



UNIVERSITY OF
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Work, Worklessness and Wellbeing – Young People and Covid-19

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‘I don’t have enough money to pay for my rent on furlough. It’s a constant worry – and I can’t do anything about it, I have all this time but I don’t know what to do with it apart from sit and worry.’



Headlines

- 1/3 of 18-24 year olds have lost their jobs or been furloughed since March 2020.
- 12-24 worst affected in terms of labour market and wellbeing
- Inequities exist with low SES and minority ethnic groups disproportionately impacted



A young man and woman are smiling and talking on a university campus. The man is wearing a red polo shirt with 'RACER CREW' and 'LING 58' printed on it. The woman is wearing a yellow shirt and blue overalls. The background shows other students and a blurred campus setting.

Wellbeing and mental health

- Not able to concentrate
- Not enjoying day to day activities
- Lacking private space to work or study
- Increase in negative feelings
- 3 quarters of 18-29 year olds worried about the future
- 12-24 critical time for social and emotional development



Transitions

- Key transitions points transformed or removed
- Disruption and uncertainty around requirements for transition
- Lack of social groups and connection outside of immediate family/housemates



Long term implications

- Previous recessions and economic downturns have demonstrated long lasting effects on those making key transitions. Not taking action to support young people could, therefore, have widespread, long-term implications for society.
- Young people who experience unemployment early in their careers are potentially exposed to scarring effects (Brown et al., 2011; Schmillen & Umkeher, 2017).
- Trends in youth unemployment predict future unemployment, increase the likelihood of poor mental and physical health, and are linked to higher levels of crime (Kelly, McGuinness, & O'Connell, 2012).



“

we feel unmotivated and a lack of
positivity, the future is uncertain but I know
in years ahead, mentally and emotionally
we will feel a sense of achievement that we
got through these times”



When working with young people concentrate on...

Psychological Resilience

New ways of working

Technology

Generation Z



Baby boomer
1940–59



Gen X
1960–79



Gen Y (millennial)
1980–94



Gen Z
1995–2010

Context

- Postwar
- Dictatorship and repression in Brazil

- Political transition
- Capitalism and meritocracy dominate

- Globalization
- Economic stability
- Emergence of internet

- Mobility and multiple realities
- Social networks
- Digital natives

Behavior

- Idealism
- Revolutionary
- Collectivist

- Materialistic
- Competitive
- Individualistic

- Globalist
- Questioning
- Oriented to self

- Undefined ID
- “Communaholic”
- “Dialoguer”
- Realistic

Consumption

- Ideology
- Vinyl and movies

- Status
- Brands and cars
- Luxury articles

- Experience
- Festivals and travel
- Flagships

- Uniqueness
- Unlimited
- Ethical

Example schemes....

Scotland Developing the Young Workforce

- Aimed to reduce youth unemployment
- Connects employers, educators and young people
- 21 Regional groups to enable policy to be delivered at a local level
- Addresses skills gap

Kickstart

- Subsidised job placements
- Connects young people and employers
- Minimum 25 hours a week for 6 months paid at least minimum wage
- Open to 16-24 year olds claiming UC

Acknowledge their strengths and interests to help find solutions to current problems.

Adopt a future focused narrative within which young people are equal partners in the co-production of resources, many of which are online, to develop new pathways into work, training and Further/Higher education.

Respect the views of young people and their need for greater independence while at the same time realising that they may require many different avenues of support.

Reassure young people that support is, and will continue to be, available.

Emphasise the importance of family, friends and community as support networks and sources of information.



‘If we’re honest with ourselves I think, before this (Covid-19) everyone was rushing around and stressed out. I hope that we can find the positives in this, find the little things to appreciate, enjoy time with our loved ones when we can and to think differently about life. To find new ways to have fun and care for ourselves and take that into our futures.’