



## CONTACTS

**James K. Pedderson**, Director of Public Relations

Office: 312-422-5078

Mobile: 847-567-1463

[jamespedderson@challengergray.com](mailto:jamespedderson@challengergray.com)

**Colleen Madden**, Media Relations Manager

Office: 312-422-5074

[colleenmadden@challengergray.com](mailto:colleenmadden@challengergray.com)

## For Immediate Release

### Teen Summer Job Outlook

## **MORE SUMMER JOBS THIS YEAR FOR TEENS; AT LEAST, FOR THOSE WHO WANT THEM, THAT IS**

**CHICAGO, March 29, 2016** – Teen employment, already at its highest level since 2009, should continue to increase in the summer months, according to a just-released outlook. However, the number of teens seeking and finding summer jobs during the summer months has declined in each of the last three years – a trend that is likely to continue in 2016.

“Teenagers seeking summer employment should continue to have more and more opportunities. The economy is the strongest it’s been since the recovery began in 2010. The only area that is suffering right now is the energy sector, which was not a fertile sector for teen job seekers, to begin with,” said John A. Challenger, chief executive officer of global outplacement firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc., which released its annual teen summer job outlook on Tuesday.

While the job market may be more welcoming to teenagers, recent trends suggest that may not necessarily translate into increased summer job gains. In 2015, 1,160,000 16- to 19-year-olds found employment from May through July, which was 11 percent fewer than the 1,297,000 finding summer jobs in 2014.

Last summer marked the third consecutive year in which teen summer job gains declined from the previous year. However, even as summer job gains decline, overall teen employment is still on the rise.

As of February, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics counted approximately 4.6 million employed 16- to 19-year-olds. That is up from 4.4 million a year earlier. The February total is the highest for that month since 2009, when nearly 4.8 million teenagers were employed.

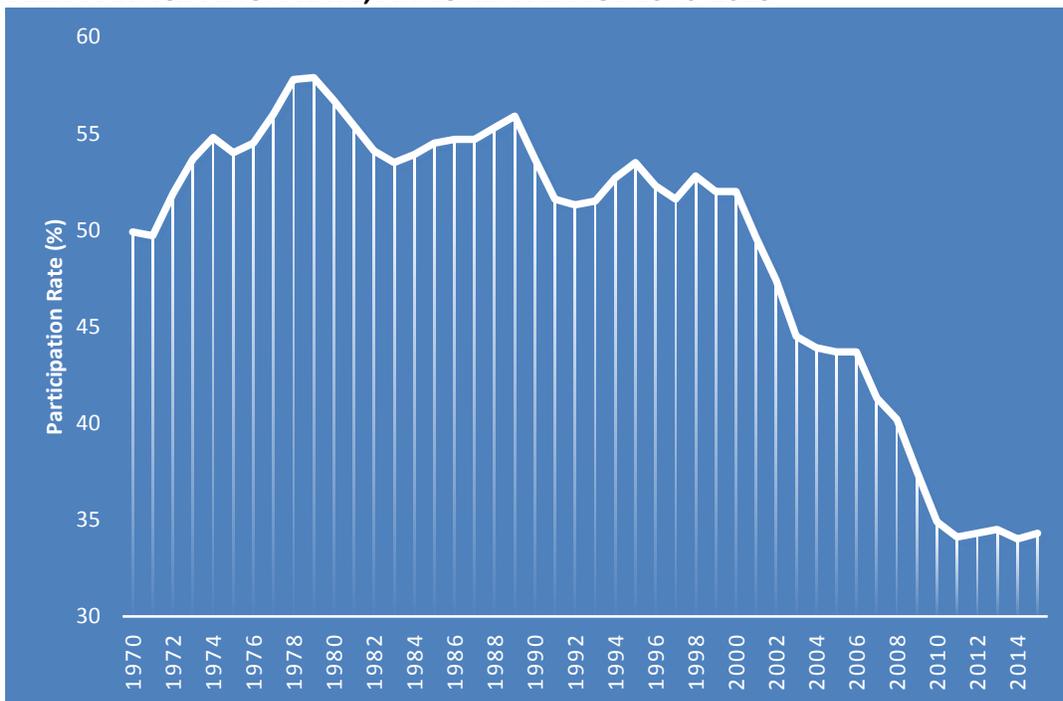
And, despite the 11 percent decline in summer job gains last year, teen employment reached a July peak of 5,696,000, the highest total since 2008.

