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Iowa-Commission

Report of Committee on Employment of Youth

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IOWA COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH
OF THE
MID-CENTURY WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE

REPORT OF COMMITTEE
ON EMPLOYMENT OF YOUTH

Ray Bryan, Acting Head
Vocational Education Department
Iowa State College
Ames, Iowa
Chairman

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THE EMPLOYMENT OF YOUTH

Introduction

The Committee on Employment of Youth has made a survey of youth entering the labor force, major occupations, education and employment, vocational education, apprenticeship, employment counseling, and child labor and work permits. Some of this was done by graduate students at the State College, Ames.

The problem of getting young people started in the world of work is one of society's greatest obligations. In Iowa approximately 240,000 young people are in the 14-19 age range. About 40,000 of these young people enter the labor market each year. The task of finding a suitable job for these young people is difficult. However, it is essential task if the young people are to become productive citizens. Thus a study of the employment of youth in Iowa is a first step in helping young people.

In studying the problem of employment of youth, two points of view must be kept in mind. First, children and young people must be protected from employment practices which are detrimental to their health and which keep them from taking full advantage of their educational opportunities. Second, the modern home is providing fewer and fewer opportunities for work experience. Many young people approach the labor market with little or no work experience. We believe that work experience is of such importance that it should be provided by the home, school or community agency and that it should be considered a part of the child's program of education.

Iowa's Labor Force

To get the proper perspective for this study, one must consider Iowa's present labor force. Young people will be entering this labor force and its characteristics will largely determine their long-time occupational opportunities.

According to the 1940 census there were 1,959,091 people 14 years of age and older in Iowa. Of this number 957,869 or 48.9 percent were in the labor force. Of the 985,494 males 770,949 or 78.2 percent were in the labor force. Only 19.2 percent of 186,920 of the 973,597 females were reported in the labor force. Since 1900 the percent of males in the labor force has been declining slowly and the percent of females has been increasing.

Of the 770,949 males in the labor force 49,885 or 6.5 percent were in the age group 14-19 years. Of the 186,928 females in the labor force 23,279 or 12.5 percent were in the 14-19 age group.

Table 1 shows the distribution of the labor force of Iowa among the major occupational groups.

Table 1

MAJOR OCCUPATION GROUPS OF THE EXPERIENCED LABOR FORCE
BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND SEX FOR IOWA: 1940

	Total	Male	Female	%
Experienced Labor Force *	951,931	767,117	184,814	100
Professional and Semi-Professional Workers	64,929	31,042	33,887	6.8
Proprietors, Managers, and Officials including Farm	284,324	273,801	10,523	29.8
Clerical, Sales and Kindred Workers	128,491	73,708	54,783	13.6
Craftsmen, Foremen, and Kindred Workers	86,927	85,510	1,417	8.1
Operatives and Kindred Workers	105,886	88,682	17,204	11.1
Protective Service Workers	6,394	6,330	64	.67
Service Workers, except Protective	80,186	22,488	57,698	8.4
Laborers, including Farm	177,489	173,543	3,946	18.4
Occupations Not Reported	17,305	12,013	5,292	1.8

*Does not include new workers: 3,832 Males and 2,106 Females

The importance of Table 1 is realized when one considers that approximately two-thirds of the people entering the labor market each year will find jobs as replacements for workers who are retiring or who have left the job for other reasons.

Education and Employment

Formal education should employ the time of most young people. How well are Iowa young people employed by education?

According to the 1940 census 38,493 of the 44,673 14 year olds, or 86.2 percent, were in school; 36,085 of the 45,489 15 year olds, or 79.3 percent; 32,916 of the 46,223 16 year olds, or 71.2 percent; and 30,567 of the 46,633 17 year olds, or 65.5 percent.

Seventy-five percent of those who enter the 9th grade and 62.5 percent of all youth 17 years of age are graduated from the 12th grade, with the greatest loss occurring between the 10th and 11th grades.

It is reasonable to expect that 75 percent of the youth will complete a high school curriculum. Society must provide some worthwhile activities for the other 25 percent.

The State Board for Vocational Education provides vocational education in the fields of agriculture, distribution education, home economics and trades and industries. In the 1948-49 school year 239 of the 861 high schools provided training in one or more of the above programs. These programs enrolled 23,769 pupils or approximately one-fifth of the pupils enrolled in Iowa high schools. The above figures also indicate that the pupils in only 27.8 percent of the high schools had an opportunity to get training in any of these areas.

