



Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.  
The original outplacement company



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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### Are Teens the Big Job Gainers in May Jobs Report?

### **TEENS GAIN 594,000 JOBS IN MAY AFTER LOSING 1.7M IN APRIL**

**CHICAGO, June 8, 2020** – The latest employment situation report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) showed the economy gaining a surprising 2.5 million jobs after many economists and experts expected another month of losses. According to an analysis of non-seasonally adjusted data from the BLS by global outplacement and executive and business coaching firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc., teens gained 594,000 jobs in May after losing 1,650,000 in April.

On average, since 1948, teen employment rises by 106,000 jobs between March and April, according to the BLS data. Last year, it fell by 215,000 jobs before rebounding in May, June, and July to the highest number of summer job gains for teens since 2001. (See Table 1)

“Most of the jobs coming back in May were in leisure and retail, prime industries for teen workers. Grocery stores experiencing massive demand during the onset of the pandemic moved quickly to beef up their staffs, and in many cases, those positions were filled by teen workers,” said Andrew Challenger, Senior VP of Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.

Despite the May gains, employed teens are at the lowest level since the 1960s. In April, teen employment fell to 3,161,000, the lowest level since March 1958, when 3,132,000 teens were employed and the participation rate was 41.8%. Last month, that number grew to 3,755,000. Prior to April, that is the lowest number of employed teens since January 1964 when 3,708,000 teens were employed and the participation rate was 37.7%. Last month’s participation rate for this group was 32.7%.

Meanwhile, the unemployment rate for teens soared to 32.2% in April before falling slightly to 30.7% in May. These were the highest unemployment rates in the entire series which began in 1948, according to the BLS.

“No doubt the number of teens in the labor force has fallen since its peak in the late 1970s when over 70% of teens participated in the labor market during the summer months. However, the high unemployment rate for this group in April and May suggests teens are looking for work or were working and now find themselves unemployed,” said Challenger.

“Many teens may be taking essential positions to contribute to the household income as their parents lose jobs,” he added.

In fact, according to a report in the Chicago Tribune, teens are expressing frustration with e-learning after working jobs at essential businesses to help their families make ends meet.

“Many businesses that primarily employ teens, like retail stores, amusement parks, and restaurants, are slowly reopening for the summer and in many cases, the Payroll Protection Program kept jobs on payrolls. Many other businesses, such as movie theaters and summer youth programs are not seeing the demand to add jobs or even reopen. It remains to be seen if the businesses that are reopening will see the demand to keep these workers employed, much less add more,” he added.

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## SUMMER EMPLOYMENT GROWTH AMONG WORKERS AGED 16 TO 19

Year	May	June	July	Summer Jobs Gained	Change from Prior Year
1998	270,000	1,058,000	675,000	2,003,000	
1999	415,000	750,000	852,000	2,017,000	0.70%
2000	111,000	1,087,000	311,000	1,509,000	-25.20%
2001	58,000	1,124,000	560,000	1,742,000	15.40%
2002	161,000	985,000	510,000	1,656,000	-4.90%
2003	152,000	859,000	458,000	1,469,000	-11.30%
2004	168,000	827,000	597,000	1,592,000	8.40%
2005	183,000	1,007,000	546,000	1,736,000	9.00%
2006	230,000	1,033,000	471,000	1,734,000	-0.10%
2007	62,000	1,114,000	459,000	1,635,000	-5.70%
2008	116,000	683,000	355,000	1,154,000	-29.40%
2009	111,000	698,000	354,000	1,163,000	0.80%
2010	6,000	497,000	457,000	960,000	-17.50%
2011	71,000	714,000	302,000	1,087,000	13.20%
2012	157,000	858,000	382,000	1,397,000	28.50%
2013	215,000	779,000	361,000	1,355,000	-3.00%
2014	217,000	661,000	419,000	1,297,000	-4.30%
2015	182,000	609,000	369,000	1,160,000	-10.60%
2016	156,000	691,000	492,000	1,339,000	15.40%
2017	75,000	1,023,000	190,000	1,288,000	-3.80%
2018	130,000	951,000	307,000	1,388,000	7.80%
2019	216,000	1,053,000	468,000	1,737,000	25.10%
2020	594,000				
<b>AVERAGE Since 1998</b>	<b>176,348</b>	<b>866,409</b>	<b>449,773</b>	<b>1,473,545</b>	
<b>AVERAGE Since 2006</b>	<b>169,200</b>	<b>815,361</b>	<b>389,052</b>	<b>1,344,503</b>	

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