“The numbers suggest that a more teenagers are finding employment at other times of the year. After all, we are approaching full employment. Many metropolitan areas are already struggling with labor shortages. This environment opens doors for teen job seekers, as those who may have relegated to retail and restaurant jobs are moving up, which leaves a void that can be filled by teens,” said Challenger.

“Even with the recent gains, though, teen employment is a shadow of its former self. The latest figures are well below the employment levels of the late 1990s and early 2000s, when it was common to see 7.0 million to 8.5 million teenagers employed at the peak of the summer job surge. In 1978, more than 10 million teenaged Baby Boomers were working in July. We will probably never hit that mark again,” said Challenger.

The percentage of teenagers participating in the labor force has been declining since the 1970s. Currently, only about one-third of teens participate in the labor force (meaning they are working or actively seeking employment).

#### TEEN PARTICIPATION RATE, ANNUAL AVERAGE 1970-2015

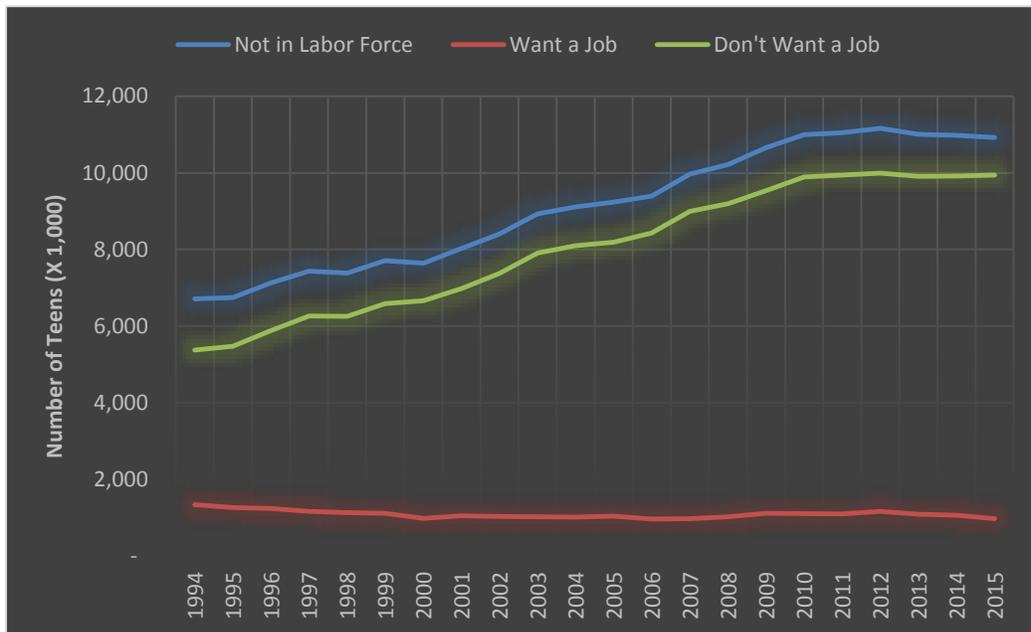


Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, non-seasonally adjusted data

Some teens want a job, but are not in the labor force for a variety of reasons, including the belief that no work is available, simply could not find work, lack school or training, or are currently in school. Others have transportation problems or have family responsibilities.

However, the group of teenagers who want jobs represented less than one-tenth of the 10.9 million teens who were not in the labor force in 2015, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics data. The overwhelming majority are not in the labor force by choice.

### TEENS NOT IN THE LABOR FORCE...AND THEY DON'T WANT TO BE



**Source: Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc., with unpublished non-seasonally adjusted data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics**

“The number of teenagers not in the labor force who want a job has remained flat over the last 20 years. Meanwhile, the number of teenagers not working by choice has risen in near lockstep with the overall number of teens abandoning the labor force.

“This does not mean that teenagers have gotten lazier over the last two decades. They are simply engaged in more activities that fall under the radar of standard employment measures. Many are volunteering. More are participating in summer education programs or in summer sports leagues. Others are in unpaid internships. Many simply may be doing odd jobs, such as baby sitting or lawn mowing,” said Challenger.

“Much of this is in pursuit of college admissions goals and broader career goals beyond college. As colleges become more competitive, teens are trying to find activities that stand out on applications. In this environment, typical summer jobs have fallen out of favor,” he added.