

77% of Tutors Say a Confidence Crisis Is Hitting Gen Alpha Learners Hard

Superprof tutors say the real obstacle to academic success is what students believe about themselves

PARIS, FRANCE, August 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A new survey from [Superprof](#), the world's largest tutoring network, finds that many students who can prove they know the material still don't believe it.

According to the survey, 77% of tutors say they frequently or occasionally see a student get the right answer or demonstrate a skill, then insist they "can't" do it or "aren't good at" the subject. The finding points to a confidence crisis that may be shaping student outcomes as much as academic ability itself.

The logo for Superprof, featuring the word "superprof" in a bold, red, sans-serif font with a white outline, set against a light gray background.

Conducted in July 2026, the survey gathered responses from 923 U.S.-based tutors. The findings deviate from familiar narratives about shrinking attention spans and pandemic-era learning loss and even from the common assumption that phones, social media and AI are to blame, and instead indicate that many students understand subject material well but lack the self-belief to activate what they know. That distinction matters most right now, as parents and educators head into back-to-school season looking for ways to re-engage kids.

While 56% of tutors say students are more confident in their academic abilities than five years ago, anxious behaviors remain common: 53% say students avoid challenging work, 41% report increased fear of mistakes, and 40% see students give up after a single setback.

Overall, the data paints a picture of students paralyzed by performance pressure, low self-confidence, and a fear of making mistakes. Far from struggling in their subjects, many of these learners demonstrate above-average proficiency but cannot grow to their full potential until they are inspired to trust their abilities.

Tutors are pushing back on one of the most common explanations for student struggle: technology. Parents and educators often point to smartphones, social media and AI as the reason students are struggling. Tutors surveyed largely push back on that narrative and say these tools tend to be symptoms rather than root causes. The deeper issue is cognitive overload from constant digital information, paired with a lack of instruction on how students can use these tools for active learning instead of passive consumption.

"This data confirms what we're hearing from tutors across the country: some of the biggest breakthroughs happen the moment a student starts believing they can succeed, rather than when they learn a specific formula, technique, or topic," said Wilfried Granier, CEO of Superprof. "For students to go out into the world ready to show us what they can do, we have to close the confidence gap along with the knowledge gap."

Addressing the confidence gap has become routine in tutoring, with 80% of respondents saying that building students' confidence is now a significant part of their job, more than any other non-content focus reported.

"Bridging the confidence gap starts with creating a safe and welcoming environment where students feel heard rather than constantly evaluated," said May Jerry, a tutor at Superprof. "I allow my English Language Learners (ELL) to speak uninterrupted, following up with tailored practice tasks that gently guide them toward formal academic proficiency. Celebrating these incremental victories transforms their anxiety into genuine self-belief and lasting motivation."

As families and educators look for ways to assist students this fall, the data suggests the real target is how students see themselves.

Parents and students looking for effective resources, or tutors interested in joining the Superprof network, can visit www.superprof.com to find a tutor or start tutoring.

About Superprof

Superprof is the world's largest tutoring network, connecting millions of students with tutors for online or in-person lessons across more than 2,000 subjects. From academics to languages to life skills, Superprof helps learners of all ages find personalized, flexible support to achieve their goals.

Gena Ritter
Communications Strategy Group
gritter@wearecsg.com

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