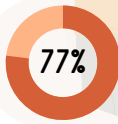


Youth Perspectives on: Youth Employment



Overview



77% of youth surveyed (n=1,135) rated this issue as somewhat or extremely important

Employment came up just over 30 times during listening sessions with youth. While students expressed enthusiasm about working and earning money, many also described limited access to job opportunities, especially for younger teens and those without prior experience.

WHY IT MATTERS

Early employment plays a critical role in helping young people gain real-world experience, develop responsibility, and build financial literacy. Jobs can also boost confidence and serve as a protective factor against disengagement. When youth face barriers to employment, such as age restrictions, low pay, or limited job openings, they may miss out on opportunities to grow and prepare for adulthood.

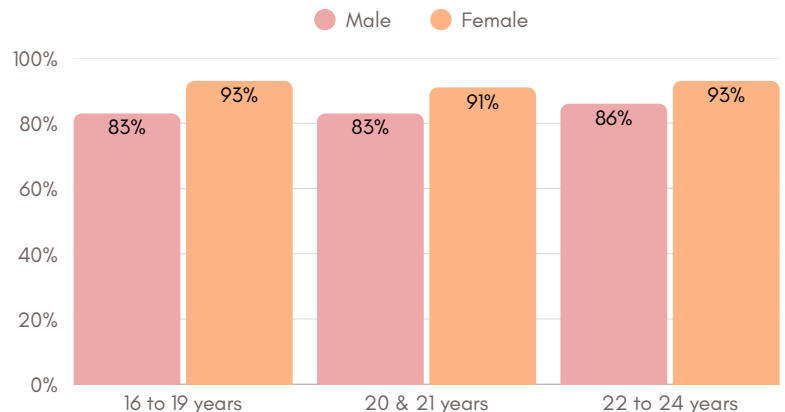
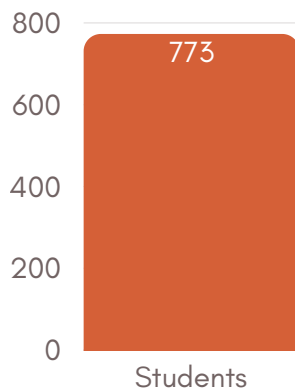
WHAT THE DATA SAY

Employment Rate among Labor Force Participants by Gender and Age (16-24)

Source: American Community Survey, 2022 5-Year Estimates

ACPS Students Earning One or More Career & Technical Education Credential

Source: VA Department of Education, 2023-2024



WHAT YOUTH WANT

20+ mentions

Access & Opportunities

"There needs to be way way more job opportunities and more jobs for kids 13+."

- Access to jobs that are welcoming to teens
- Paid internships and entry-level positions that offer skill-building and mentorship
- School and community programs that support workforce development and connect students to employers
- Opportunities that prepare them for long-term career success

2 mentions

Quality & Pay

"Better pay for students."

- Fair wages that reflect the value of youth labor

WHAT YOUTH EXPERIENCE

5+ mentions

Access & Opportunities

"Less jobs for 14- and 15-year-olds."

"Not getting job opportunities due to lack of history or experience."

- Limited access due to limited experience and age-based restrictions that exclude motivated younger teens.
- Not knowing how to get started or where to find available positions.

1 mention

Quality & Pay

"Not a lot of high paying jobs for kids."

- Low compensation – even when jobs are available, youth often feel wages are too low to make a meaningful impact.