



# YOUTH MATTERS: YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS

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*Analysis of a youth survey conducted in Western Australia between  
December 2014 and February 2015 by the State Training Board*



April 2015

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We cannot begin to address specific challenges and barriers that young people face without first understanding their experiences in today's job market.

The views of youth living in Western Australia have been sought through a comprehensive survey about education, training and employment experiences and barriers faced when exploring and entering the job market.

There are many factors that can make the transition from school to work difficult, putting some school leavers at risk of becoming disengaged or marginalised. If young people have poor literacy and numeracy skills, are not aware of or don't understand the training and career pathways open to them, or have personal issues that prevent them from progressing, it's going to be more challenging for them to find meaningful work.

Whilst there are many factors that can be addressed from an education or training perspective there are some barriers to participation that sit largely outside the remit of the State Training Board or the Department of Training and Workforce Development. Transport, for example, is a key factor in a young person's access to education, training and employment. Young women especially report that they are not able to access afternoon or evening jobs because they cannot access reliable transport at night. This severely limits their options in the job market.

Some respondents to the survey point to a general laziness, lack of motivation and ease of Government support payments as factors in increasing youth unemployment. Others call for better opportunities, more jobs and for employers to give young people a chance. Experience also seems to be a barrier in young people finding work. Many students reported that they couldn't get a job because they lacked experience but they couldn't get experience because employers wouldn't give them an opportunity.

This report is a summary of the survey results and provides a youth perspective on education, training and employment, work experience and career advice. The report is divided into six parts:

- Part 1 provides an overview of the 1186 respondents to the survey.
- Part 2 explores school, education and training matters.
- Part 3 explores work experience.
- Part 4 explores career advice.
- Part 5 explores jobs and employment.
- Part 6 provides youth perspective on tackling youth unemployment issues.

Whilst the survey is an important step in developing a youth workforce development plan, the State Training Board is aware that many marginalised and long-term unemployed may face additional barriers that were not captured through this survey. The Board intends to undertake further consultation through face-to-face focus groups and forums to get a better understanding of the challenges facing youth.

**AUDREY JACKSON**  
**CHAIR, YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE**

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## ABOUT THE SURVEY

The State Training Board youth survey aims to identify the barriers and challenges that confront many young people as they embark on education, training and employment.

Young people are often overlooked by policymakers when developing policies and programs that impact young people. The State Training Board's youth unemployment project aims to consult with youth about their experiences, concerns and visions for the future.

The survey forms part of phase two of the State Training Board's youth unemployment project. Phase two builds on from the release of *Youth Matters: a study of youth education, training, employment and unemployment in Western Australia* ("**Youth Matters**") in 2013.

The survey was developed using Survey Monkey and consisted of 35 questions, although not all questions required an answer by all respondents. The questions included demographic questions (age, sex, location etc.), school/college related questions, work experience, career advice and employment or job-related questions.

The survey was released by Hon Kim Hames MLA, former Minister for Training and Workforce Development on 4 December 2014. Young people were encouraged to complete the survey through social media and through a partnership arrangement with Student Edge. The survey closed on 27 February 2015 with a total of 1186 responses received.

The State Training Board thanks Student Edge, the Department of Training and Workforce Development and the industry training council network for their support in undertaking this survey.





## PART 1: PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

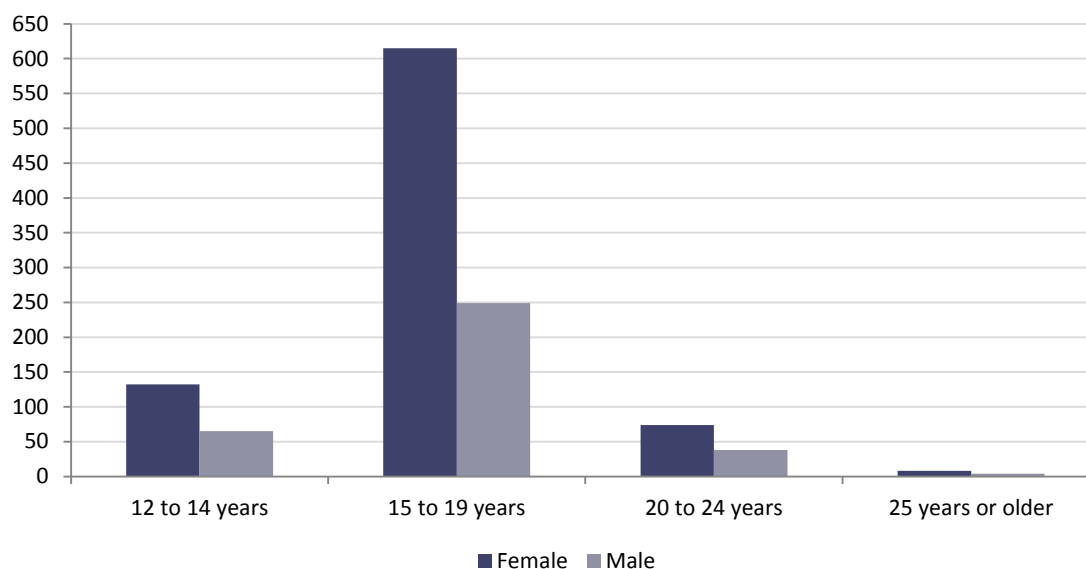
The survey was designed for young people aged between 15 and 24 years of age living in Western Australia. Survey respondents were asked a number of questions to help classify each respondent. These questions included:

- Age
- Gender
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander status
- Disability status
- Language spoken at home
- Location (Town/Suburb and Postcode)
- Living arrangements
- Transport issues
- Participation in organised after-school or social activities
- Highest Level of Education completed

The majority of survey respondents were aged between 15 and 19 years (72.6%). It should be noted that 197 survey respondents were aged 14 years or younger therefore questions regarding employment were not relevant to these respondents.

Figure 1 shows the age and gender spread of survey respondents. Seven out of every ten survey respondents were female. The highest response rate came from 15 year old females (165) followed by 17 year old females (160). The highest group of male respondents were aged 15 years (91) followed by males aged 16 years (75).

**Figure 1: Age and Sex Profile of Respondents**



In terms of Aboriginality, a total of 36 respondents (3%) identified as being Aboriginal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or Torres Strait Islander. A further 23 respondents (1.9%) chose “I’d rather not say” in response to the question.

In terms of disability status, a total of 49 respondents (4%) answered “Yes” to the question.

Respondents were asked to identify the main language spoken at home. The majority of respondents (91%) identified “English” as the main spoken language at home. Of the remaining

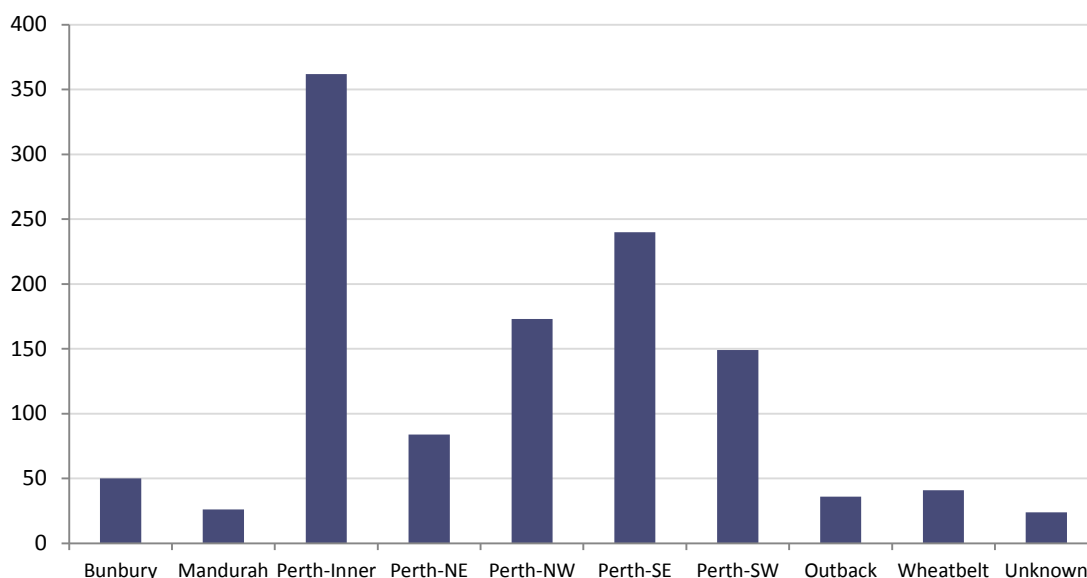
102 respondents there were 38 different languages identified with Tagalog (12), Vietnamese (12), Chinese/Mandarin (10) and Filipino (6) being more prevalent.

## Living arrangements

*Youth Matters* explored the factors that can influence a young person’s ability to transition between education, training and employment. One of these factors is the living arrangements of the young person.

Survey respondents were asked to provide their suburb/town and postcode to identify their location. For ease of interpretation this information was classified using the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) to Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4)<sup>1</sup> as shown in Figure 2. A number of survey respondents (83) simply answered “Perth” or “Western Australia” and did not provide a postcode which made it difficult to classify. The majority of survey respondents lived in the Perth metropolitan area.

Figure 2: Respondent Location Based on Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4)



The majority of survey respondents (88%) indicated that they lived at home with their parent/parents. Survey respondents identified their living arrangements:

- 25 lived with friends (2.1%);
- 15 lived in group home or residential care (1.2%);
- 18 lived on their own (1.5%);
- 18 lived with legal guardian or foster carer (1.5%);
- 28 lived with other relative (i.e. sibling, grandparent, aunt or uncle) (2.3%);
- 1045 lived with a parent or parents (88.1%); and
- 36 lived with partner or spouse (3.0%).

## Parental Influences

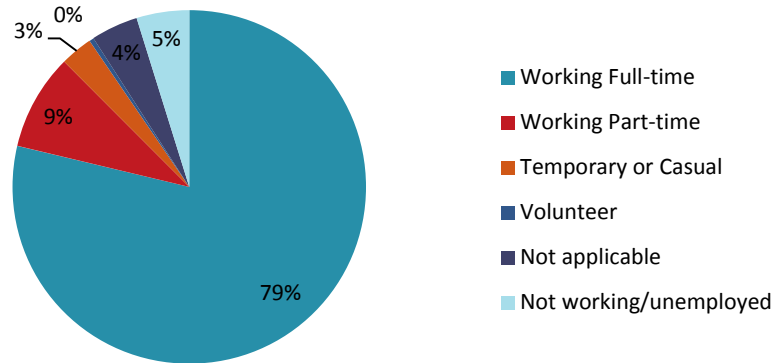
It is important to consider parental socioeconomic status when looking at the social and economic circumstances of children and young people. The employment status of a parent or carer is important in the context of a young person’s attitude towards employment.

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the employment status of the parent/carer that they live with most of the time (i.e. more than 4 days per week). The majority of respondents (79%) indicated

<sup>1</sup> There are 106 Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4) regions in Australia with populations in the range of 100,000 to 500,000.

that their parents/carers worked full-time. A further 9% indicated that their parents/carers worked part-time and 3% worked on a temporary or casual basis. Approximately 5% of survey respondents advised that their parent/carers were currently not working.

**Figure 3: Parent/Carer Employment Status**



Parental engagement in a young person’s schooling activities can influence the young person’s transition to further education/training and employment. Survey respondents that indicated that they were attending school or other education provider were asked how often their parent/carer took an interest in their school work, subjects and activities. Overall, parent/carer engagement with the young person’s schooling was positive with 35% of respondents indicating that their parent/carer always took an interest in their school work; 30% reported that their parents/carers took an interest in their school work “most of the time” and 18% reported that their parents/carers took an interest in their school work sometimes. Only 2.8% of respondents reported that their parent/carer never took an interest in their school work/subjects.

### Access to transport

Access to transport can play a vital role in the ability of a young person to participate in education, training or employment. Respondents were asked how often transport issues (access to transport, cost of transport) prevented them for doing things they wanted or needed to do.

For those living in regional Western Australia, 12.7% reported that transport was always a barrier; 21% reported that transport was a barrier most of the time and 44% reported transport as a barrier sometimes. 22.7% reported that transport was never a problem.

For the Perth metropolitan area 7.9% of respondents reported transport as a barrier always with the high proportion of these respondents coming from the South East metropolitan area (covering the Cities of Victoria Park, Kalamunda, Belmont, Canning, Gosnells and Armadale). 18.7% reported transport as a barrier most of the time with 23.5% of respondents coming from the South East metropolitan area. 528 respondents (52%) of respondents reported transport as a barrier sometimes. 21% of all Perth metropolitan respondents reported that transport was never a barrier.

A number of respondents pointed to transport being an issue when it came to getting a job or attending education/training:

*Transport is a problem because most teenagers can't drive or find it hard to get to their workplace.*

**Female, 14 years**

*Often the commute is the biggest challenge with university. I often have to rely on lifts from my parents (which take about 20 minutes depending on traffic). Travelling on public transport takes me around an hour both ways. I don't even live that far away from university; however after attending university Monday-Saturday the commute can often feel draining before/after a long day.*

**Male, 20 years**

*Transport as it will take me over an hour to get from home to university on public transport (even though driving is only about 25 minutes) so I am moving out of home in a weeks' time just so I can get to university!*

**Female, 17 years**

*A lot of it is transport, not all parents are able to help under aged youth to get from their job to home etc. The main issue is we are expected to work nights which can be dangerous if an individual has to catch public transport home. Me personally I live equal distances in all directions to retail and food outlets that hire young workers but I live a considerably lengthy distance from public transport to get me there and back. Not all employers will hire a young girl who can't do night shifts they want flexible and available people.*

**Female, 16 years**

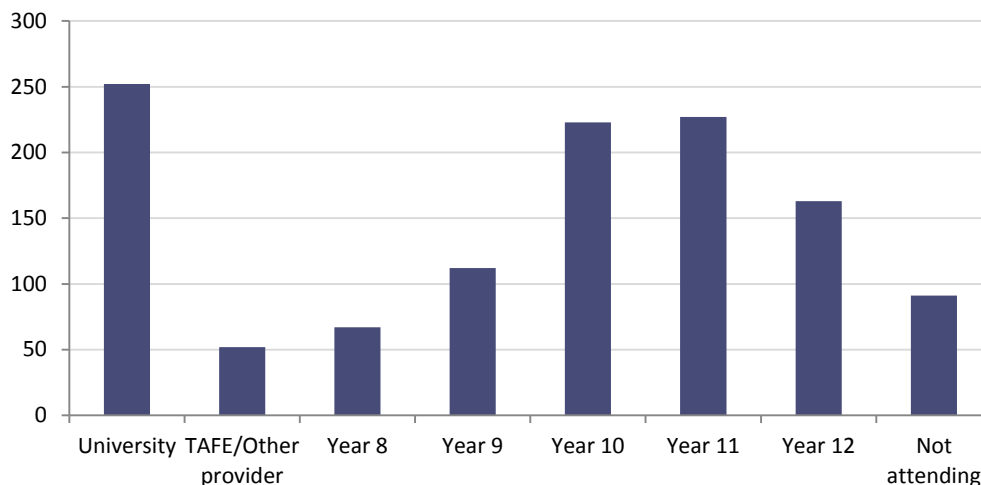
*Sometimes getting to and from university can be a bit of a hassle on public transport. I am unemployed so paying for fares can sometimes be a bit difficult.*

**Female, 18 years**

## Attendance at education or training providers

The majority of survey respondents (92.8%) reported that they were attending school or other educational/training institution.

