Challenges Facing Youth Entering the Labor Market

Martha Ross
The Brookings Institution

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Challenges facing youth and young adults entering the labor market

Martha Ross
April 4, 2018
Among all races/ethnicities, employment rates start fairly low among teens and increase with age.

Employment by race/ethnicity and age, 2008-2014, U.S.

Source: Brookings analysis of American Community Survey Public Use Microdata
Employment rates vary by as much as 27 percentage points by educational attainment.


- In school
- Less than HS
- HS
- Some college
- AA
- BA

20-24:
- 2008: 89%
- 2014: 87%

25-54:
- 2008: 87%
- 2014: 83%
The employment/education pattern holds in the Las Vegas metro, though the differences aren’t quite as great.

Employment rate by educational attainment and age, Las Vegas metro, 2008-2014

- **20-24**
  - Less than HS: 61%, 56%
  - HS: 66%, 67%
  - Some college: 84%, 78%
  - AA: 89%, 88%
  - BA: 85%, 83%

- **25-54**
  - Less than HS: 60%, 65%
  - HS: 74%, 75%
  - Some college: 70%, 69%
  - AA: 80%, 78%
  - BA: 84%, 85%
THE EDUCATION PIPELINE

How many 18-24 year-olds are on track to a post-secondary credential?

52%
ATTENDING SCHOOL

- 9% high school
- 41% college/post-secondary
- 2% graduate school

8%
NOT IN SCHOOL, HAS A COLLEGE DEGREE

- 6% B.A.
- 2% A.A.

40%
NOT IN SCHOOL, NO COLLEGE DEGREE

- 11% some college
- 22% high school diploma
- 7% less than high school

Fewer young adults in Las Vegas and Clark County are in school than the national average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>In school</th>
<th>Not in school, has AA/BA</th>
<th>Not in school, no degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>U.S.</strong></td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Las Vegas</strong></td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clark</strong></td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most young adults who are not in school are working, but others are disconnected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>In school</th>
<th>Not in school</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Working</td>
<td>Not working</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>U.S.</strong></td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Las Vegas</strong></td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clark</strong></td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most young adults who have left school and are working have a high school diploma or less.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Less than HS</th>
<th>HS</th>
<th>Some college</th>
<th>AA</th>
<th>BA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>U.S.</strong></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Las Vegas</strong></td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clark</strong></td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority of the out-of-work have a high school diploma or less

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Out of work 18-24-year-olds</th>
<th>Out of work 25-64-year-olds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HS or less</td>
<td>Some college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>U.S.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Las Vegas</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clark</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We need more and better options to help young people move from school to work

• Much stronger advising in HS and college

• Dual enrollment programs that allow high school students to earn college credits

• Redesigned high schools to better prepare students for both post-secondary education and careers

• Reforms within community colleges to increase graduation rates
We need more and better options to help young people move from school to work

- Stronger pathways into the labor market: work-based learning in high school, sector strategies tailored to young adults, and apprenticeships

- Changes in employer behavior, such as increased partnerships with education and training institutions and recruitment focused on skills rather than degrees