



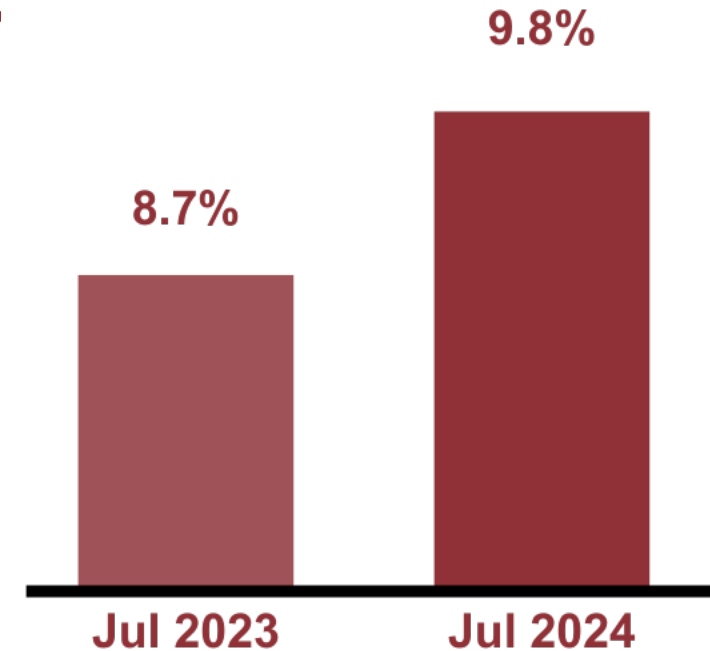
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Getting to Work: Reimagining Employment Pathways for Youth

National Youth Employment



As of July 2024,
54.5% of youth aged
16 to 24 were
employed in the
United States.



The **youth unemployment** rate
was **9.8%** in July 2024, **higher**
than the rate in July 2023 which
was previously **8.7%**

Challenges for Recent Graduates

- **Recent college graduates have encountered challenges in the employment landscape.**
 - Since January 2021, the **jobless** rate for college graduates aged 22 to 27 has remained consistently above the national average. This pattern is linked to a slowdown in hiring within important sectors like technology, finance, and consulting.
 - In 2023 survey conducted by Intellegent.com, revealed that 40% of business leaders believed that Gen Z graduates were not ready for the workforce. 94% of the respondents admitted they had steered clear of hiring recent college graduates.
 - Those who participated in the survey mentioned negative characteristics such as a lack of work ethic, inadequate communication skills, and an attitude of entitlement. 62% attributed these issues due to modern culture, while 48% held the COVID-19 pandemic responsible.

A Complex Job Market in 2025

- **As per the U.S. Bureau of Labor, jobs in computer and information fields are expected to expand at a rate significantly higher than the average for all job categories from 2023 to 2033.**
 - As of 2022, there has been a significant decline in the number of applications for technology-related fields from students, nearly 19%.
 - Due to mass layoffs in the tech industry, Gen Z have since pivoted to Government related jobs due to their stability.
 - Due to recent developments, there have been numerous budget reductions leading to approximately 216,000 federal job losses in March 2025. Consequently, this has fostered an atmosphere of unpredictability for young people, which could have lasting implications for their career paths and financial security. ³

3. Ito, A. (2025, March 31). *Gen Z is facing a career apocalypse*. Business Insider. <https://www.businessinsider.com/doge-damage-gen-z-careers-tech-layoffs-job-market-hiring-2025-3>

Connecticut's Disconnected Youth

- **In the 2024 Disconnected Youth Report, Connecticut is currently dealing with significant problems; 119,000 young people are at risk, and 44,000 are unable to secure employment due to youth poverty being a contributing factor.** ⁴
 - Youth unemployment rose to 9.8% in July 2024, up from 8.7% in July 2023. Roughly three-fourths of unemployed youth were seeking full-time work.
 - The incidence of youth homelessness has reached its highest level in a decade, alongside increasing mental health challenges among young people in Connecticut.
 - A total of 119,000 young individuals have either left school or are at risk of doing so, and they are currently without jobs and often lack the skills needed to be employable. ⁵

Youth Employment Opportunities

The **Youth Employment Opportunities program** is a statewide initiative that offers paid job experiences for individuals between the **ages of 14 and 24**. This program runs year-round through the five Workforce Development Boards in Connecticut. Its objective is to enhance **job readiness, establish professional networks, and provide opportunities for career exploration**.

The key elements to this initiative include;

- Paid Employment with covered expenses (e.g., uniforms, transportation)
- Hands-on training alongside professionals in various industries
- Focusing on underserved and disconnected youth populations
- Collaborations with the Department of Children and Families and Court Support Services.

For further information, check out the CT Youth Employment website.



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