Figure 4: Attendance at school or education provider



Studies have found that students who are absent from school are more likely to drop out of school<sup>2</sup> and less likely to be employed 6 months after the end of compulsory schooling<sup>3</sup>. Survey respondents were asked how many days they had deliberately skipped school/college in the previous 12 months. 78.8% of respondents to the question answered that they had skipped zero school days; 16.7% had skipped 1-9 days; 2.3% had skipped 10-19 days; 0.96% had skipped 20-30 days and 1.15% had skipped more than 30 days. 36% of those that reported skipping more than 20 days at school were in Year 10; 27% of those that had reported skipping more than 20 days of school indicated that they were attending University.

## Highest level of education completed

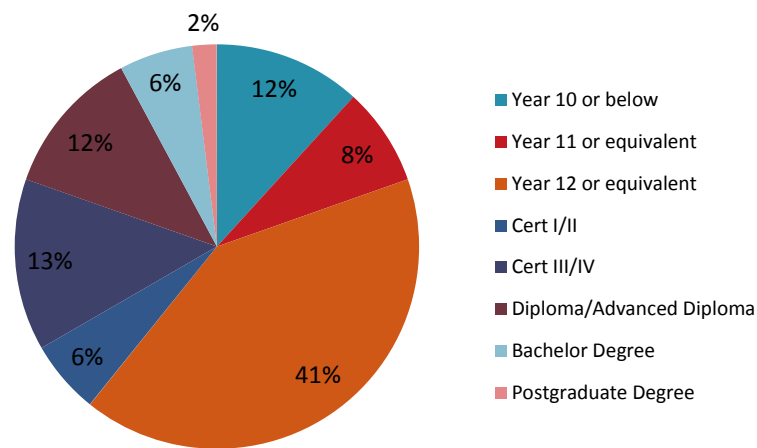
Survey respondents were also asked to indicate their highest level of education completed to date. It is understandable, given the age of most respondents, the highest level of education completed was Year 10 or below.

In terms of those students attending TAFE or further education provider, the Highest Level of Education Completed indicates that the majority of those survey respondents have completed year 12 before entering TAFE.

<sup>2</sup> Henry KL, Knight KE, Thornberry TP, School disengagement as a predictor of dropout, delinquency, and problem substance use during adolescence and early adulthood. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 2012; 41: 156-166

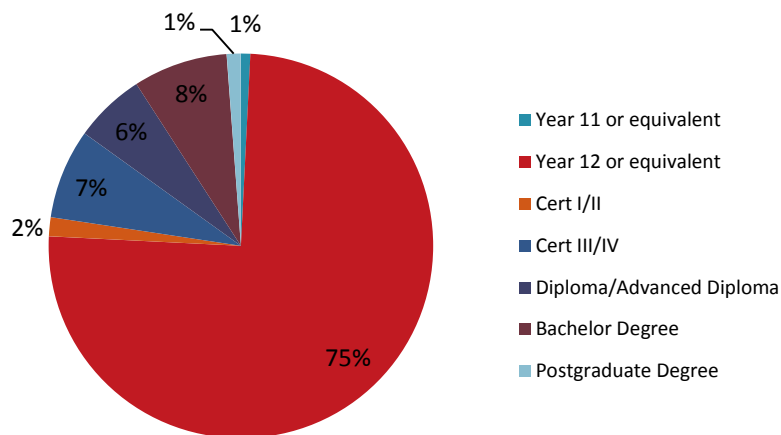
<sup>3</sup> Attwood G, Croll P, Truancy in secondary school pupils: Prevalence, trajectories and pupil perspectives. *Research Papers in Education*, 2006: 21: 467-484.

Figure 5: Highest Level of Education Completed TAFE Attendees (Survey respondents)



In terms of those students attending University, the Highest Level of Education Completed indicates that the majority of those survey respondents have completed year 12 before entering University.

Figure 6: Highest Level of Education Completed University attendees (Survey respondents)



### Year 12 completion

Year 12 attainment is regarded as a key factor in the formal development of an individual’s skills and knowledge. Those with Year 12 have a greater likelihood of continuing with further studies, particularly in higher education, as well as entering into the workforce. The Australian Council of Australian Governments (COAG) National Education Agreement (2009) aims to lift the Year 12 or equivalent attainment rate for 20-24 year olds to 90% by 2015<sup>4</sup>. The ‘equivalent’ to Year 12 is considered a Certificate III qualification.

6% of survey respondents aged 18 years or older reported their highest level of education to be below the COAG target (i.e. less than Year 12 or equivalent). 50% of these reported to having a Certificate I or II; 11% had Year 10 or below; and 38.8% reported to have Year 11 or equivalent.

Survey respondents still attending high school (i.e. Years 8-12) were asked their intentions on completing Year 12. The majority of survey respondents (91.3%) indicated that they planned to

<sup>4</sup> Compact with Young Australians, Australian Government, 30 April 2009

finish Year 12. Only a small number of survey respondents indicated that they did not plan to finish Year 12 (1.1%) and 7.5% indicated that they were undecided or unsure of whether they would complete Year 12.

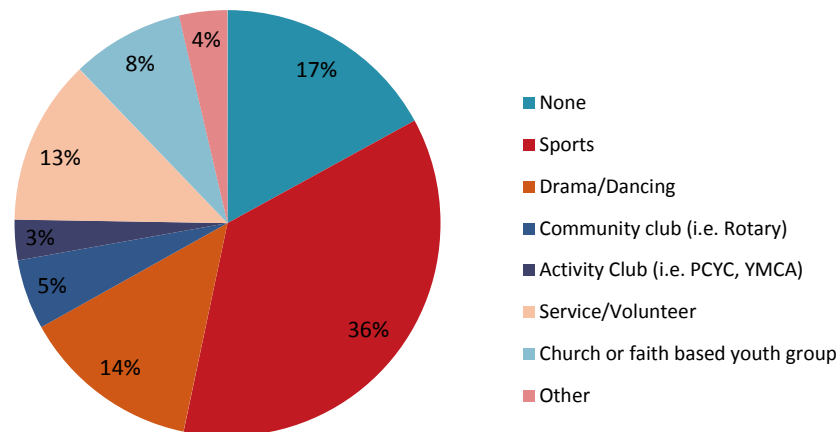
### After school or social activities

Participation in community based or social activities can help young people who are at risk of becoming disengaged or marginalised. Social networks and structures that support diversity can provide support, influence and opportunities for engagement, thus facilitating links to others that promote a sense of belonging and meaningful connections, fostering social inclusion and reducing disengagement<sup>5</sup>.

The majority of survey respondents (75%) participate in an organised after-school or social activity. 498 respondents participated in one after school activity, 252 participated in two activities, 123 participated in three or more activities.

17% of survey respondents did not participate in any organised after-school or social activity.

**Figure 7: Organised after school or social activities**



<sup>5</sup> Australian Research Alliance for Children & Youth, Preventing Youth Disengagement and Promoting Engagement, August 2008





## PART 2: SCHOOL, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The prospects of young people are often linked to their experiences at school. Education and training are essential for young people to enter the labour market successfully as they increase their productivity and employability. The research undertaken for *Youth Matters* showed that most young people (around 75%) manage the transition from school to further education, training or work with little difficulty and go on to establish a permanent place in the labour market.

Factors underpinning a successful transition include appropriate education and training. Full-time participation in education/training is critical to ensure that young people are equipped for a successful transition to secure work and independence. However, it is important that young people feel engaged whilst in education/training and feel that they are contributing towards their future.

### Biggest challenge with school/college

The survey provided an opportunity for respondents to provide comments on their biggest challenge with school/college. A number of respondents indicated that balancing school work with work, social activities or other commitments was difficult. Interestingly, a number of respondents indicated the high levels of stress associated with school both in connection with their school work and also relating to the social pressures associated with friends or classmates. 17 respondents indicated the bullying was a problem.

*I struggle having to balance a social life, school work as well as working a job.*

**Female, 16 years**

*Managing all my school commitments and the pressure of the high expectations I set myself. Sometimes it was a bit overwhelming especially in year 12.*

**Female, 17 years**

146 respondents indicated that time management and motivation was a problem. This included responses specific to going to school/college on time; the management of time in class and balancing school work with other commitments. A number of respondents indicated that staying motivated about school and assignments was a struggle.

A few respondents indicated that they struggled with their school work. This included specific problems with subjects (such as Chemistry, Algebra and Maths, English and Grammar). Some students indicated that they had learning difficulties such as dyslexia and this caused problems with their school work. Others, particularly those that spoke a different language at home, struggled to understand teachers or had difficulty with communication.

As you might expect a number of respondents reported homework as being the biggest problem associated with school.

*School always has homework that you have to complete by a certain date, and usually I have loads of homework to finish every week.*

**Female, 16 years**

*The amount of homework, some teachers go, "Oh I didn't give you any homework, here's some!" And they give you homework 'just because' and they don't think about the fact that every other teacher gave us homework.*

**Female, 14 years**

Preparing for exams and tests causes many young people a great deal of stress. A number of respondents indicated that exams were the biggest problem with school/college. Many secondary students indicated that there was pressure to do well with ATAR exams and they stressed about the possibility of not getting in to university.

*My biggest challenge or problem with school is the tests and exams. There is generally a really big deal made out of them which makes me feel worried and anxious and sometimes unable to sleep at night.*

**Female, 13 years**

*[My biggest challenge is] the jump from year 11 to year 12 with the bigger workload and the stress of the final exams in the near future.*

**Male, 17 years**

*Worrying about not being able to do ATAR courses and not passing ATAR or can't get into University. This stresses me out a lot.*

**Female, 15 years**

A number of respondents indicated that money or the costs associated with school/college was a problem.

*It's so, so, so, so EXPENSIVE! Post- grad units are approximately \$2100 - \$2600 each. I study part time and work full time, so time is not on side.*

**Female, 24 years**

*Affording the funds for university and knowing whether or not that course is going to benefit me later on in the future or if I will change my mind.*

**Female, 16 years**

*We were requested to purchase a MacBook for school; however, it is not used to its full potential. Furthermore most teachers do not like us using MacBooks in class, which means we must additionally pack books and other notes. Therefore our school bags are extremely heavy and it was a waste of money to purchase a MacBook and extra books, when we can use e-books.*

**Female, 15 years**

*Getting by financially as my TAFE fees are quite high, which leaves me little money to do other things & afford necessities.*

**Male, 23 years**

## Youth perspective on how well schools prepare students

Schools must cater for students from all walks of life with different goals and interests. Many schools offer a range of education and training courses and programs to provide young people with a choice and enable them to develop knowledge, understanding and skills about themselves, their community and the broader world in which they live.

Survey respondents were asked about their experiences at school. If the student had left school they were asked to answer the question based on the school they attended most recently or the last school year. There were six statements relating to their school/college:

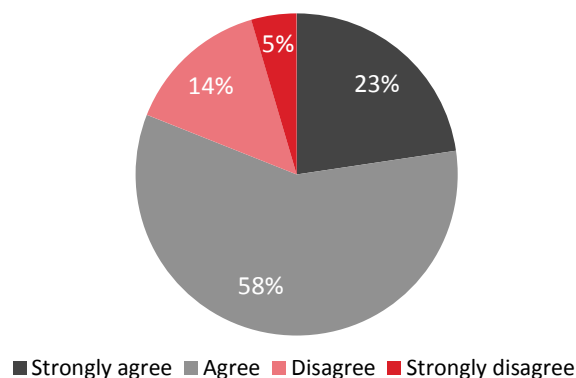
- My school has good links with employers that can offer work experience or employment.
- My school is preparing me to do well with my studies (e.g. the school provides support for Maths/English)
- My school offers a variety of education programs
- My school has helped me identify what I want to do with my life
- My school has developed a career plan for me to follow
- My school has helped me with skills to apply for jobs (e.g. resume writing, job applications, interview preparation)

Survey respondents' answers choices were Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree or Strongly Disagree. 150 respondents or 12.7% of respondents skipped the question.

### My school has good links with employers that can offer work experience or employment

A majority of survey respondents believed that their school or college had good links with employers that can offer work experience or employment. 22.6% strongly agreed with the statement; 58.2% agreed with the statement; 14.3% disagreed with the statement and 4.5% strongly disagreed with the statement.

Figure 8: My school has good links with employers



There was only a marginal difference between those living in regional Western Australia compared with those living in the Perth metropolitan area. 23.08% of regional respondents strongly agreed with the statement compared with 22.62% of Perth based respondents. 60.77% of regional respondents agreed with the statement compared with 58.09% of Perth based respondents. A greater proportion of Perth based respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement (19% compared with 16% of regional respondents).

There was only a marginal difference between males and females. More females strongly agreed with the statement (24.7% of females compared with 19.8% of males). More males strongly disagreed with the statement (5.3% of males compared with 1.0% of females).

Reviewing the results based on the type of education facility the respondent attends (i.e. TAFE,

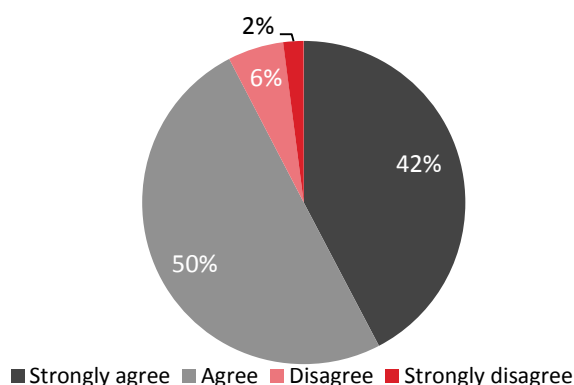
University, Upper Secondary and Lower Secondary) shows no real distinction as shown in the table below:

My school has good links with employers that can offer work experience or employment	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Lower secondary (Years 8 to 10)	24.5%	59.6%	12.0%	4.0%
Upper secondary (Years 11 and 12)	23.2%	56.6%	15.5%	4.7%
University	19.5%	59.3%	16.1%	5.1%
TAFE	19.5%	58.5%	17.1%	4.9%

**My school is preparing me to do well with my studies**

An overwhelming majority of survey respondents (92%) believed that their school/college was preparing them to do well with their studies (such as providing support for English and Maths).

**Figure 9: My school is preparing me to do well with my studies**



Regional respondents to the question answered favourably with 91% responding ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ to the statement. The Wheatbelt was the only region that reported a stronger negative response to the statement with 20% of respondents from the Wheatbelt disagreeing with the statement. There was not much difference between male and female respondents.

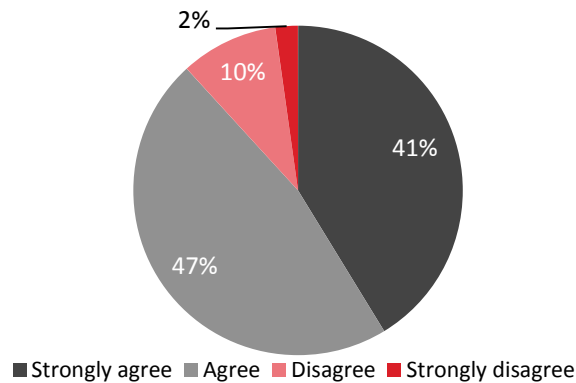
Reviewing the results based on the type of education facility the respondent attends (i.e. TAFE, University, Upper Secondary and Lower Secondary) shows that secondary students strongly agreed with the statement more than University or TAFE students. In fact, 8.5% of University respondents disagreed with the statement and 9.5% of TAFE respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

My school is preparing me to do well with my studies (e.g. the school provides support for Maths/English)	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Lower secondary (Years 8 to 10)	51.2%	41.9%	5.6%	1.3%
Upper secondary (Years 11 and 12)	45.1%	49.1%	3.9%	1.8%
University	26.7%	62.3%	8.5%	2.5%
TAFE	23.8%	61.9%	4.8%	9.5%

**My school offers a variety of education programs**

Survey respondents agreed that their school/college offered a variety of education programs with 88% indicating a positive response. There was very little difference between the genders with 87.8% of females and 89.0% of males responding positively to the statement.

