

November 1, 2007

Canadian Youth: Which Path to a Good Job?

Ottawa – CPRN and Statistics Canada today released a new study by Darcy Hango and Patrice de Broucker that helps explain why some Canadian high school students will go on to good, secure jobs – while others won't.

The study, *Education-to-Labour Market Pathways of Canadian Youth: Findings from the Youth in Transition Survey*, is part of CPRN's Pathways Project which is examining the routes young people take from school to regular participation in the workforce. This report uses Statistics Canada's Youth in Transition Survey to study these issues on a national scale. It looks at the different paths that young people in Canada take from high school through to regular participation in the labour market, who takes these paths, and what labour market outcomes are associated with them.

"Young people and those who advise them need to have good information about the consequences of different choices about learning, and policy-makers need to have information about the factors that help shape these choices," says Sharon Manson Singer, CPRN President.

Some of the important factors revealed in the report include:

- Teenaged girls are less likely to drop out of high school, and more likely to go on to post-secondary education.
- Having more siblings is associated with a greater risk of dropping out of high school.
- Youth with parents who have a high level of education are more likely to go on to post-secondary education. Similarly, higher parental expectations are associated with higher educational attainment.
- Marks matter. There is a very strong relationship between low marks in high school and dropping out not to return.
- Working some hours in high school is beneficial. Working more than 20 hours though is associated with teens dropping out, or delaying attendance at a post-secondary institution.
- There is a link between teens having a child and dropping out or not attending post-secondary education.
- Aboriginal youth are more likely than non-Aboriginal youth to leave the educational system with a lower level of attainment.
- Meanwhile, visible minority youth and those born outside of Canada are more represented than non-visible minority youth and Canadian-born youth among those who graduate from university programs.
- On average, post-secondary graduates earn more than others (regardless of the specific pathway to getting a degree or diploma).
- Young adults who move to another province after high school earn more than youth who stay in the same province. Specifically, earnings increase by 11% for youth who move to Alberta – and by 12% for those who move to a province other than Alberta.

These elements combine to provide a preliminary picture of the learning pathways that young people follow and how this affects their early experience in the workforce. This report also shows that, although completing some form of post-secondary education generally leads to jobs with higher earnings and lower unemployment, some young post-secondary graduates do not manage to land the “good” job they might have expected, at least in their early experience in the labour market.

“While reinforcing other research about the importance of completing both high school, and some form of post-secondary education, the findings also demonstrate that there is a wide range of labour market outcomes even among post-secondary graduates,” says Ron Saunders, CPRN Vice-President of Research.

To download a copy of the report, go to: www.cprn.org.

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