To be effective vocational education should be preceded by vocational guidance. While the schools are making rapid strides in providing guidance services for every child, only 78 high school counselors were reported as spending two or more hours per day counseling during the 1949-50 school year. Vocational choice is one of the aims of general education in Iowa and should receive attention from each school. Each student should make a tentative choice of a vocational field consistent with his talents and based upon an understanding of opportunities for success and service. Those students who plan to enter some occupation immediately upon leaving high school and who do not have an opportunity to gain actual work experience in their father's business or on the home farm should engage in some part-time work experience under actual job conditions and under the direction of the school.

Apprenticeship Program

The apprenticeship program offers another opportunity for vocational training. In January 1950 a total of 3,709 apprenticeship agreements were reported to be in effect in the state of Iowa. This total includes only those agreements registered with the Iowa Apprenticeship Council in Des Moines.

The following tabulation gives the apprenticeship occupation and the number of apprentices active in each occupation.

OCCUPATION	APPRENTICES	OCCUPATION	APPRENTICES
Auto Mechanics	295	Mechanic	3
Auto Upholsterer	3	Meter Tester & Repairman	2
Baker	41	Marker	1
Barber	3	Miller	1
Blacksmith	5	Millman & Cabinet Maker	36
Boilermaker	4	Millwright	8
Bookbinder	28	Model Maker	1
Bricklayer	171	Molder	32
Business Machine Mechanic	3	Monument Mfg.	5
Candy Maker	2	Motor Repairman	1
Carman	18	Motorcycle Mech.	1
Carpenter	494	Neon Tube Bender	7
Cement Finisher	15	Optician	41
Cook	12	Painter	70
Coremaker	4	Pattern Maker	25
Dental Technician	58	Photoengraver & Photographer	20
Draftsman	27	Pipe Organ Mechanic	1
Dry Cleaning	2	Plasterer	39
Electrician	480	Plumbers & Steamfitters	340
Electric Motor Repairman	3	Portrait Photographer	1
Electroplater	3	Printers	748
Farm Implement Mechanic	3	Pump Repair Maintenance	1
Film Technician (M.P.)	1	Radio Repairman	2
Floor Coverer	22	Refrigeration Mechanic	7
Furniture Finisher	2	Roofer	1
Furrier	2	Scale Serviceman	8
Garment Cutter	2	Sheet Metal	194
Gas Meterman	3	Shoe Repairman	3

To an effective vocational education should be provided by the State. This the State is now doing in providing training facilities for every child, only to the extent that the State is now doing so. The State is now doing so in providing training facilities for every child, only to the extent that the State is now doing so. The State is now doing so in providing training facilities for every child, only to the extent that the State is now doing so.

Vocational Training

The vocational training program is a part of the State's effort to provide for the vocational training of every child. The State is now doing so in providing training facilities for every child, only to the extent that the State is now doing so. The State is now doing so in providing training facilities for every child, only to the extent that the State is now doing so.

Year	Occupation	Number	Percentage
1900	Teacher	100	100
1901	Teacher	100	100
1902	Teacher	100	100
1903	Teacher	100	100
1904	Teacher	100	100
1905	Teacher	100	100
1906	Teacher	100	100
1907	Teacher	100	100
1908	Teacher	100	100
1909	Teacher	100	100
1910	Teacher	100	100
1911	Teacher	100	100
1912	Teacher	100	100
1913	Teacher	100	100
1914	Teacher	100	100
1915	Teacher	100	100
1916	Teacher	100	100
1917	Teacher	100	100
1918	Teacher	100	100
1919	Teacher	100	100
1920	Teacher	100	100
1921	Teacher	100	100
1922	Teacher	100	100
1923	Teacher	100	100
1924	Teacher	100	100
1925	Teacher	100	100
1926	Teacher	100	100
1927	Teacher	100	100
1928	Teacher	100	100
1929	Teacher	100	100
1930	Teacher	100	100

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OCCUPATION	APPRENTICES	OCCUPATION	APPRENTICES
Gas Serviceman and Elec.	14	Sign Painter	7
Glazier	21	Sign Writer	1
Granite Cutter	6	Sprinklefitter	1
Instrument Repair	3	Stationary Fireman & Eng.	3
Insulator & Asbestos	2	Stone Worker & Carver	2
Interior Decorator	2	Tailer	3
Iron Worker	6	Terrazzo Worker	3
Jeweler	9	Tile Layer & Setter	9
Lather	5	Tool Designer	7
Locksmith	2	Tool & Die Maker	63
Machinist	83	Upholsterer	9
Machinist-Maintenance	15	Watch-maker	37
Machinist-(S.M.)	6	Watch Repairman	3
Marking Device Maker	4		
Meat Cutter	75		
Mechanic Maintenance	3		
		TOTAL	3709

The occupations with the major number of apprentice agreements were: printers, 20 percent; carpenters, 13.3 percent; electricians, 13 percent; plumbers and steamfitters, 9 percent; and auto mechanics, 8 percent. The others were scattered widely in eighty other occupations.