Figure 10: My school offers a variety of education programs



Perth based respondents were more positive about their schools’ variety of education programs with 43% of respondents strongly agreeing with the statement compared with 33% of regional respondents.

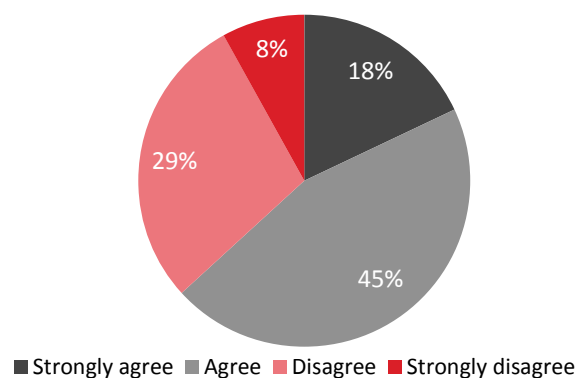
Reviewing the results based on the type of education facility the respondent attends (i.e. TAFE, University, Upper Secondary and Lower Secondary) shows that 48% of lower secondary school respondents strongly agreed with the statement compared only with 22% of TAFE respondents.

My school offers a variety of education programs	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Lower secondary (Years 8 to 10)	48.0%	42.2%	8.2%	1.6%
Upper secondary (Years 11 and 12)	38.6%	48.3%	11.0%	2.1%
University	38.1%	49.2%	9.7%	3.0%
TAFE	22.0%	65.9%	7.3%	4.9%

**My school has helped me identify what I want to do with my life**

Survey respondents were mixed on this statement with 29% disagreeing with the statement. There wasn’t a strong difference between the genders in this statement with 63% of females and 62% of males agreeing to the statement.

Figure 11: My school has helped me identify what I want to do with my life



Perth based respondents were more positive with this statement with 65% of respondents providing a positive response compared with 56% for regional respondents. 13% of regional respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Reviewing the results based on the type of education facility the respondent attends (i.e. TAFE, University, Upper Secondary and Lower Secondary) shows that secondary students tend to agree with the statement but a large proportion of students disagree with the student with 30% of lower

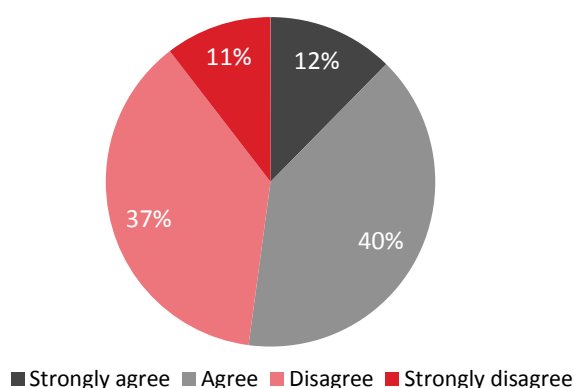
secondary students and 29.1% of secondary students disagreeing with the statement.

My school has helped me identify what I want to do with my life	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Lower secondary (Years 8 to 10)	18.6%	44.0%	30.0%	7.4%
Upper secondary (Years 11 and 12)	16.5%	44.6%	29.1%	9.7%
University	20.3%	46.2%	28.4%	5.1%
TAFE	22.0%	51.2%	12.2%	14.6%

**My school has developed a career plan for me to follow**

When it comes to career plans, only 52% of respondents agreed that their school/college developed a career plan for the student to follow. 10% of female respondents and 11% of male respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Figure 12: My school has developed a career plan for me to follow



53% of regional respondents did not agree with the statement that their school/college developed a career plan for the student to follow. 70% of Wheatbelt respondents and 66% of Mandurah respondents disagreed with the statement.

Reviewing the results based on the type of education facility the respondent attends (i.e. TAFE, University, Upper Secondary and Lower Secondary) shows that TAFE respondents were more positive about career plans developed by their colleges with 48.8% agreeing with the statement. Secondary students were less positive about their school’s career planning with 38.8% of lower secondary students and 37.3% of senior secondary students disagreeing with the statement. 38.6% of University respondents also disagreed with the statement suggesting that TAFE students are provided more careers planning by their college than any other student.

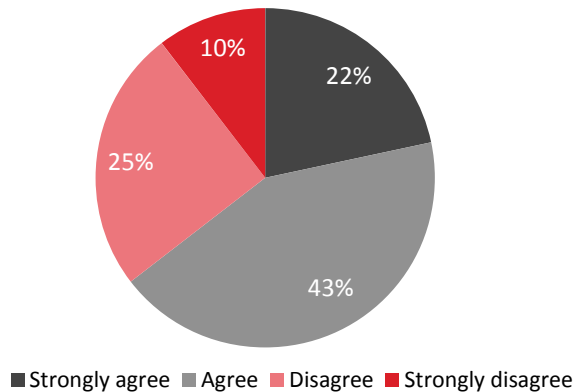
My school has developed a career plan for me to follow	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Lower secondary (Years 8 to 10)	12.2%	38.0%	38.8%	10.9%
Upper secondary (Years 11 and 12)	13.1%	39.4%	37.3%	10.2%
University	10.6%	41.5%	38.6%	9.3%
TAFE	17.1%	48.8%	19.5%	14.6%

**My school has helped me with skills to apply for jobs (e.g. resume writing, job applications, interview preparation)**

The development of skills needed to apply for jobs such as resume writing and interview preparation are essential for improving the transition from education/training to the workforce. Many young people struggle when they apply for their first job and are not provided with opportunities to practice interview techniques in a learning environment. Males were slightly more positive than

females in response to this statement with 67% of males agreeing with the statement compared with 63% of females. 54% of respondents based in the Mandurah region and 45% of respondents based in Perth’s North East area disagreed with the statement.

**Figure 13: My school has helped me with skills to apply for jobs**



Reviewing the results based on the type of education facility the respondent attends (i.e. TAFE, University, Upper Secondary and Lower Secondary) shows that TAFE respondents were more positively about job application skills being developed through their college with 75.6% of TAFE respondents agreeing with the statement. About 26% of lower secondary students and University students disagreed with the statement. Whilst this is not unexpected for lower secondary students given their age, it could suggest that University students are not provided with job-ready or job application skills through their studies.

My school has helped me with skills to apply for jobs (e.g. resume writing, job applications, interview preparation)	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Lower secondary (Years 8 to 10)	23.3%	39.0%	26.5%	11.1%
Upper secondary (Years 11 and 12)	24.9%	42.3%	23.9%	8.9%
University	13.1%	48.7%	26.3%	11.9%
TAFE	24.4%	51.2%	14.6%	9.8%

**Intentions to undertake training, education or study in the next 12 months**

Survey respondent were asked their intentions regarding further study, training or education in the next 12 months. 21% of survey respondents did not provide a response to this question.

The table below shows that 27% of 12-14 year olds, 54% of 15-19 year olds and 45% of 20-24 year olds intend to continue with their current studies in the next 12 months.

3.5% of 12-14 year olds, 0.7% of 15-19 year olds and 3.6% of 20-24 year olds indicated that they were not interested in further study.

<b>Study Intentions</b>	<b>12-14 years</b>	<b>15-19 years</b>	<b>20-24 years</b>
Continue current studies	53	469	50
Consider studying at TAFE	1	41	6
Consider studying at University	8	68	7
Not interested	7	6	4
Too costly	5	23	4
Not sure or undecided	71	75	7
Waiting on previous results	0	17	0
No response	51	166	34
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>865</b>	<b>112</b>

The increase in fees for TAFE and University students has been in the media in recent months. 2.7% of all survey respondents indicated that they would not be studying as it was considered too costly. This suggests that only a small percentage of young people are concerned about the cost of studying in Western Australia.



## PART 3: WORK EXPERIENCE

Allowing young people to participate in work experience can be a valuable career exploration process. Many young people have unrealistic views of the world of work and many will find through a work experience placement that a certain career pathway may or may not be suitable to them. Work experience can be a very effective means of challenging social stereotypes about the realism of occupational ambitions<sup>6</sup>.

Work experience allows a young person to work in an adult environment for the first time and to develop employability skills that enhance their vocational or academic studies. Work experience closer to the ultimate labour market entry (aged 16 to 18 years) optimises opportunities for jobs to be secured<sup>7</sup>, but is too late to inform important decisions about post-education and training choices. Ideally work experience should be timed to take place before a young person is required to make their senior secondary subject selections.

### Participation in work experience

Survey respondents were asked whether they had participated in work experience as part of their studies. Only 343 respondents (28.9%) reported that they had participated in some form of work experience.

Survey respondents that had participated in work experience were asked to rate their experience. There were 8 statements that survey respondents were asked to rate.

As a result of my work experience...

- I have a better understanding of the skills employers are looking for and which skills they think are important
- I have a better understanding of my own strengths and weaknesses
- I was able to practice the skills I have learned during my course/studies
- I feel more confident about handling new situations or meeting new people.
- I have developed new skills (e.g. customer awareness, problem solving)
- I have a better idea about what I want to do as a job or a career.
- I have a better understanding about people's rights and responsibilities at work (e.g. health and safety, equal opportunities)
- I understand why it is important to do well in school.

Survey respondents' answers choices were Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree or Strongly Disagree or Not Applicable.

### **I have a better understanding of the skills employers are looking for and which skills they think are important**

The benefits of work experience will largely depend on the type of work placement given to the student and the type of exposure the young person has to customers/clients, the exposure to different technology and equipment and the interaction with office/workshop personnel. This requires a work experience placement that is more than simply making teas/coffees and photocopying.

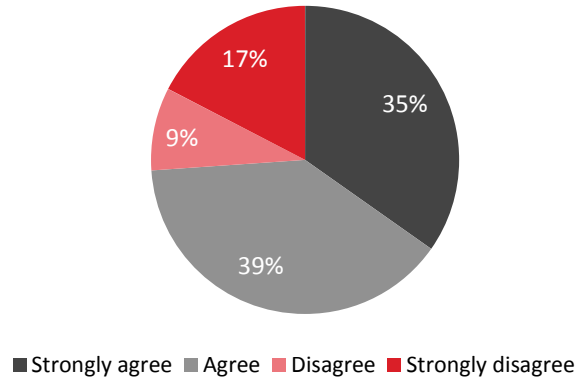
Industry-specific or job-specific work experience can enlighten a young person to the required skills employers are looking for in that particular industry/job which can help a young person decide

<sup>6</sup> Education and Employers, *Work Experience: Impact and Delivery – Insights from the Evidence*, UK April 2012

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*

whether the industry/job would suit their personal characteristics, aptitude or abilities. More generic 'employability skills' can also be picked up through a work experience placement, such as communication skills, thinking skills, learning skills and personal management skills (i.e. time management).

**Figure 14: Better understanding of the skills employers are looking for**



The majority of survey respondents believed they had a better understanding of skills employers were looking for. 78% of male and 71% of female respondents reported having a better understanding of skills employers are looking for.

Better understanding of the skills employers are looking for	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<15 years	31.0%	37.9%	6.9%	24.1%
16 and 17 years	40.3%	38.7%	8.1%	12.9%
>18 years	25.0%	41.7%	12.5%	20.8%

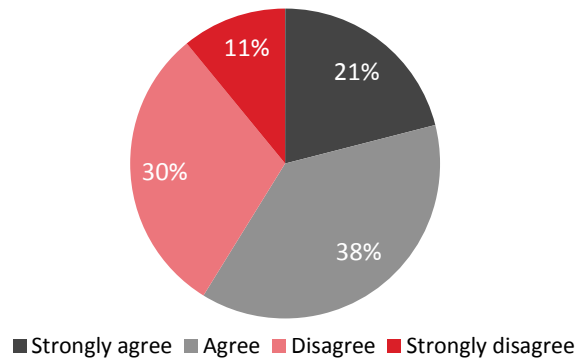
Respondents aged 16-17 years were more positive about their work experience providing a better understanding of the skills employers are looking for with 40.3% strongly agreeing with the statement. More respondents aged 15 years and younger were less positive with 24.1% strongly disagreeing with the statement.

**I have a better understanding of my own strengths and weaknesses**

Work experience can allow a young person to explore their own strengths and weaknesses in a new and different environment. Young people can find that they possess excellent customer skills whereas others may find that they are more shy or reserved and may benefit from more 'background work'. Again, it will depend on the type of work experience placement and the willingness of the employer to expose the young person to new experiences.

41% of respondents did not feel that they developed a better understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses through their work experience.

Figure 15: I have a better understanding of my own strengths and weaknesses



It seems that male respondents were more positive about exploring their strengths and weaknesses through their work experience placement with 34% of male respondents strongly agreeing and 36% agreeing with the statement. 34% of female respondents disagreed with the statement and a further 12% strongly disagreed with the statement.

I have a better understanding of my own strengths and weaknesses	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<15 years	6.7%	33.3%	33.3%	26.7%
16 and 17 years	26.2%	38.5%	29.2%	6.2%
>18 years	25.0%	41.7%	29.2%	4.2%

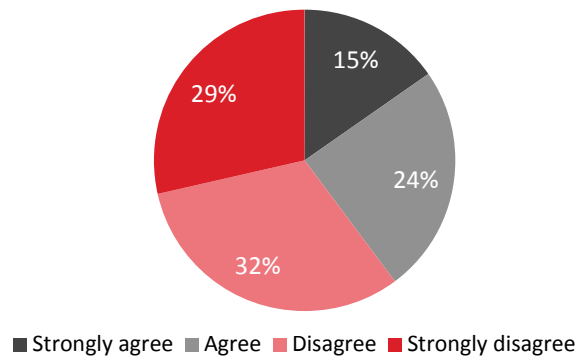
Respondents aged 15 years and younger did not believe their work experience provided them with a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses with 60% disagreeing with the statement. Respondents aged 16-17 years and 18 years or older were fairly consistent with 64.6% and 66.7% respectively agreeing with the statement.

**I was able to practice the skills I have learned during my course/studies**

Work experience that is linked to a specific vocational course can provide young people with a real-life environment to practice the theories and skills learned during their course/studies. Formal work experience such as those provided through pre-apprenticeships can be an excellent way of developing longer term relationships with employers, students, parents and schools to provide a meaningful placement for students.

The survey respondents did not agree with this statement which suggests that work experience placements are not providing young people with the opportunity to practice the skills they learn during their course/studies. 61% of respondents disagreed with the statement. 29% of female respondents and 27% of male respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

Figure 16: I was able to practice the skills I have learned during my course/studies



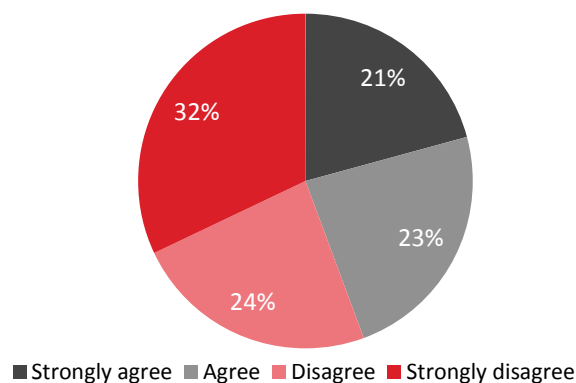
Older respondents, particularly those aged 18 years or older (69%) did not feel that their work experience provided an opportunity to practice the skills they had learned during their course/studies.

I was able to practice the skills I have learned during my course/studies	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<15 years	8.3%	41.7%	29.2%	20.8%
16 and 17 years	20.8%	18.8%	31.3%	29.2%
>18 years	11.5%	19.2%	34.6%	34.6%

**I feel more confident about handling new situations or meeting new people**

Work experience is often the first time a young person is exposed to the world of work. Some young people can find work experience to be a daunting experience as they are placed in an unfamiliar environment without their usual support mechanisms such as teachers and parents. Confident young people will thrive in this type of settings as they enjoy meeting new people and make the most of the week or so they have with the employer.

