



## Fewer Summer Jobs Means Less Opportunity

Posted on June 13, 2016

[https://informationstation.org/kitchen\\_table\\_econ/fewer-summer-jobs-means-less-opportunity/](https://informationstation.org/kitchen_table_econ/fewer-summer-jobs-means-less-opportunity/)

With school winding down, many teenagers are on the lookout for summer jobs. But fewer and fewer are finding one. As the administration said, “[L]anding that first job is all too difficult for students.”

According to MarketWatch, the number of career opportunities secured by job-seekers ages 16 to 19 registered at 156,000 in May—a 14 percent decline from last year. And last year’s number was almost 11 percent lower than the year before. It continues a troubling trend: During the 1970s, teenagers acquired an average of about 800,000 jobs from May to July, compared to just over 400,000 jobs on average this decade. A Gallup survey found that only about one in

three teenagers work summer jobs; in the 1970s, that number was over 50 percent.

One reason is it’s costing more for employers to hire them. Raising the entry-level wage—one government policy gaining traction around the country—effectively makes America’s youngest employees more expensive, forcing job creators to hire less people to stay in business. When labor costs go up, small business owners and other employers are left scrambling to save money in other ways. And that means less resources spent on business expansion and investment in new employees. John Challenger—whose research firm Challenger, Gray, and Christmas concluded

that “fewer American teens get summer jobs”—suggested as much: “Restaurants and retail outlets are still hiring teens, but not as many as in the past.”

Unemployed teenagers not only lose out on pocket money, but also the chance to learn new skills and move up the career ladder. Summer jobs teach inexperienced employees “how to manage in situations where you don’t necessarily like everything,” explains career coach Roy Cohen. They also prepare teenagers for life after college. As career coach Martin Yate puts it, “Any experience at all puts you ahead of the competition because you have real experience in the professional world of work.”