Handicapped Youth

It is estimated that Iowa has 15,000 disabled persons. In May 1950, 2,136 were receiving services from the Rehabilitation Division of the State Board for Vocational Education. Approximately 25 percent of this number are in the 15-19 age group. About 60 percent of the vocational training is provided through business colleges, universities, and schools of higher learning. The remainder is purchased from private trade schools, on-the-job training, tutorial, correspondence and other. A total of 1,250 people were rehabilitated from July 1946 to July 1948. It may be assumed that over 300 of this number were in the 15-19 age group. The program has grown and 900 to 1,000 rehabilitations are expected in the year ending in 1950.

It would seem desirable that school people should become informed about the services of the Rehabilitation Division.

Employment Assistance

The Employment Security Commission maintains thirty-nine employment offices throughout Iowa. The offices are located at:

Albia	Carroll	Clinton	Fort Dodge	Marshalltown
Algona	Cedar Rapids	Davenport	Fort Madison	Mason City
Ames	Centerville	Decorah	Grinnell	Muscatine
Atlantic	Charles City	Des Moines	Iowa City	Newton
Boone	Council Bluffs	Dubuque	Keokuk	Oelwein
Burlington	Creston	Fairfield	Knoxville	Oskaloosa

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Ottumwa	Perry	Shenandoah	Sioux City	Spencer
Storm Lake	Washington	Waterloo	Webster City	

These offices offer testing, counseling and placement services for those seeking employment. In January of 1950 the offices placed 4,888 people. Seven hundred five were under 21 years of age. Seven were placed in professional and managerial positions; 226 in clerical and sales; 152 in service; 8 in skilled; 41 in semi-skilled and 271 in unskilled. In April 1950, 7,042 people were placed. Of this number 1,066 were under 21 years of age. Seven were placed in professional and managerial positions; 211 in clerical and sales; 253 in service; 17 in skilled; 85 in semi-skilled and 493 in unskilled. If these two months are indicative it would seem that the areas of clerical and sales, service, and unskilled labor offer the largest number of beginning jobs for young people.

If young people are to effectively plan an occupation, they must have accurate information about the types of jobs that are available to beginners. One of the better ways of obtaining this information is the use of the community occupational survey. This survey should not only give a picture of the jobs for beginners but also should show how the people of the community make a living.

Child Labor

Two types of work permits are issued under Iowa Child Labor Laws. The work permit is issued to either boys or girls in the 14-15 year age group who have completed school work equivalent to sixth grade level. The street trades permit is issued to boys between the ages of 11 and 15. The superintendent of schools or his representative issues the permits upon application. During the year 1949, 628 work permits were issued. Boys received 65.8 percent of the permits. In the same year 2,128 street trade permits were issued.

A survey was made of the work and street trades permits by a graduate student at the State College, under the supervision of the chairman of the committee.

The purposes of this investigation were to discover as shown by the work permits and street trades permits filed by the Iowa Bureau of Labor: (1) the particular counties with the heaviest concentration of work certificates; (2) the relationship between industries, income, and population by counties and number of work permits; (3) the relationship between income and population by counties and number of street trades permits; (4) the size of the communities that issued work certificates; (5) the kinds of work that the minors do in their out-of-school hours; (6) the work opportunities for minors; (7) the differences between males and females with respect to grade in school, age, types of work, and total hours worked per week; and (8) a tabulation of employment by month for minors.

The information was collected from all of the work permits and street trades permits that were filed with the Iowa Bureau of Labor beginning January 1, 1949 and continuing to January 1, 1950. Work permits are issued to 14 and 15 year olds, boys and girls. The information obtained from the work permits included: age, sex, size of community, county, hours per week, industry of employer, grade completed, month of issue, and issuing officer. Street trades permits are issued to boys from ages of 11 through 15 years. The information obtained from the street trades permits included: age, size of community, county, hours per week, industry of employer, description of work, grade completed, month of issue, renewal or not specified certificate, and issuing officer.

There were 628 work permits filed at the Iowa Bureau of Labor during 1949. Eighty-two percent of the counties in Iowa issued 5 permits or fewer. Twenty per cent of the total 628 work permits were issued by Polk County. Six counties issued more than 20 permits each.

The 7 communities in Iowa ranging in size from 30,000 to 99,999 (Sioux City, Cedar Rapids, Dubuque, etc.) contributed almost 40 per cent of the work permits. The percentage of males and the percentage of females were quite similar in all of the communities regardless of size.