Figure 17: I feel more confident about handling new situations or meeting new people



Just over half of respondents did not feel that their work experience helped them feel more confident about handling new situations or meeting new people. 31% of females and 33% of males strongly disagreed with the statement.

I feel more confident about handling new situations or meeting new people	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<15 years	27.6%	34.5%	13.8%	24.1%
16 and 17 years	12.5%	21.4%	33.9%	32.1%
>18 years	35.0%	15.0%	10.0%	40.0%

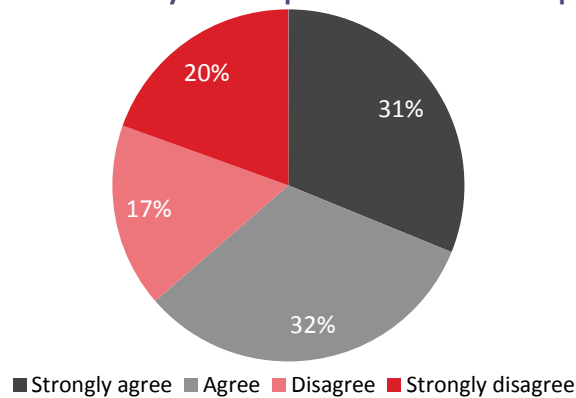
Younger respondents felt more confident about handling new situations or meeting new people as a

result of their work experience. 62.1% of respondents aged 15 years or younger agreed with the statement. Respondents aged 16-17 years did not feel that they were more confident in new situations or meeting new people as a result of their work experience with 66% disagreeing with the statement. 40% of respondents aged 18 years or older strongly disagreed.

**I have developed new skills (e.g. customer awareness, problem solving)**

The development of new skills in a work experience setting will require an employer who is committed to providing the young person with ‘meaningful’ work and providing them with new learning opportunities. Unfortunately a large portion of respondents did not provide a response to this question. 68% of male respondents and 61% of female respondents responded positively to this question.

**Figure 18: As a result of my work experience I have developed new skills**



As a result of my work experience I have developed new skills	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<15 years	33.3%	55.6%	11.1%	0.0%
16 and 17 years	23.8%	26.2%	23.8%	26.2%
>18 years	47.1%	23.5%	17.6%	11.8%

Respondents aged 15 years and younger and respondents aged 18 years and older agreed that work experience had allowed them to develop new skills such as customer awareness and problem solving. Almost half of respondents aged 18 years or older (47.7%) strongly agreed with the statement suggesting that their work experience is more likely to be linked closer to their studies or is more likely to be ‘meaningful’ engagement with the employer/business.

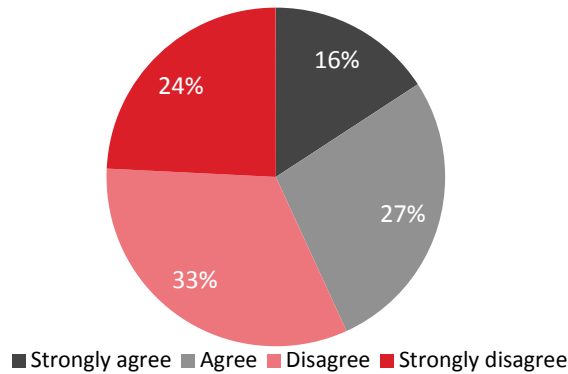
**I have a better idea about what I want to do as a job or a career.**

As a career exploratory tool, work experience can open up new possibilities or help confirm that a particular job or industry is not a good match for the young person. For this reason young people should not be limited in the number of work experience placements that are offered to them.

A lot of this question also depends on the age of the respondent. Young people aged less than 15 years will often see work experience as simply a way of getting out of the classroom for a week or two and are less likely to get a real perspective on their future career options. Older cohorts, particularly those in senior secondary (Years 11 and 12) may use work experience to confirm their career choice or as a way of deciding between one or more vocations. Work experience offered in a tertiary sector is more likely to be specific to the course being offered.

There was very little difference between males and females with 46.4% of males and 41.8% of males agreeing with the statement.

Figure 19: I have a better idea about what I want to do as a job or career.



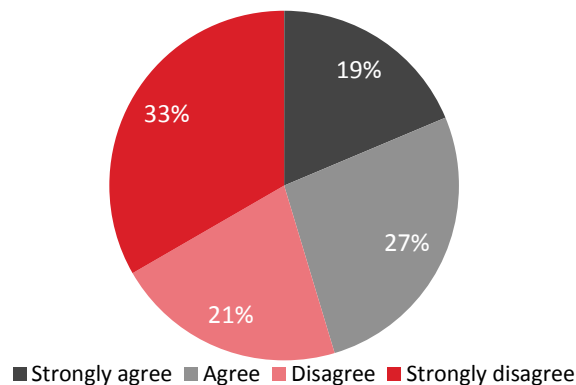
48% of respondents aged 15 years or younger agreed that work experience had provided a better idea about their future job or career prospects. 55% of respondents aged 16 and 17 years disagreed that work experience had given them a better idea about future jobs or careers. 66% of respondents aged 18 years or older also disagreed with the statement.

I have a better idea about what I want to do as a job or career	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<15 years	4.0%	44.0%	24.0%	28.0%
16 and 17 years	23.1%	21.2%	25.0%	30.8%
>18 years	11.1%	22.2%	22.2%	44.4%

**I have a better understanding about people's rights and responsibilities at work (e.g. health and safety, equal opportunities)**

Work experience is also seen as an introduction into the world of work. If work experience students are integrated into the work environment they should be exposed to rights and responsibilities in the workplace. Unfortunately this does not appear to be the case with 33% of all respondents strongly disagreeing with the statement.

Figure 20: I have a better understanding about people's rights and responsibilities at work



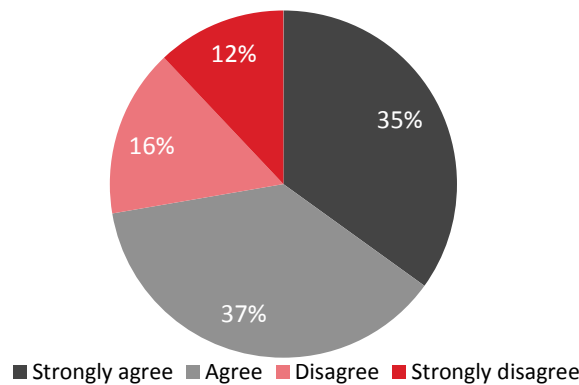
Respondents aged 15 years or younger were split 50/50 on this question. Respondents aged 16-17 were slightly more positive with 54% agreeing to the statement. 81% of respondents aged 18 years or older disagreed with the statement however they are more likely to be exposed to the world of work by this age.

I have a better understanding about people's rights and responsibilities at work	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<15 years	9.1%	40.9%	40.9%	9.1%
16 and 17 years	29.7%	24.3%	16.2%	29.7%
>18 years	6.3%	12.5%	62.5%	18.8%

**I understand why it is important to do well in school.**

The majority of respondents saw the importance of doing well at school. This question may have been better suited as a general question for all respondents rather than one specifically relating to work experience.

**Figure 21: I understand why it is important to do well in school**



73.1% of male respondents and 71.9% of female respondents agreed with the statement. There was some difference between the age groups with slightly more 18 years and older respondents (83%) agreeing with the statement compared with 74.1% of 15 years and younger and 66% of 16-17 year olds.

I understand why it is important to do well in school.	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<15 years	29.6%	44.4%	7.4%	18.5%
16 and 17 years	39.5%	26.3%	18.4%	15.8%
>18 years	33.3%	50.0%	5.6%	11.1%

**Further considerations on “Work Experience”**

Given that only a small number of respondents answered the questions regarding work experience it is proposed that the State Training Board’s Youth Unemployment Committee will do further work on this particular area of focus.

Events held as part of the overall Youth Unemployment project has examined work experience from an employer’s perspective. Employers have varying views about what work experience is meant to provide for the young person. Some employers at the Malaga event held on 13 May 2014 suggested that it is appropriate to get work experience students to “sweep floors” or “make tea and coffee” as this provided them with a realistic perspective of what entry-level jobs are likely to involve. Others suggested that work experience should be seen as a pre-induction into the workplace and young people should be given opportunities to develop “employability skills” through meaningful work experience placements.

The Rockingham event held on 5 December 2014 employers were asked to complete a short survey. One of the questions asked employers to list their concerns in offering a work placement for a work experience student:

*We have no concerns with offering work placement for work experience students as we take over 80 per year as an organisation.*

**Large Employer Health industry**

*We have concerns that it may take existing staff time to coach [work experience student].*

**Community Services industry**

*We are concerned about the maturity of the candidates.*

**Large employer, health industry**



## PART 4: CAREER ADVICE

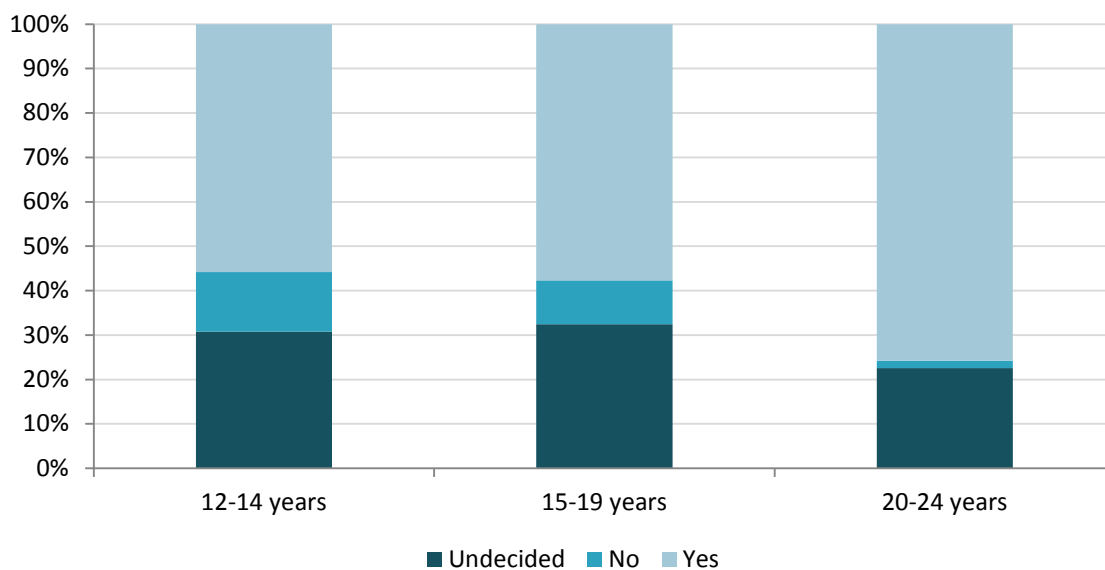
There is an almost overwhelming amount of information and material available to young people to assist them with their career decisions and planning. The volume or quality of material is not in question. The issue for many young people is the appropriateness of the platforms used to present information and the services provided to support these. The research has indicated that the disengaged and marginalised young people that require the most intensive support need personal, direct and specific career advice linked directly to other support services.

Recent career development reforms in Western Australia have included the enhancement of the State Government’s career development services to ensure greater access to professional careers advice and training information to assist in making informed choices about future education and employment options.

### Do you know what you would like to do for a job or career?

Survey respondents were asked “Do you know what you would like to do for a job or career?” 58% of all respondents indicated that they already know what they want to do as a job or career. It comes as no surprise that 71% of people aged 18 years or older indicated that they know what they want to do for a career/job.

Figure 22: Do you know what you would like to do for a job or career?



Survey respondents under the age of 15 years, males are slightly less likely to know what they would like to do for a career/job with 15% indicating that they did not know compared with only 10.5% of females of the same age group.

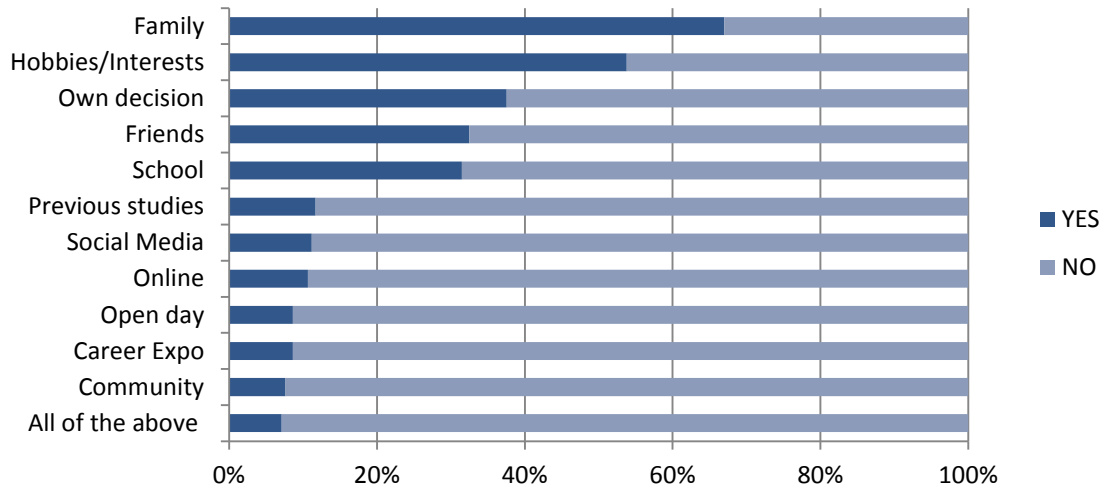
### Influences and sources of advice on job and career decisions

What influences a young person to follow a certain job or career pathway? If we can determine the source of career advice we can design career services/information to suit these influences. Most respondents indicated that their job and career choices were influenced by multiple factors. 7% of all respondents indicated that their job or career choices were influenced by “all of the above”.

The famous quote by Confucius “Choose a job you love, and you’ll never work a day in your life” seems appropriate in terms of career influencers. Many young people consider their

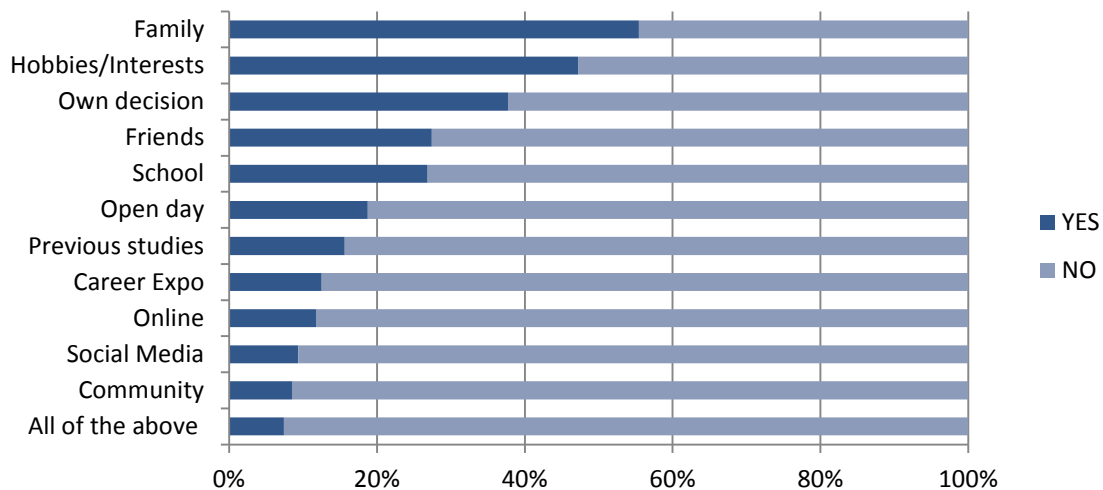
hobbies/interests as an influencer of their future career directions and this was the second most popular choice after “Family/Parents”. It is true that hobbies/interests can highlight a young person’s preferences when it comes to types of working environments, types of work and industries that interest them. For example, the recent Aspirational Careers Program<sup>8</sup> offered at Kings College in Wellard indicated that boys in Year 9 were not interested in ‘traditional’ jobs but were interested in computer games and wanted to learn more about getting a career as a computer game designer.

