

ALASKA'S YOUNGEST WORKERS



Teens a smaller share of population and workforce in recent years

By MALI ABRAHAMSON

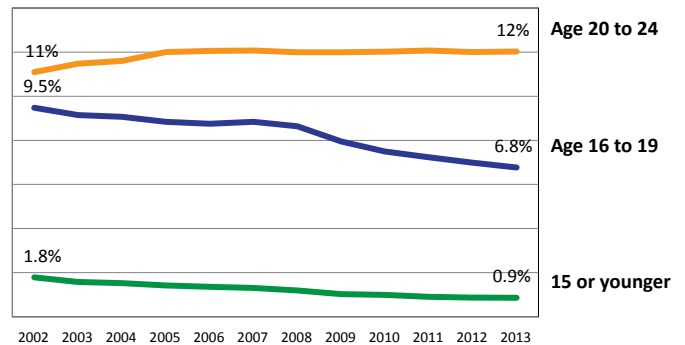
Teens in Alaska's workforce have declined significantly over the past 12 years, both in overall number and in their percentage of the state's workforce. Teens made up 11.3 percent of the Alaska workforce in 2002, and their percentage fell to 7.7 by 2013. (See Exhibit 1.)

Young adults between 20 and 24, however, have remained steady at about 12 percent of the total workforce.

Less workforce participation

One reason for the decline is that there are simply fewer teens in Alaska than there were 10

1 Declining Percent of Workers PERCENT BY AGE GROUP, 2002 TO 2013



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

2 10 Most Common Occupations for Young Workers ALASKA, 2013

Age 15 and Under

Food Preparation Workers
Personal Care Aides
Combined Food Prep/Serving, Incl Fast Food
Retail Salespeople
Cashiers
Office Clerks, General
Office and Administrative Support Workers
Umpires, Referees, and Other Sports Officials
Laborers/Freight, Stock, Matl Movers, Hand
Packers and Packagers, Hand

Ages 16 to 19

Retail Salespeople
Combined Food Prep and Serving, Incl Fast Food
Cashiers
Food Preparation Workers
Counter Attendants, Cafeteria/Concession/Coffee
Waiters and Waitresses
Hosts/Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, Coffee Shp
Laborers/Freight, Stock, Matl Movers, Hand
Construction Laborers
Office and Administrative Support Workers

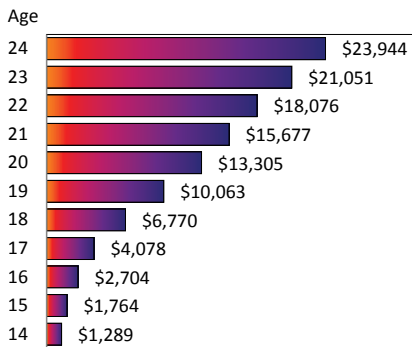
Ages 20 to 24

Retail Salespeople
Cashiers
Combined Food Prep/Serving, Incl Fast Food
Construction Laborers
Office and Administrative Support Workers
Personal Care Aides
Waiters and Waitresses
Office Clerks, General
Laborers/Freight, Stock, Matl Movers, Hand
Janitors/Cleaners, Exc Maids and Housekeeping

Source: Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

3 Wages Increase With Age

ALASKA, AVERAGE ANNUAL, 2013



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

years ago. Even as the state's total population grew by an average of 1.1 percent a year during that period, the number of teens dropped.

But population aside, teens nationwide are becoming less likely to participate in the labor force.¹ The U.S. labor force participation rate among 16-to-19-year-olds fell from 51.3 percent in 1992 to 34.3 percent in 2012 and is projected to drop to 27.3 percent by 2022.

In Alaska, labor force participation is generally higher than the U.S. average for all age groups. For 16-to-19-year-olds, it was six points higher in 2012, at over 40 percent. But Alaska's teen rate has also been on the decline, dropping from 47.7 percent in 2003.

What they're doing instead

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics attributes the decline in participation to more competition for jobs from other age groups, more unpaid internships and summer school enrollment, increased college enrollment, and diminishing federally funded job opportunities.

Some high school students devote more time to sports and volunteer work, which may look better on a college application than paid work at a restaurant. Other teens work but may not show up in the job counts, such as deckhands on fishing boats or unpaid help in a family business.

