

course fees	revere
unwilling	However
practical	over
blended learning	supported
low-income	setting up
cost-effective	long-term
rise	maximise
view	unaffordable
major	workforce
for instance	indicate

Encouraging school-leavers to take college courses

In the last ten years there has been a **rise** in the number of teens finishing their studies at age 16 or 17. Statistics **indicate** that they are opting to leave school as early as possible, either because they are unable or **unwilling** to take their education further. It is clear that this could have a **practical** impact on the skills, knowledge and qualifications of the general **workforce**. It is therefore essential that governments find ways to **revere** this trend.

We need to begin by asking why young people do not see college as a good option. A **major** factor is certainly the cost. For many **low-income** families, **course fees**, materials and equipment are simply **unaffordable**. Reducing fees would therefore enable many more students to attend college. However, for the government to do this, it would need to use a very large part of its total budget for education, year after year.

It might be a more **cost-effective** solution to offer young people more flexibility in *when* and *how* they study. If governments **encourage** colleges in developing online courses and **blended learning** programmes, more young people could study at a time and place that was convenient to them. Students with daytime jobs, **for instance**, could choose to do their coursework and **attend** workshops or online webinars in the evening or weekends.

Developing these kinds of programme would be expensive at first, but once the courses were established, it would be a **practical** approach. Now we have the technology, we should use it to **maximise** educational opportunities for the young generation.