Figure 23: Influencing job and career choices in young people aged 12-14 years



The majority of 12-14 year olds and 15-19 year olds recorded “Parents/Family” as being an influence on their job and career choices. Parents and family influence over job and career choices appears to decline as a person gets older. Less than 40% of 20-24 year old respondents indicated the “Family” was an influencer on their job and career choices.

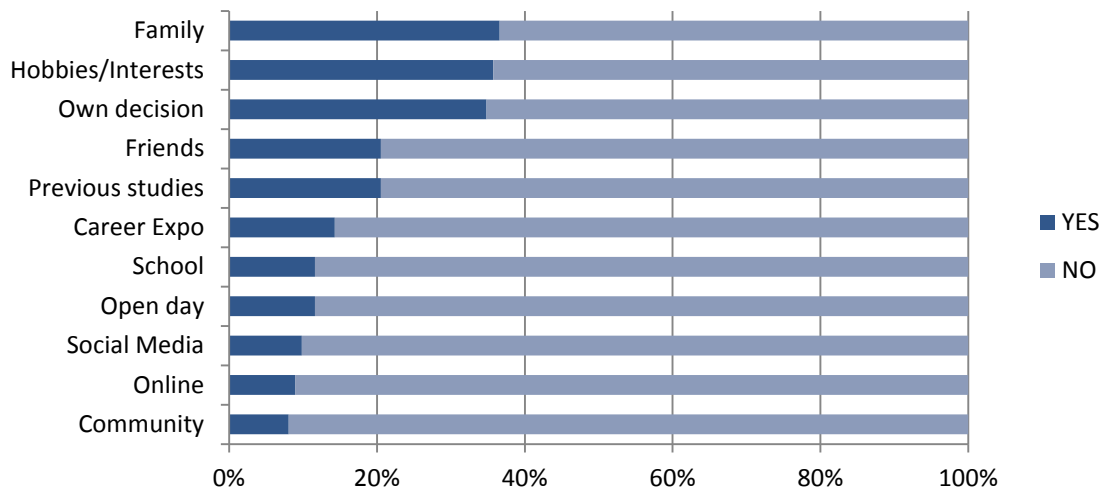
Figure 24: Influencing job and career choices in young people aged 15 to 19 years



<sup>8</sup> The Aspirational Careers Program was a pilot conducted in 2014 with Year 9 students from Kings College, Wellard. It was developed by the Order of Australia Association (WA Branch) in partnership with Earth Sciences WA, the State Training Board and Training Councils to provide students with an introduction to careers on offer in Western Australia. The program included career talks with professionals from the different industries as well as excursions to various employers in the local area. The program aimed to develop young people’s interests in different careers before they are required to make decisions about their upper secondary school subjects and ‘open their eyes’ to new possibilities. The Order of Australia Association (WA Branch) is looking to continue the program with selected Training Councils.

The survey also included more traditional sources of career advice or influences of career choices such as attending career expos, attending University or College Open Days and using online career tools such as those provided by the Career Centre and Student Edge. For survey respondents to this survey the influence from traditional career advice sources appears to be fairly minimal with only 11% of survey respondents listing “Career expos” and “Online career tools” as an influence to their career decision; 16% indicated that they used College or University Open Days to help them decide on their future career.

**Figure 25: Influencing job and career choices in young people aged 20 to 24 years**



### Usefulness of career services provided by school/college

Career Services include a range of services and resources aimed helping a young person consider their career options and choose appropriate pathways to help them meet their career goals. Young people were asked how useful they considered the career services provided by their school or college.

There was very little different between the genders with 10.5% of females and 9.7% of males reporting that the career services provided by their school/college was extremely useful. Slightly more females than males (4.9% compared with 3.1%) believed that the career services provided by their school/college was “not at all useful”.

### Lower Secondary School Students (Years 8-10)

Career Services provided to lower secondary school students are general in nature providing basic information about professions, their hierarchy and access/entrance ways based on the student’s performance at school.

Figure 26: Usefulness of career services provided to lower secondary students (Years 8-10)

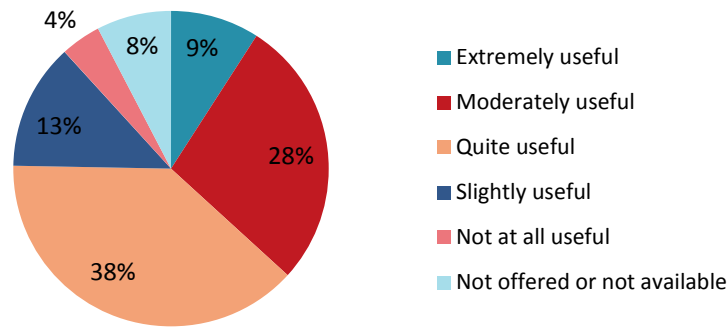
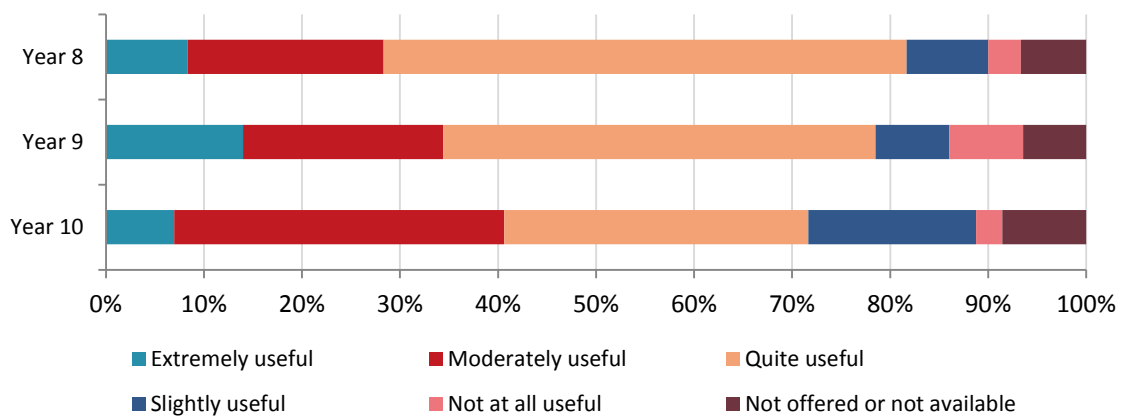


Figure 26 shows the usefulness of career services provided by all lower secondary students that completed the survey (Years 8 to 10). Figure 27 shows a breakdown of those results across the three school years. It shows that 33.6% of Year 10 students found that career services offered by their school were moderately useful and 6.9% of Year 10 students reported career services as being extremely useful.

Figure 27: Usefulness of career services provided to lower secondary students by Year.



### Senior Secondary Students (Years 11 and 12)

Career Services are more crucial for students in senior secondary. It is a time when subject selection, including VET pathways and ATAR courses, could be made easier with suitable career services being provided to students and their parents.

Figure 28: Usefulness of career services provided to upper secondary students (Years 11 and 12)

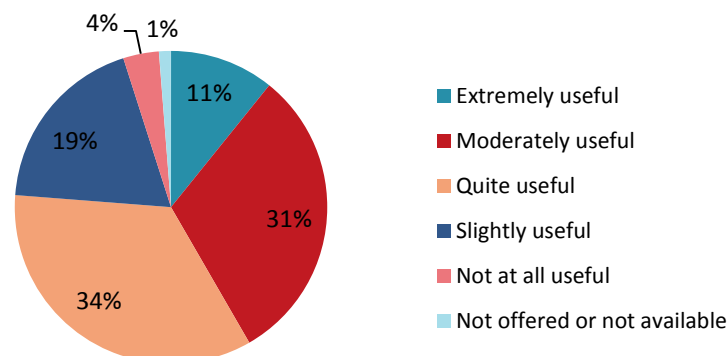
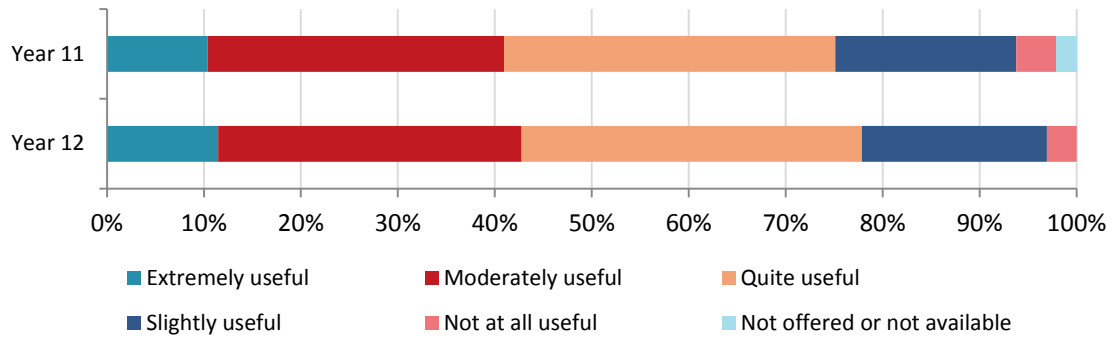


Figure 28 shows the usefulness of career services provided by all upper secondary students that

completed the survey (Years 11 and 12). Figure 29 shows a breakdown of those results across the two school years. It shows very little difference between the two years.

**Figure 29: Usefulness of career services provided to upper secondary students by Year**



### Tertiary Students

Career services offered at tertiary institutions (TAFE and University) are more likely to be specific to the course/studies being undertaken by the student. Most universities and most TAFE colleges have a dedicated Career Service for their students.

**Figure 30: Usefulness of career services provided to Tertiary Students**

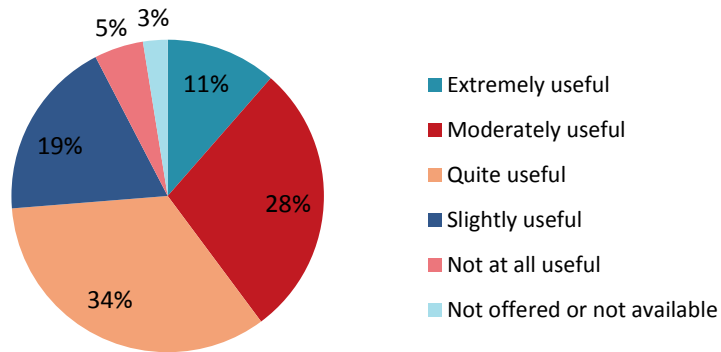
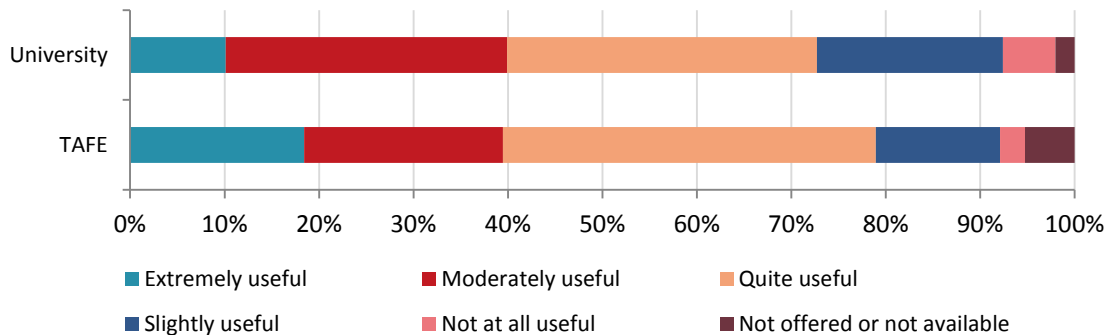


Figure 30 indicates that the majority of tertiary students found the career service as being useful to their needs. Only 5% indicated that they career services were not at all useful. Figure 31 indicates that more TAFE students found their college’s career services as being extremely useful.

**Figure 31: Usefulness of career services provided to TAFE and University students**



## When thinking of a future job or career, what things are most important to you?

People are motivated by different things when it comes to jobs or careers. We asked survey respondents to rank the following considerations when it came to deciding about future jobs or careers:

- Job satisfaction - doing what I love or I am passionate about
- Money/Salary - how much can I earn
- Education and training - how long do I have to study?
- Work/Life Balance - will my job get in the way of my social life/hobbies?
- Travel - Will I be able to travel the world?
- Job tasks - what activities/tasks will I do on a daily basis?
- Employee incentives - staff discounts, holidays, bonuses
- Location of employer - transport links, parking, fly-in and fly-out (FIFO)
- Style of work - office or outdoors?
- Promotion opportunities - how fast can I become the boss?

The survey software enabled the users to rank the responses in order of preference. It should be noted that 10.8% of male respondents and 5.7% of female respondents answered the question in the order in which the survey question was published suggesting that they either did not understand the question or could not be bothered changing the ranking. To eliminate this possibility, those responses have been removed for the purposes of analysing the results.

**Table 1: Ranking of factors when considering future job or career choices**

Most important	Second most important	Third most important
Job Satisfaction (589)	Money/Salary	Work/Life Balance
Money/Salary (134)	Job Satisfaction	Work/Life Balance
Education/Training (39)	Money/Salary	Job Satisfaction
Work/Life Balance (48)	Job Satisfaction	Money/Salary
Travel (27)	Money/Salary	Job Satisfaction
Job Tasks (14)	Job Satisfaction	Money/Salary
Employee incentives (6)	Education/Training	Location of employer
Location of employer (11)	Job Tasks	Work/Life Balance
Style of work (21)	Money/Salary	Job Satisfaction
Promotion opportunities (5)	Travel	Education/Training

The majority of young people considered “Job Satisfaction” as being the most important factor when considering future jobs or career options. The second most important factor was “Money/Salary” and the third “Work/Life Balance”. There was a slight difference between male and female respondents. Males considered “Education/Training” as being the third most important factor when deciding jobs and career pathways after “Job Satisfaction” and “Money/Salary”. Female respondents ranked “Work/Life Balance” as being more important than “Education/Training”.

## Career Advice from Employers’ Perspective

The State Training Board acknowledges and supports the work already being undertaken by the Department of Training and Workforce Development and the Training Councils in relation to the provision of career advice to young people.

In considering career advice, the State Training Board’s youth unemployment committee has received the following suggestions from employers relating to career guidance:

- Start from the young person’s skills or interests and translate into a career pathway.
- Programs that allow students to sample different opportunities, workplaces, types of work to help them make an informed decision (such as INSTEP/ONSITE)

- Provide young people with the employer’s perspective such as a “Day in the Life of your Employer” to fully appreciate what it means to run a small/medium/large business and hopefully they could learn to appreciate the effort/hurdles/burden the employer makes towards their job (costs, insurance, safety concerns, responding to difficult attitudes).
- Work experience should be realistic and pitched at entry level and should include tasks such as photocopying, sweeping floors, getting tea/coffee or answering phones as this may provide young people with a more realistic expectation about their first job.
- Career guidance should include advice that they won’t be General Manager after their first week – there is a ladder to progress.
- Young people are bombarded with choice these days and this isn’t helping. Provide less choice in schools and provide foundations for them to build their careers as they mature.
- Work experience should be developed around work ethics as well as sampling different work environments.