Jobs typically in retail, food service

Because teens and younger adults have limited skills

¹Labor force participation rates include self-employment, which is not included in job and wage data used elsewhere in this article. To be counted as part of the labor force, a person must be either working or looking for a job.

and often less time due to education demands, they tend to work in entry-level, part-time service jobs.

For those who are working, their job opportunities are dominated by food service and retail occupations. Some farms hire the youngest teens for harvests, and entertainers have young dancers in their troupes. Child care and personal care also stand out, as Alaska Native Regional Corporations hire young teens to work as home health and personal care aides.

Older teens, those between 16 and 19, work similar jobs but also qualify for seafood processing.

Once people reach their 20s, retail and food service still dominate but tellers and financial clerk service occupations become common (see Exhibit 2) and their employers become representative of the overall Alaska industry mix. Many young adults also work in oil fields, hospitals, transportation, and state government.

Wages increase with every year

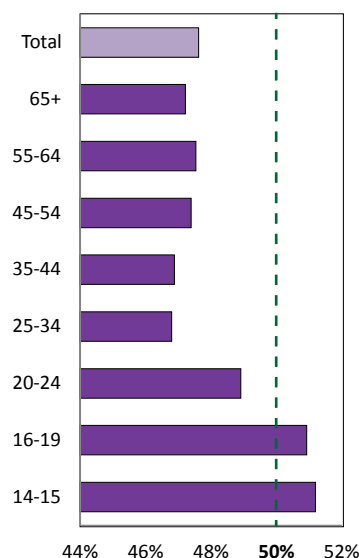
Workers between 14 and 19 earned \$163 million in 2013, or about 1 percent of total Alaska wages. Annual pay increased with every year of age. (See Exhibit 3.) Those between 20 and 24 earned \$787 million, or 6 percent of total wages.

By age 21, the average wage was just over the federal poverty threshold for Alaska of \$14,720, compared

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4 More Teen Girls Work

PERCENT FEMALE WORKERS BY AGE, 2013



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Summary of Alaska Child Labor Law

Alaskan youth under the age of 14 may only work in the following occupations:

- Newspaper sales and delivery
- Babysitting, handiwork, and domestic employment in or about private homes
- Occupations in the entertainment industry, with an approved work permit from the Alaska Wage and Hour Administration

Special restrictions (14- and 15-year-olds):

When school is in session, hours will be limited to a total of nine hours of school attendance plus employment in any one day; work will be performed only between 5 a.m. and 9 p.m. and total hours worked will be limited to 23 in any week.

During school vacations, work hours will be limited to 40 per week between 5 a.m. and 9 p.m.

Jobs forbidden for 14- and 15-year-olds:

- Occupations in manufacturing, mining, or processing, including work rooms or places where goods are manufactured, mined or otherwise processed
- Occupations involved in operation of power-driven machinery other than office machines
- Occupations in construction (including demolition and repair), except office work
- Any work in an establishment that serves alcoholic beverages
- Public messenger service
- Occupations in or about canneries, except office work
- Work performed in or about boilers, engine rooms, or retorts
- Work involved with maintenance or repair of the establishment's machines or equipment
- Occupations that involve working from window sills, ladders, scaffolds, or their substitutes
- Occupations handling or operating power-driven food slicers, grinders, choppers, cutters, and bakery type mixers
- Work in freezers, meat coolers, or preparation of meat for sale
- Loading/unloading to or from trucks, railroad cars, or conveyors

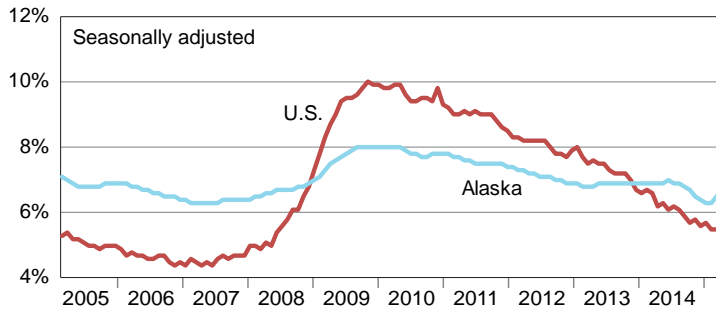
- Occupations in warehouses and storage except office and clerical work
- Occupations involving use of sharpened tools
- Occupations in transportation of people or property except office or sales work