Two-thirds of the work permits were issued for males and one-third was issued for females. Two-fifths of the minors were employed in wholesale and retail trade. More than one-fifth of the minors were employed in agriculture, forestry or fishery. There did not seem to be any strong age preferences for the various industries, except that a slightly higher percentage of 15 year olds than 14 year olds were engaged in agriculture and in transportation. A higher percentage of 14 year olds were employed in wholesale and retail trade than 15 year olds. A higher percentage of males than females were employed in transportation, communication and public utilities; personal, business and recreational services; manufacturing; construction; and agriculture. The percentage of females exceeded the percentage of males in wholesale and retail trade. All industries except agriculture had 50 per cent or more of their workers from grade 9 or higher.

Nearly 50 per cent of the minors had completed the required attendance through elementary school and were continuing their education. Nearly four-fifths of the work permits showed that the minor had completed grade 8. Five per cent of the 14 year olds and 5 per cent of the 15 year olds were retarded in school. Fifty-six per cent of the females and 46 per cent of the males had completed grades 9, 10 and 11.

Two-fifths of the 15 year olds worked from 40 to 49 hours per week. Twenty-nine per cent of the 14 year olds worked from 40 to 49 hours per week. A higher percentage of boys worked the 40 to 49 hour week than did the girls. One-third of the males and one-third of the females worked fewer than 20 hours per week. Three-fourths of those in agriculture and nearly all of those in construction worked 40 to 49 hours per week. Nearly one-third of those in wholesale and retail trade and one-third of those in transportation worked 10 to 19 hours per week.

Over one-half of the work permits were issued during the summer months of June, July, and August. February was low with 3 per cent of the permits. The low months for males were February with 3 per cent for the number of permits issued. More females than males were employed in the pre-Christmas season. Three-fourths of those engaged in agriculture were employed in June and July. Over 70 per cent of the permits filed during the months of April, October and November were issued for wholesale and retail trade. Over one-half of those in manufacturing worked during June, July and August, no permits were filed in manufacturing during October, November and December.

Three-fifths of the work permits were issued by people specified by the local school board such as director of pupil adjustment, director of employed minors, and secretary of the school board. County superintendents issued six of the work permits and superintendents issued slightly more than one-third of the total.

There were 2,128 street trades permits filed at the Iowa Bureau of Labor during 1949. One-fifth of the total issued were renewals. Seven counties, Clinton, Linn, Mahaska, Lee, Polk, Pottawattamie, and Woodbury issued all but 15 of the 2,128 street trades permits.

Four-fifths of the street trades permits were issued to carrier salesmen. There were no permits issued for magazine distributors or peddlers. Two per cent of the permits were issued for street trades such as leaflets distributors, shoeshine boys, and minors selling novelties. Most of the younger boys of 11 and 12 years of age or older. All of the shoeshine boys and boys who sold pop and novelties were from Des Moines. Des Moines issued two-fifths of the street trades permits. About three-fifths of the street trades permits were issued in cities that varied from 30,000 to 99,999.

All of the street trades permits were issued to males from the ages 11 through 15, except for 6 who were 10 years old. One-tenth of the total were issued to minors 11 years old. Over on-half of the street trades permits were issued to minors 13 years and under. Most of the boys had been employed 20 hours or less a week. Those boys 11 and 12 years old worked fewer hours than the older boys. Ten street trades permits stated that the boys had worked 50 hours or more per week.

One-third of the minors had not completed seventh grade. Seven per cent of the boys were in high school. Eighty-nine permits showed that the boy had not completed any grades beyond the fourth grade. Ten per cent of the 15 year olds, 6 per cent of the 14 year olds, 4 per cent of the 13 year olds, and 5 per cent of the 12 year olds were retarded in school.

Three-tenths of the permits were issued during January; one-tenth of the permits were issued in August. Few permits were used in December. Most of the other street trades permits, other than carrier salesmen, were issued during the summer months.

Most of the street trades permits had been issued by officers such as director of pupil personnel, director of employed minors, and secretary of the school board. No street trades permits were issued by county superintendents; some of the permits had been issued by superintendents.

One may make at least two observations concerning work permits. First, that a large number of children work without securing a permit, and second, that the child labor laws of Iowa should be brought up to date. These laws should provide for the changes that have occurred in industry and employment in Iowa during the past 25 years and should also aid in providing work experiences for youth of high school age as part of the educational program.

Summary

We recommend that:

1. A study be made of the present child labor laws with the purpose of bringing them up to date.
2. Vocational guidance and vocational education opportunities be expanded in the high schools of Iowa.
3. The work of the Iowa Employment Security Commission be brought to the attention of the schools.
4. Handicapped youth be made aware of the vocational opportunities through the Rehabilitation Division of the State Board for Vocational Education.
5. Communities be encouraged to conduct occupational surveys to discover the types of job opportunities and also to enumerate the entry jobs for beginners.
6. Communities make every possible effort to provide worthwhile activities for both in and out of school youth.

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