## PART 5: JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT

Many young people will mix labour market participation with their studies and many will change jobs as they find the “right fit”. The Australian Bureau of Statistics data shows that 20 per cent of young people change their labour force status every month. An even greater number of youth, almost half of teenagers (15 to 19 years) and a third of young adults (aged 20-24 years) combine periods in and out of work over the course of a year<sup>9</sup>. Young people need this opportunity to ‘try out’ different employment and training options in real workplaces and adult education facilities. A spell of unemployment or underemployment is quite normal and is generally short lived.

### Employment status

Survey respondents were asked if they currently have a job. 14.9% of respondents did not provide a response to the question. 43% indicated that they were employed and 37% indicated that they were looking for work. The majority of young people employed indicated that they worked on a part-time basis. Informal or cash in hand jobs (such as babysitting)

Figure 32: Employment status of respondents (all age groups)

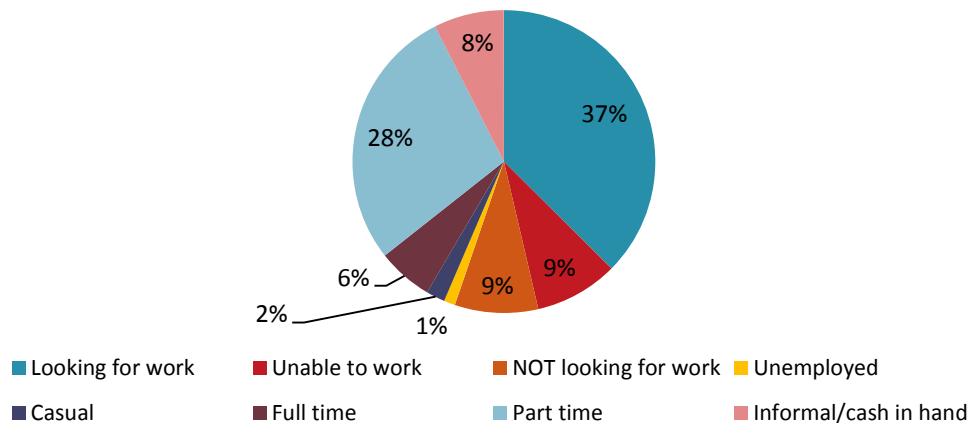


Figure 33: Employment status of respondents (based on location)

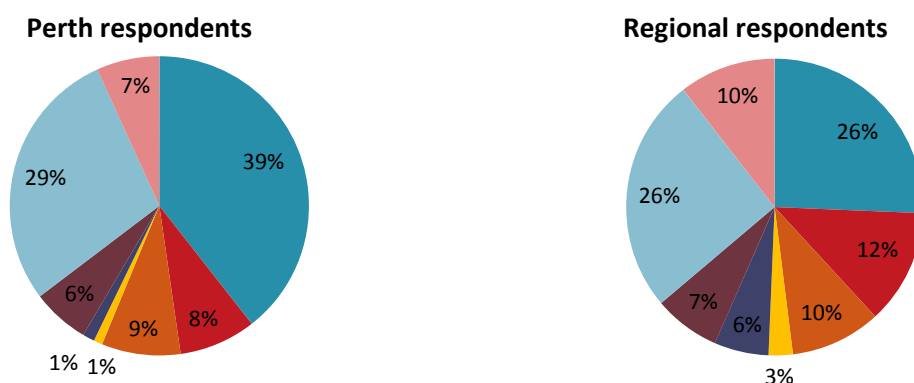


Figure 33 shows the employment status based on the location of the respondent. It shows that a greater proportion of regionally based respondents were working in some capacity (49%) compared with Perth respondents (42%). It also shows that a greater proportion of Perth based respondents were currently looking for work compared with their regional counterparts.

<sup>9</sup> Insight, eNewsletter from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), Issue 41, March 2011

### 12 to 14 years old

There are age restrictions on the type of job and working hours for children in Western Australia. The Western Australian Department of Commerce<sup>10</sup> states:

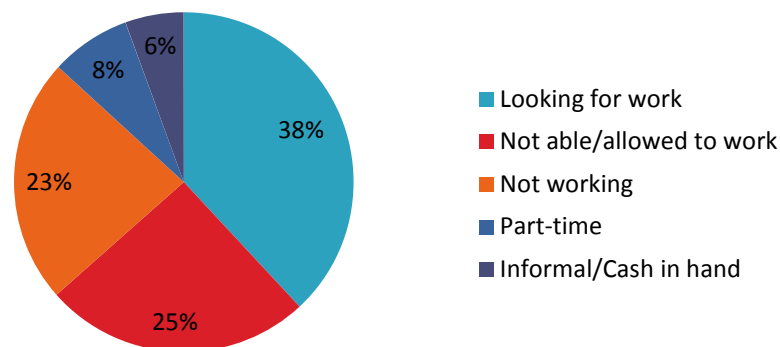
*As long as the work does not prevent school attendance, children of any age can work in a family business run by a relative, perform professionally as an actor or work as a volunteer for charities and some sporting clubs.*

*Children aged 10, 11 and 12 years are allowed to deliver newspapers, pamphlets or advertising material but cannot work during school hours. They cannot start work before 6am and must be finished by 7pm and must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult (with written permission from the parent) at all times.*

Children aged 13 and 14 years are allowed to:

- deliver newspapers, pamphlets or advertising material;
  - work in a shop, fast food outlet or café; or
  - collect shopping trolleys from a retail outlet or adjacent area,
- as long as they have written permission from a parent and the job is outside school hours and they do not start work before 6.00am or finish after 10.00pm.*

**Figure 34: Employment status of 12-14 year old respondents**



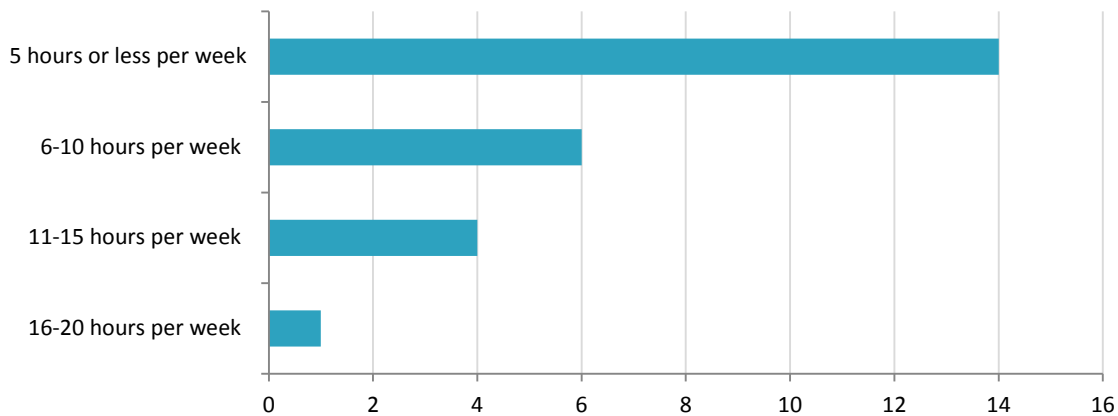
Only a small percentage (13%) of 12-14 year olds indicated that they currently had a job:

- 23% had been in their current job for less than one month;
- 34% had been in their current job for 1-3 months;
- 7.6% had been in their current job for 3-6 months;
- 11.5% had been in their current job 6-12 months; and
- 19.2% had been in their current job for more than 12 months.

Figure 35 below shows that the majority of 12-14 year olds work an average of 5 hours or less per week. This would be consistent with types of jobs that this age group are legally able to do.

<sup>10</sup> Department of Commerce, When can children work? 7 January 2015. Retrieved from <http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/labour-relations/when-can-children-work-0>

Figure 35: Average hours worked per week for 12-14 year olds

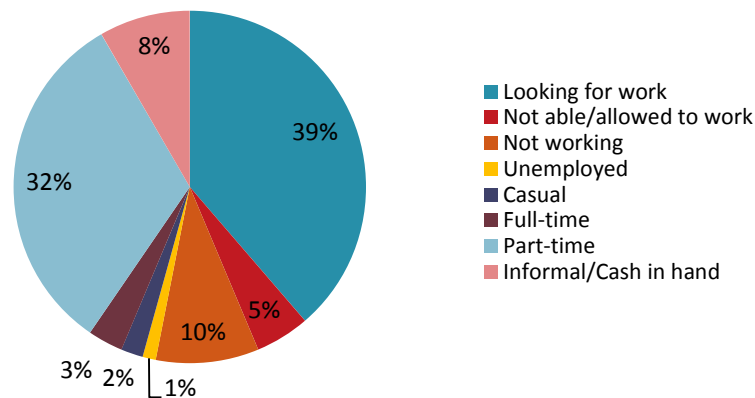


**15 to 19 year olds**

From 15 years of age young people are more likely to mix labour market participation with their studies. Many young people will seek casual or part-time employment for the first time and some may consider full-time employment as an alternative to education.

Many young people in this age group will try different types of employment and may only stay with a particular job for short period of time as they discover what suits them in terms of employment and what doesn't.

Figure 36: Employment status of 15-19 year old respondents



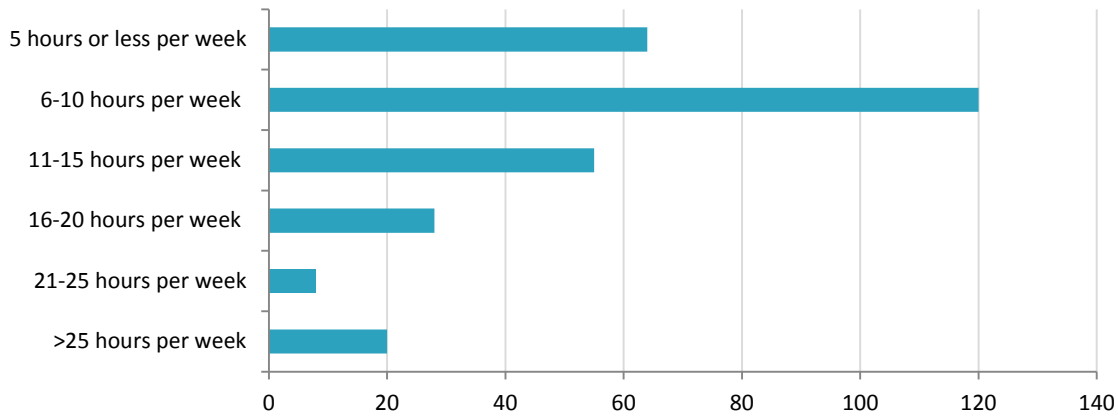
39% of 15-19 year olds indicated that they were looking for work. 45% of 15-19 year olds advised that they were employed in some capacity. A small number indicated that they were unemployed. 5% indicated that they were not able to work or were not allowed to work.

Of the 15-19 year olds that indicated that they currently had a job:

- 7.9% had been in their current job for less than one month;
- 12.7% had been in their current job for 1-3 months;
- 12.7% had been in their current job for 3-6 months;
- 11.8% had been in their current job 6-12 months; and
- 41% had been in their current job for more than 12 months.

Figure 37 provides the average hours worked for 15-19 year olds respondents to the survey. The majority of those surveyed indicated that they worked an average of between 6-10 hours per week. 2.7% worked between 21 and 25 hours per week and 6.8% worked 25 hours or more hours per week.

Figure 37: Average hours worked per week for 15-19 year olds



**20 to 24 year olds**

The majority of survey respondents aged between 20 and 24 indicated that they were employed in some capacity. 11% of respondents indicated that they were currently looking for work and 3% indicated that they were unemployed.

Figure 38: Employment status for 20-24 year old respondents

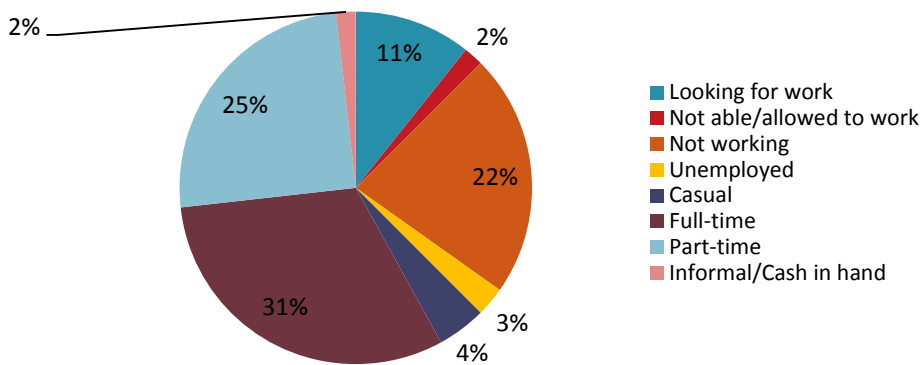
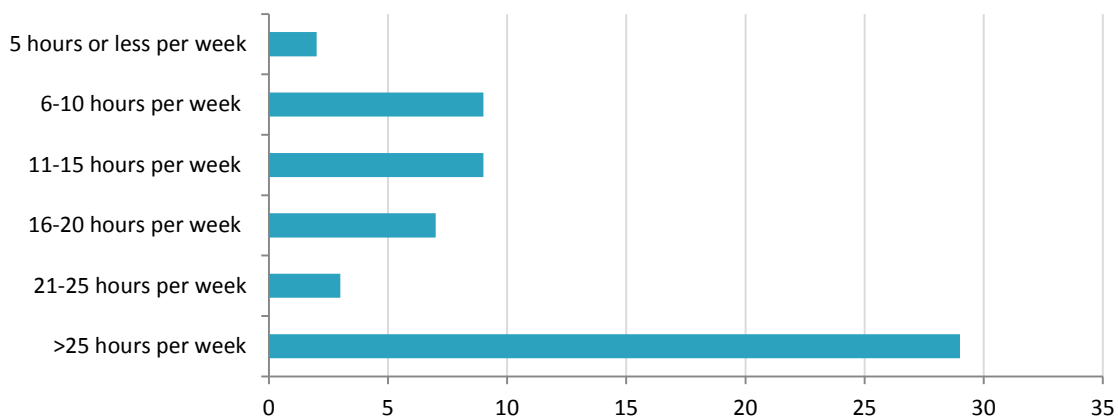


Figure 39 shows that the majority of 20-24 year old survey respondents worked 25 hours or more per week. This age group are more likely to be in full-time or close to full-time employment as they complete tertiary education.

Figure 39: Average hours worked per week for 20-24 year olds



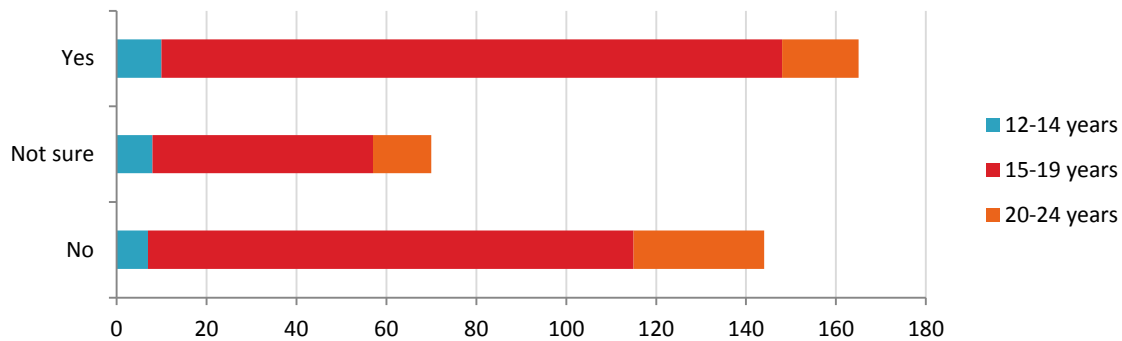
**Underemployment**

The Australian Bureau of Statistics Labour Force survey defines underemployment as part-time

workers who would prefer more hours and full-time workers who, for economic reasons, worked part-time hours during the survey period<sup>11</sup>. It is noted that the State Training Board’s youth survey is not a sophisticated measure of underemployment but nevertheless we asked those surveyed to indicate whether they would prefer to work more hours than they were currently.