Minors 17 and under cannot be employed in:

- Occupations in manufacturing, handling, or use of explosives
- Occupations of motor vehicle driver or helper (some limited restrictions)
- Mining operations, including coal
- Logging or occupations in the operations of any saw-mill, lathe mill, shingle mill, or cooperage
- Operation of power-driven woodworking machines
- Occupations with exposure to radioactive substances and to ionizing radiation
- Operation of elevators or other power-driven hoisting apparatus
- Operation of power-driven metal forming, punching, and shearing machines
- Occupations involving slaughtering, meat packing, processing, or rendering
- Occupations involved in the operation and cleaning of power-driven bakery machines
- Occupations involved in the operation of power-driven paper products machines
- Occupations involved in the manufacture of brick, tile, and kindred products
- Occupations involved in the operation and cleaning of circular saws, band saws, and guillotine shears
- Occupations involved in wrecking, demolition, and shipwrecking operations
- Occupations involved in roofing operations
- Occupations involved with excavation operations
- Electrical work with voltages exceeding 220, or outside erection or repair and meter testing including telegraph and telephone lines
- Occupations involving exposure to bloodborne pathogens
- Occupations involved in canvassing, peddling, solicitation of door-to-door contributions, or acting as an outside salesman

Employment Scene

1 Unemployment Rates JANUARY 2005 TO APRIL 2015



Sources: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis; and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

TEEN WORKERS

Continued from page 16

with just \$1,289 at age 14. This is largely because young adults are no longer restricted by child labor laws and can work longer hours.

Teen girls more likely to work

Teens stand out for their lack of a gender gap in job availability and compensation. Partly because Alaska girls haven't yet left the workforce to have children, females are over half the teen workforce. (See Exhibit 4.)

Girls also earn 49 percent of teen wages in Alaska, compared to the 40 percent of wages that women of all ages earn.

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2 Unemployment Rates BOROUGHES AND CENSUS AREAS

	Prelim. 4/15	Revised 3/15	4/14
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED			
United States	5.4	5.5	6.2
Alaska Statewide	6.7	6.5	6.9
NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED			
United States	5.1	5.6	5.9
Alaska Statewide	7.0	7.5	7.1
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	6.0	6.3	6.0
Municipality of Anchorage	5.3	5.5	5.3
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	8.5	9.2	8.5
Gulf Coast Region	8.1	9.1	8.3
Kenai Peninsula Borough	8.5	9.5	8.5
Kodiak Island Borough	4.7	5.1	5.5
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	10.5	12.4	10.7
Interior Region	6.8	7.4	7.1
Denali Borough	17.0	19.4	19.1
Fairbanks North Star Borough	5.7	6.1	5.8
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	12.3	14.1	14.2
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	18.8	20.8	19.9
Northern Region	11.4	11.4	11.5
Nome Census Area	13.4	13.3	12.9
North Slope Borough	5.6	5.5	5.5
Northwest Arctic Borough	17.1	17.6	18.4
Southeast Region	7.2	8.3	7.5
Haines Borough	10.9	14.8	12.4
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	18.0	22.9	18.0
Juneau, City and Borough	5.0	5.5	5.2
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7.9	9.0	8.4
Petersburg Census Area	10.1	12.4	10.6
Prince of Wales-Hyder CA	13.4	16.1	13.0
Sitka, City and Borough	4.9	5.2	5.2
Skagway, Municipality	14.4	21.4	16.1
Wrangell, City and Borough	8.0	9.6	8.0
Yakutat, City and Borough	9.1	10.9	10.3
Southwest Region	12.3	11.9	12.2
Aleutians East Borough	2.8	3.2	3.5
Aleutians West Census Area	3.9	2.6	4.0
Bethel Census Area	16.6	16.4	16.7
Bristol Bay Borough	12.3	20.8	11.5
Dillingham Census Area	10.4	10.1	10.7
Lake and Peninsula Borough	15.9	18.0	18.8
Wade Hampton Census Area	26.4	26.7	24.9

Sources: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis; and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics