

Summer McJobs are good for kids, study says

July 7 2014



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A new UBC Sauder School of Business study shows that teenagers who work at summer or evening jobs gain a competitive advantage later in life. Developing early knowledge of the working world and how to manage in it, they are more likely to find good employment and earn more money in the future.

"With summer in full swing and kids sitting on the couch, parents are wondering whether to push them to find a job," says Sauder professor Marc-David L. Seidel, who co-authored the study. "Parents may think

that their kids could do better than a job at the local fast food joint. But our study shows even flipping burgers has value – particularly if it leads to part-time work later during school term."

Seidel and his co-authors found teens in part-time jobs progress to better-suited careers since the early exposure to work helps them hone their preferences. They enhance their soft skills, acquire better references and learn how to job-hunt more successfully – establishing wider career networks.

The more hours that 15-year-olds work, particularly during the school term when they have to learn to manage their time, the better their career prospects, says Seidel. The study showed benefits arose from working up to as much as 33 hours per week during the [school](#) year or 43 hours during summer.

Researchers used data from the Statistics Canada Youth in Transition Survey. This represented 246,661 15-year-old Canadian teenagers, looking at their [work](#) history over a 10-year period beginning at age 15 and ending at 25 in 2009.

"Adolescent labour has been stigmatized as exploitative with many parents opting to put their kids in summer camp rather than [summer](#) jobs," says Seidel. "However, our research shows that working can offer educational and developmental opportunities that prepare adolescents for the real world."

More information: The study, Beneficial "Child labor": The impact of adolescent work on future professional outcomes appears in the latest edition of the journal *Research in the Sociology of Work*.

Provided by University of British Columbia

Citation: Summer McJobs are good for kids, study says (2014, July 7) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-07-summer-mcjobs-good-kids.html>

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