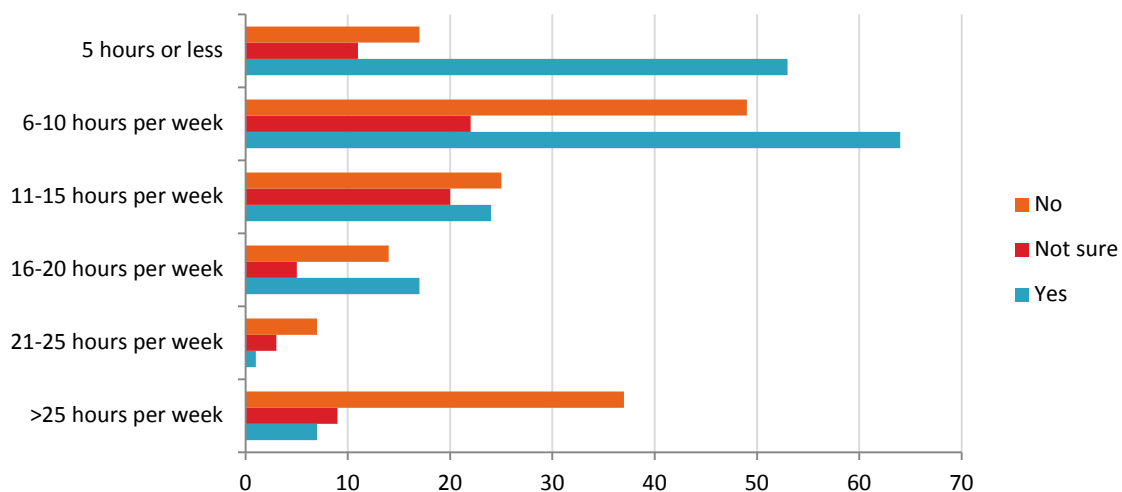
The question has been analysed based on age of the respondent and also by the hours worked per week. Figure 40 shows that 165 respondents indicated that they would prefer to work more hours than they were currently. The majority of these respondents were in the 15-19 age bracket.

**Figure 40: Would you like to work more hours than you are currently?**



When we analyse the results based on the indicated average hours worked per week it shows that those working low hours (i.e. 5 hours or less per week and 6-10 hours per week) had the greatest number of respondents indicating that they would prefer to work more hours per week.

**Figure 41: Indication of want for more working hours based on current working hours per week**



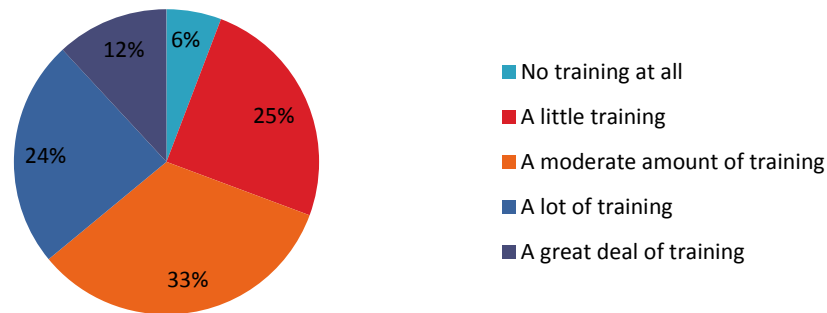
### On the job training

Young people are often the first casualties of a receding economy. The research shows that early school leavers are especially vulnerable in an uncertain labour market due largely to their age, poor literacy and numeracy, lack of skills, experience and/or knowledge and lack understanding of their rights in an employment market. Without adequate support they are more likely to face periods of unemployment or underemployment. Older workers with experience and skills are able to ride the bumps of a changing labour market and are more likely to either escape unemployment or find work more quickly.

<sup>11</sup> State Training Board, *Youth Matters*, p7

On the job training is a form of training taking place in a normal working situation. On the job training often sees a younger employee working closely with a supervisor or work colleague as they 'learn the ropes'. Some on the job training is more formal such as those provided through an apprenticeship or traineeship. We asked survey respondents to indicate the level of training they had received as part of their employment.

**Figure 42: Training provided as part of employment**

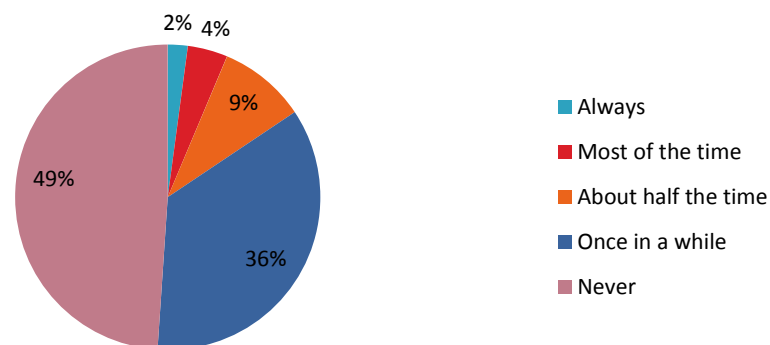


6% of all respondents indicated that they had received no training as part of their employment. 25% indicated that they had only received a little training as part of their employment. The majority of survey respondents (33%) indicated that they had received a moderate amount of training as part of their employment.

### Job security and looking for work

Survey respondents were then asked whether they were worried about losing their job. The majority of survey respondents (48.9%) indicated that they were never worried about losing their job. 35% were worried 'once in a while' about losing their job. 2.1% were worried about losing their job 'always'. There was very little difference between the age groups.

**Figure 43: How often respondents worry about losing their current job.**



Survey respondents were asked to indicate how likely they were to search for a new job in the next 30 days. This question was analysed based on the age of the respondent and also by the current employment status.

**Figure 44: Likelihood of looking for work in the next 30 days (by age group)**

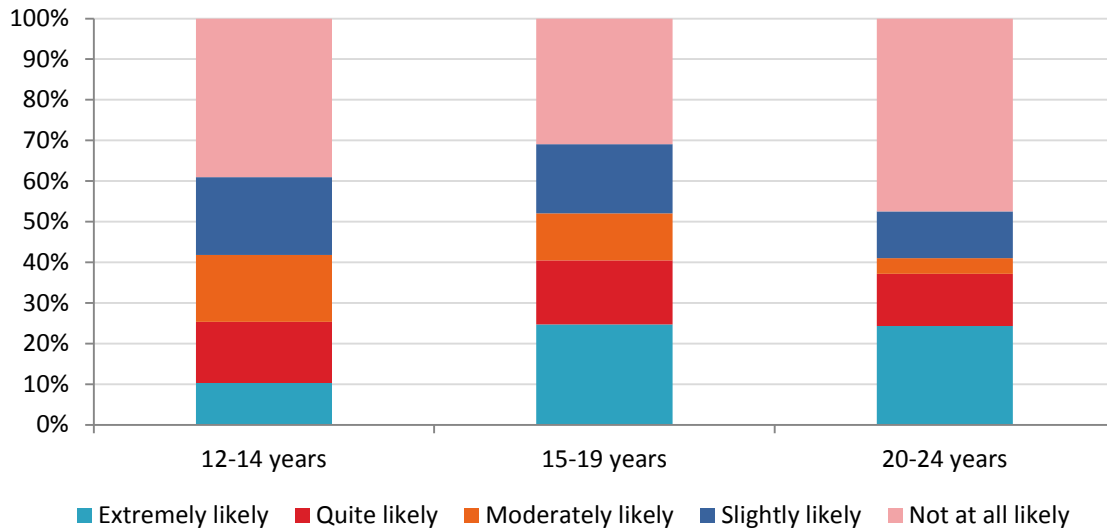
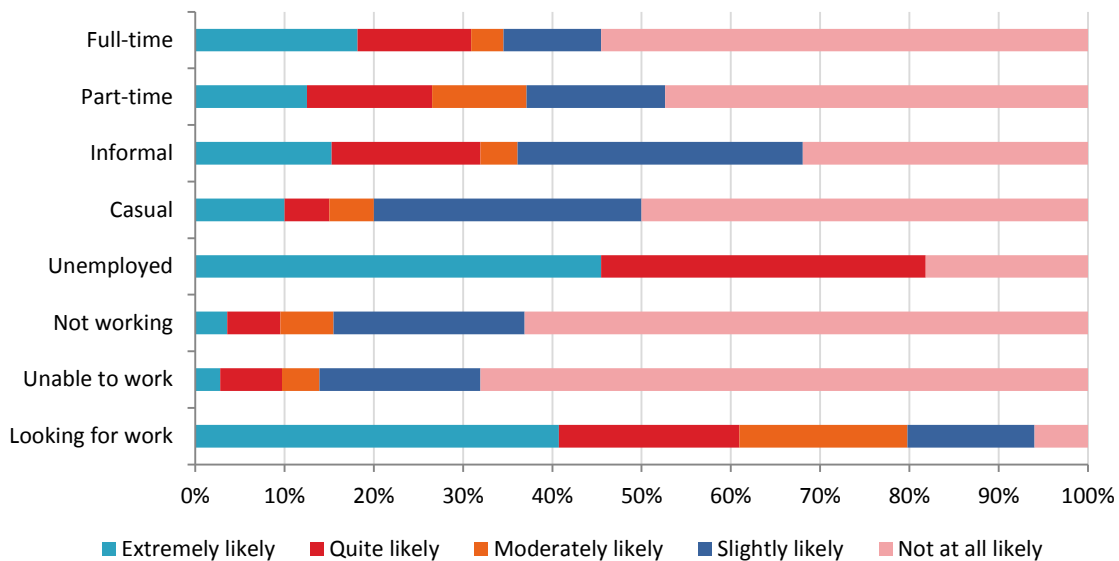


Figure 44 shows that the majority of 12 to 14 year olds (39%) were not at all likely to search for a job in the next 30 days. 10% were extremely likely to search for a job in the next 30 days. It also shows that 24.7% of 15-19 year olds and 24.3% of 20-24 year olds are extremely likely to search for a job in the next 30 days. 47.4% of 20-24 year olds are not at all likely to search for a job in the next 30 days.

If we look at the likelihood of searching for a job in the next 30 days based on the employment status (see Figure 45 below) it shows that the majority of full-time workers, part-time workers and casual workers are not at all likely to search for a new job in the next 30 days. Those employed on an informal or “cash in hand” basis are more likely to search for employment in the next 30 days.

More than 40% of those looking for work were “extremely likely” to search for a job in the next 30 days. Interestingly, 5.9% of those “looking for work” indicated that it was “not at all likely” that they would search for a job in the next 30 days.

**Figure 45: Likelihood of searching for job in next 30 days based on current employment status**



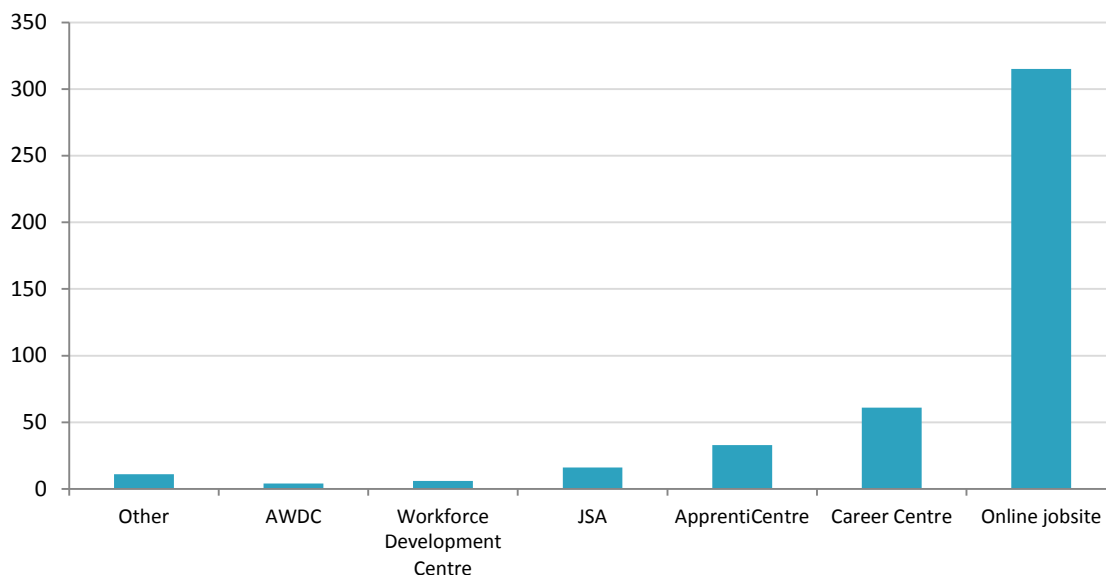
### Use of employment and support services

When looking for work it is important that young people are aware of the services provided by various government agencies and private organisations. Survey respondents were asked if they had used any of the following employment or career support services:

- Job Services Australia (JSA);
- Aboriginal Workforce Development Centres (AWDCs);
- Online job site (such as Seek or Career One);
- ApprentiCentre;
- Career Centre;
- Workforce Development Centre;
- None of the above; or
- Other.

Survey respondents could choose more than one answer to this question. Unfortunately only 40% of survey respondents provided a response to this question. It shows that the majority of those that completed this question have used online job sites such as Seek or Career One to find employment. The next most popular source of career and employment information is the Department of Training and Workforce Development’s Career Centre.

Figure 46: Use of employment and career support services



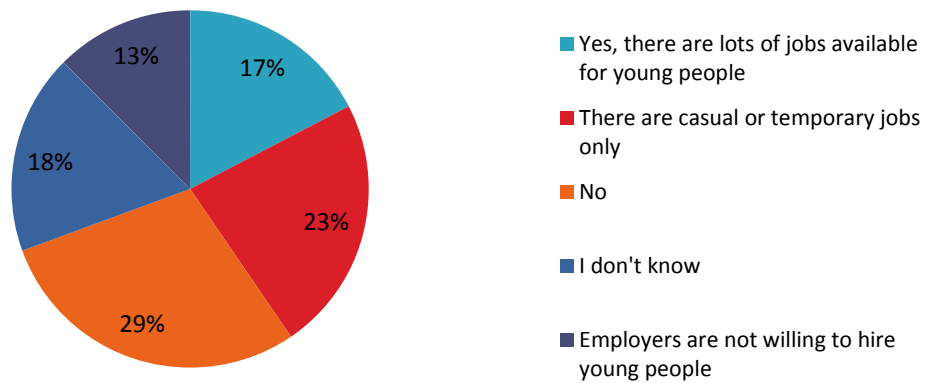
### Are there enough jobs for young people in the local area?

