can easily use the next few pages to tell you what a blessing BUDGET BRAINIACS can be to a grandchild just starting out in life.

But I won't.

Instead, I want YOU to put **BUDGET BRAINIACS** through its paces and prove it to yourself by signing up your child/grandchild for 30 days without risking a cent.

If you find you aren't completely thrilled & convinced **BUDGET BRAINIACS** is helping your child/grandchild gain critical financial knowledge and learn important financial skills & habits . . .

. . . I'll promptly have **any & all charges** made to your card reversed—no questions asked.

And I'm so confident **BUDGET BRAINIACS** is everything I know it is . . .

. . . I'll even have up to \$100.00 of your total business at the **BUDGET BRAINIACS** online store promptly refunded if you do not happy with the program for any or no reason at all.

Let your child/grandchild take a **FREE** look, won't you?

After all, what can be more comforting than the thought of giving your child/grandchild a financial head start in life.

Please click the big, orange button below or call XOX.OXO.XOXO toll free to sign up your child/grandchild right away.

To your child/grandchild's financial success,

Olivia Collins-Wolt
Creator of **BUDGET BRAINIACS** and Founder, Executive Chairwoman & Acting CEO of BestFin, Inc. (the folks behind **BUDGET BRAINIACS**)

Claim your child/grandchild's FREE 30-day BUDGET BRAINIACS membership worth \$29.00

P.S. When you sign up your child/grandchild for the **FREE 30-day BUDGET BRAINIACS membership**, we'll priority mail you a hard copy of our soon-to-be released 256-page book, **The BUDGET BRAINIACS Companion to the Financially Literate American Family** worth \$12.49. It's our **FREE gift** to you and yours to keep even if you choose not to sign up your child/grandchild for a paid membership later.

P.P.S. For your convenience, we will renew your child/grandchild's membership automatically after the FREE 30-day **BUDGET BRAINIACS** trial membership expires. We will keep the membership active and charge your card at the beginning of each month with this guarantee:

100% Money-Back Guarantee

Your satisfaction is guaranteed. If you are not happy for any reason or no reason at all, you can cancel your membership at any time and receive a full refund of the final month's membership dues—even if you cancel on Day 30. Any Brainiac Dollars in your account can be redeemed up to 30 days after you cancel membership.

P.P.P.S. We receive several unsolicited letters, e-mails & phone calls from mothers/grandmothers from all across the country. Here's what some of them have to say about **BUDGET BRAINIACS**:

"It's such a relief to know my children will be well-prepared for managing their money when they embark on their own lives as adults."—Thelma Bazell, WI

"Based on the comments on my blog about Budget Brainiacs, you have a home run!"—Hermione Walters, hwalters.typepad.com

"I consider Budget Brainiacs a MUST for every American child 10 years and up. What better gift than to give someone the tools for an independent and financially secure future?"—Mary S. Norris, Chartered Family Financial Planner, FL

"Here's why I want to say THANK YOU for Budget Brainiacs. My daughter has become more responsible with money matters. She's thinking one step ahead about the choices she makes. She would buy things on impulse but that's no longer a problem anymore!"—Julia Sarandon, CT

"When we were recently at a department store and checking out, the clerk asked me if I would like to apply for their store credit card and receive a certain percentage off my purchases for the day. My son (he's 12) declined the offer, as he had completed the chapter about having only one credit card to be paid off monthly (no extra spending for me!) and knowing the credit inquiry might reduce my credit score. On our way back home, Jamie told me why none of the reasons for getting the new credit card was worth it and why we were not taking advantage of this "opportunity". So, do I recommend Budget Brainiacs? What do you think?"—Yvonne Richardson, AZ

"Budget Brainiacs would have saved me thousands and provided a game plan to set me up for my 40's and 50's. I'm glad my son and daughter don't have to go through what I have. Great job BestFin."—Molly Parfitt, NM

"As a school counselor for over 25 years in the nationally leading Maryland Montgomery County Public Schools, I recommend Budget Brainiacs to anyone 10 years or older—my four grandchildren (ages 10 to 16) are members."—Lindsey McGee, MD

"As an adult, a parent, and an educator, I strongly recommend Budget Brainiacs. It offers a wealth of information about how youngsters (my two kids are members) can conceptualize their financial life and also practical advice for saving, spending, and building wealth. Budget Brainiacs has offered me an awakening regarding several aspects of my own financial life."—Susan Rowlette, SD

"I wish they did teach me this in school. [Budget Brainiacs] very clearly explains how children can go about managing their money - and it isn't boring either. My granddaughter who just graduated from high school is a member. I wish every student could be one because it gives fundamental knowledge that we all need at some time or other when it comes to finances. I recommend it highly."—Rebecca Lawrence, MS

P.P.P.P.S. As a special one-time surprise, we've topped up your child/grandchild's **BUDGET BRAINIACS** account with 29 Brainiac Dollars! And the deadline to claim your child/grandchild's **FREE 30-day trial membership** is 31 July 2015.

Claim your child/grandchild's FREE 30-day BUDGET BRAINIACS membership worth \$29.00

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