



“Ask Benji” FAQ for Students and Families

What is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)?

The FAFSA is a form completed by current and prospective college students in the United States and used by higher education institutions and the U.S. Department of Education to determine their eligibility for student financial aid.

Why should I complete the FAFSA?

Completing FAFSA is one of the most important steps in pursuing a postsecondary education and the best way of making college more affordable for students. Arizona students from middle-income families secure an average of \$10,000 per year in federal financial aid by completing the FAFSA (including work study, grants, federal loans). In fact, most colleges and universities require a FAFSA to grant financial aid, including scholarships.

Where can I get help with the FAFSA?

“Ask Benji” was created to help Arizona students and families get quick answers to questions about the FAFSA. You can also consult your school counselor and online resources for assistance. Ask Benji’s website, www.askbenji.org, includes a resources page with quick access to additional information about the FAFSA.

Is completing the FAFSA hard?

It’s easier than ever to complete the FAFSA. It takes about 30 minutes to complete and can be done from a PC, laptop, or mobile device. Help from Benji along the way makes the process even easier.

What is Benji?

Benji is a first-of-its kind chatbot, specifically designed to help students, parents, and educators get quick answers to a wide variety of questions about the FAFSA. Benji is free and easy to use. It is not an app. There is no download required. Questions are confidential. Benji responds 24/7 within 60 seconds.



How do I get started?

To get started, text “Help” to Benji at 602-786-8171. You may receive a response from another number. This is Benji. Benji will ask you a few questions about yourself. Benji quickly responds to all questions, 24-7.

What information does Benji need from me?

Benji will ask you some basic questions (name, high school, grade), which will be used to help Benji remind you about FAFSA deadlines, inform you about upcoming FAFSA events, and tailor answers to your questions to your needs. The information Benji collects, as well as all questions asked, are completely confidential.

How does Benji work?

Benji has been programmed to immediately answer more than 600 FAFSA and financial aid questions that students and parents may have while submitting their FAFSA. As more Arizona students and parents use this service, Benji will continue to learn and respond to more questions and unique circumstances.

Why was Benji built?

Benji was built by a coalition of Arizona higher education partners to help ensure that Arizona meets its FAFSA completion goal of 52 percent of Arizona students for the 2020-2021 FAFSA cycle. Arizona has one of the lowest FAFSA completion rates in the nation and Ask Benji seeks to reverse that trend to ensure that access to higher education is equitable across the state.

Where can I get more information?

Visit www.askbenji.org for more information about Benji, FAFSA, and other resources. Text “Help” to Benji anytime at 602-786-8171 to get started.