Young people were asked whether they thought there were enough jobs for young people in their local area (suburb or town). The question was a multiple choice and survey respondents could choose from the following answers:

- Yes, there are lots of jobs available for young people
- There are casual or temporary jobs only
- Employers are not willing to hire young people
- I don’t know
- No



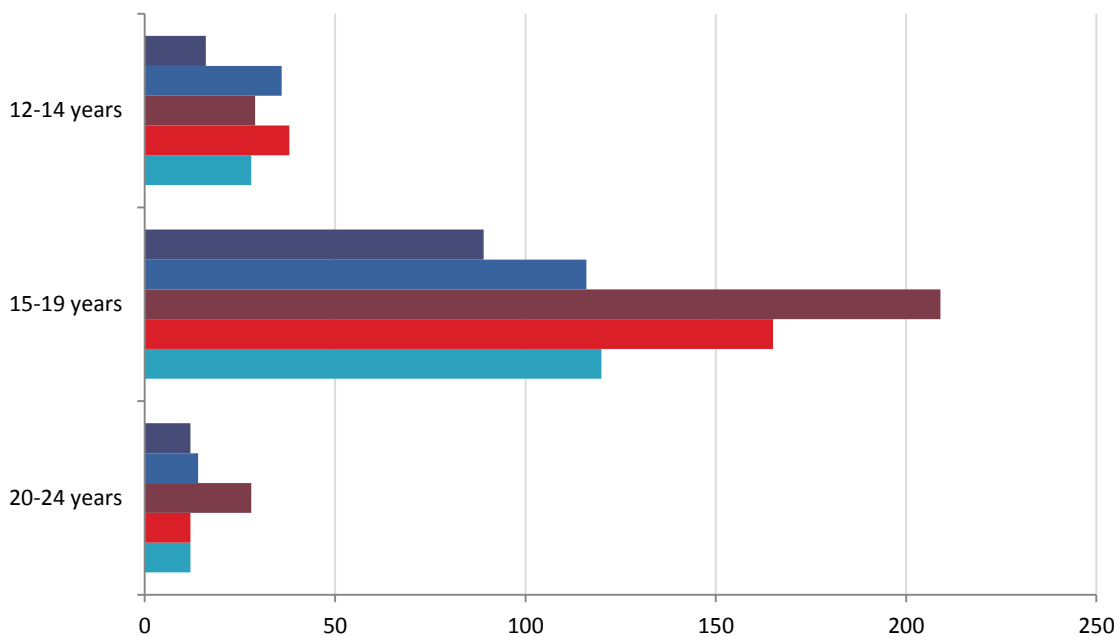
**Figure 47: Are there enough jobs for young people in the local area? All respondents**



21% of survey respondents did not provide a response to this question.

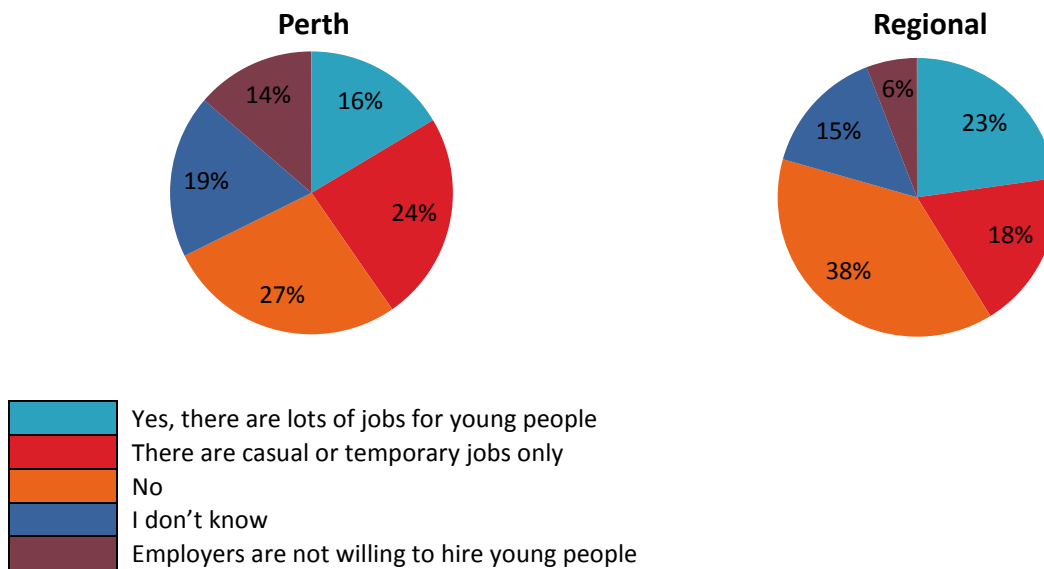
The responses have been analysed based on the age of the respondent and also based on the person's location. If we consider the age of the respondent we find that 12-14 year olds consider there are only temporary or casual jobs available in their local area. This is likely to be due to the types of work that this age group are legally able to apply for. For the 15-19 age group the majority of survey respondents indicated that there were not enough jobs for young people in their local area and this was the same for the 20-24 year old age group.

**Figure 48: Are there enough jobs for young people in the local area? Age group**



If we consider the same question but analyse it based on the location of the respondent the regionally located respondents

Figure 49: Are there enough jobs for young people? Perth versus Regional



### What are the main reasons young people can't find work?

The survey provided a free text field for young people to provide reasons why young people can't find work. Some of the responses are shown below:

*The main thing stopping young people from working is themselves. They are too lazy and want to stay home and roam the internet instead of go outside and enter the real world.*

**Male, 16 years**

*Possibly the fact that there aren't a lot of jobs out there and employers tend to go for someone more experienced and not willing to take a chance on a less experienced person.*

**Female, 15 years**

*The main things stopping young people from finding work would be lack of skills, nervousness and they would rather have parents pay for things.*

**Male, 15 years**

*Many employers state that they want to employ people who have experience. It is so hard to find a first job if you have no experience.*

**Female, 15 years**

*I think the main reason stopping young people from getting a job is their attitude. If someone goes in only half committed to getting a job which employer would want to hire them. I think we as the future work force need to take advantage of the opportunities that are given to us.*

**Male, 17 years**

*Lack of effort to go out and hand in a resume. Young people assume that because most things are done online these days that sending a resume in email form will give them as good of an opportunity as handing it in face-to-face which, as previously noted, is pointless.*

**Female, 17 years**

*Teenagers have bad attitudes and customer service skills and also not looking the part.*

**Female, 15 years**

*Experience, you need experience but with education fees you can't get experience that way and because you don't have experience and no one is willing to employ you because of it you can't gain experience. Also age if you are 18+ with not much experience no one wants to hire someone they have to pay more for than say a 14 year old.*

**Female, 20 years**

*They're lazy. The attitudes of young people is horrendous, it's the parents pushing the children to work, not the children wanting to earn an income, to be independent.*

**Female, 18 years**

*Honestly for me, it's the time in the end, the travel time to school and back plus the workload of homework I barely have time to do other activities when I get home.*

**Male, 16 years**

*Transport Issues, competency in certain learning areas, stereotype towards young people, and balancing education and work.*

**Female, 15 years**



## PART 6: YOUTH SOLUTIONS TO “YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT”

Our survey respondents considered the question “What do you think the government should do to help?” Many young respondents believed that creating more job opportunities, particularly local jobs, could help reduce youth unemployment. Some called for companies to have a quota or strict requirement to hire young people or to lower the age for employment to 13 years.

Just as many young people pointed to the lack of experience as being a barrier to employment and called for greater work experience opportunities for young people. Many called for incentives for employers who provided training or work experience to students to encourage employers to participate in work experience programs.

A sample of responses is provided below:

### Create more jobs for young people

- Create more job opportunities by opening more facilities such as shops, health care centres, etc.
- Create more job opportunities for all ages so everyone has an even chance.
- Make a quota of younger employees that all companies have to abide by.
- Ensure local areas are employing locals. Exemptions should be made for employers hiring LOCALLY and training.
- Make more jobs
- They should prioritise to train or to give more casual jobs on students in order to help themselves to become more independent and learning the importance of earning and saving money at an early age.
- Give them a shot at it
- Try to create more jobs for young people
- More jobs that young people can gain experience from
- Open more job opportunities
- Supply more jobs
- Put more opportunities
- Increase the work areas
- Let young people have jobs for free
- Provide more jobs where young kids can still be able to socialise with people
- Give more opportunities to younger people, open more shops in smaller towns/ areas
- Make a guideline for companies that they should hire up to a certain amount of people a month.
- Stop taking so much money from the mining industry, my dad lost his job coz the company went bust and hasn't had a job for 3 years, we have nearly no money left as me and my siblings go to private schools we are most likely going to have to move to shitty schools and sell all our shares and stuff just to get by. This has happened to lots of my close friends as well and we are all suffering as a result.
- Minimise foreign labour/asylum seekers – they take our jobs.

### Increase salary/wage for young people

- Have larger salaries
- Increase salary
- Increase the pay for young people

### Better work experience opportunities

- Make it easier for young people to get experience.
- Allow for more experience in the work force
- Facilitate more work experience programs through schools so that when students enter the work force after high school they aren't stuck in limbo between finding a job and needing.
- Provide incentives for employers to take on people for work experience.
- Offer more ranges of work experience.
- Put systems in place where people can gain experience from the jobs they want to pursue but actually do it through the companies. And do something about the issue of payment, so that employees don't just see an elder person as too much to employ.
- Introduce some more internship programs or some sort of further support to gain relevant work experience so it is easier to get that first break in the workforce.
- More compulsory work experience at schools as well as school classes giving work basics (i.e. counting cash, importance of customer service etc.)

### Make it easier for young people to work/to find work

- Make a workplace just for high school students because then young people will get more opportunities.
- I think the government has already done quite a lot for young people job wise, but i would like to see a website that is dedicated to helping young people find casual and part time jobs in their local area.
- Advise companies that young people are capable to do anything alongside training.
- Good question. Perhaps allow more training programmes. For example, somewhere that a new employee can be sent in order to gain necessary skills. This way the employee won't be so discouraged about hiring a junior. Other than that, obviously lower prices on SHORT courses. I have looked at doing short courses during my studies, at night or on the weekend or even on my days off just to get the skills for a decent job to get me through university. However I cannot afford the upfront price. And if the provider offers VET FEE HELP, I don't feel comfortable putting that on top of my current University HECS debt. And if a payment plan is available, the money I make from my current job is enough for printing, public transport, and fuel. Money is a serious issue.
- Promote young people in the workplace
- Encourage people and talk about it in Parliament.
- Promote it more
- Use television advertisements to encourage work.
- Give more opportunities for young people to work.
- Make it easier to get work
- Have a program to help young people find their first job.
- The government could actually create an agency that is specifically for young people who are currently looking for work.
- Promote employment through better websites.
- They should make it easier for people to get jobs and you shouldn't have to have qualifications to work somewhere
- Teach youths about their work rights and monitor companies more.
- List an application page for the new shopping centre in Dalyellup.
- Tell business they have to hire a certain number of young people.
- There needs to be more support for growing communities to open their doors to younger and less experienced people.
- Tell employers to give young people a chance and to remind them that they were not born employed and that ONCE UPON A TIME SOMEONE GAVE THEM A CHANCE.

### Make young people want to work – incentives, Centrelink

- Make young people want to work and give them more of a push to work.
- Provide a more direct approach to young people by offering incentives to those who are striving to search for a job.
- Decrease Centrelink payments to young people in order to motivate/force them to pull up their socks and find jobs. Government can provide easy/casual jobs for youth not able to find work such as cleaning the streets (picking up papers... few \$/cents per bag maybe?) and have someone supervise them? Bad example but I hope you get my drift...
- If the government implements bonuses for youths it will not benefit society as youths will think they are entitled to it, it raises tax for other working class people, and the government doesn't even know what the money is invested in. If the youth can join an organisation that assists in the process of helping them find their own work rather than accept handouts then they can learn the true value of money and spend it wisely rather than waste money that isn't theirs.
- Stop making the dole so easy to get and make jobless people take jobs that are offered to them or that can't be filled if they haven't managed to get a job in 6 months or cut off their payments.
- Change the stigma; make education and training mandatory as part of Centrelink etc.
- Maybe give incentives to hire young people
- Better apprenticeship incentives
- Centrelink is very helpful in my opinion, and maybe hold a class or group of meetings for the unemployed to get together and help each other out (optional).
- Encourage education about getting a job in schools and discourage parents from paying for everything for their children.

### Understand the cause of youth unemployment

- In areas with high youth unemployment the government first needs to understand the root cause.
- The government should reconsider unemployment because it doesn't just affect adults, it affects young people too!

### More flexible employment laws for young people

- Lower the age for [employment] to 13
- Make the minimum age for most part time jobs 13 years old (if suitable).
- Change the age limit to getting a job down to 13
- Allow employers to hire people on a Saturday only
- Implement a standard for the number of new out of school or university employees for a set period. For example, Employer must employ 7 out of school/university employees in 5 years...
- Change laws
- I think the government should allow younger people to have more responsibility in the workforce as usually we wouldn't get hired for jobs in reception, assisting in a school etc.

### Career Support and Services

- Programs catering to less driven students would be quite useful to provide guidance to them also.
- Fund/encourage professional career advisers to visit schools to speak individually to students of all skill levels about their career prospects and what it would involve to achieve them. Be able to provide detail about that job, where they could work, typical pay etc.
- Set up more websites which help you find what you want to do when you leave school and websites which help in job finding

- Promote jobs a little more to younger people for experience and for general knowledge to learn about the workforce.
- Promote more websites for teenagers looking for casual/part time jobs
- Have more spokespeople go to primary school and get younger kids thinking about getting a job when they're older.
- Provide videos on how to present themselves during an interview.
- Educate young people on how to write resume's and highlight the importance of conversing with possible employers as opposed to emailing.
- Get kids more involved by having more career opportunity excursions for teens to become more comfortable with starting somewhere new.
- Provide more opportunities to learn about other career paths

#### **Young people need to take responsibility**

- I don't think they can do very much. I think it's up to us to make good impressions and show how trustworthy and willing to work we are.
- Personally I don't think the government can do anything to help, it's up to the young adult/person to do it them self, if they want it they'll go out and do it.
- Not much, the government set up things at school for kids and that should be enough.
- Nothing, people should search for their skills in order to get a good job.
- I believe the government is already doing enough to help. It's really up to us with support from our parents.

#### **Help for Employers**

- Help employers to employ younger people – employers attitude towards young people is a problem.
- Provide training opportunities to assist employers.
- Incentivise employers to take on younger people
- I believe there should be an incentive for employers to train the inexperienced.

#### **Education and Training**

- I think that in schools, it should be made sure that students have to opportunity to get the qualifications or career help needed
- Set up more free training courses
- I think the government should run some sort of course or add it to the school curriculums on job finding and etiquette. So I guess more of a career planning course than what we may already have
- Provide a day every week for a certain age group and above to take a day off school so that they can go to work at their job
- Major pressure is put into young people especially during their senior years of high school. At a young age (primary & middle school), they should be given something a little harder to achieve so that they know what to expect in the future. So instead of all the pressure being put on their shoulders during Year 11 and 12, it should be distributed equally, starting from while their young.
- Shorten school hours and make it easier for kids to get after school jobs.
- Run short programs to help young people gain the basic level of experience needed to be successful in a particular job field (e.g. register/cash handling skills, customer service in the retail field).
- Pay students to go to school (\$10 a day)
- Provide a HECS like system for TAFE studies.
- Help young people learn skills and how to write a resume.
- Offer funded course only to those that are determined



- Basic resume templates/online interview training
- Provide more training/free training
- Make training available for larger job roles to become qualified with a low cost of training.
- Lower tertiary fees
- Raise pay to career jobs opening up more casual jobs and making students go to university for a full career
- Provide some sort of qualification course for youth workers so it easier to find jobs since they will already have the necessary skills.
- The government should lower University fees because it just discourages people.
- I don't think students should be allowed to work.
- Provide training in schools for jobs that young people are more likely to go into e.g. retail and hospitality.
- A change in the education system and way of thinking of us Australians to value education and work more. Balance out education with co-curricular activities such as sport.

#### Help with transport

- More available transportation such as trains/ buses
- Availability of transport
- More Transperth bus routes, particularly to new suburbs built further away from shopping centres.
- Cheaper transport for young people.
- Get more buses around towns and cities to help young people get to work.
- More bus routes that explore further areas.