



**2008
Junior Achievement
Kids and Careers Poll**

Sponsored by HCA and The John Templeton Foundation

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Methodology

Harris Interactive conducted this online survey on behalf of JA Worldwide from December 12 to December 19, 2007. The 626 survey respondents, ages 13-18, lived within the United States. Results for 13-17 year olds were weighted as needed for age, sex, race/ethnicity, parental education, urbanicity, and region. Results for 18 year olds were weighted as needed for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region, and household income.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate. These might including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words “margin of error” as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100 percent response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the U.S. 13-18 year old population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to be invited to participate in the Harris Interactive online research panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

Highlights

Of all respondents, 21% indicated that “critical thinking and problem solving” was the most important skill in getting a job or pursuing a career. Male teens (24%) were more likely than female teens (17%) to indicate this preference.

Nearly half of teens (47%) selected a traditional fount of knowledge “classroom education” as the leading source to learn career skills. “On the job training” was a distant second choice with 24%.

More than twice as much as many teens (41%) thought their interviewing or communication skills were the most important criteria when applying for a job compared to the next most frequently cited factor, “my life experiences” (16%).

In selecting the most important workplace benefit, teen preference for “flexible work schedule” (37%) outpaces five other specific benefits including health care (26%). Older teens (42%) are much more likely to opt for flexibility in scheduling their hours as their most important benefit compared to only 32% of teens age 13-15.

Engaging in work they enjoy (66%) is the top priority in career selection for teens and more than three times more important than the money they can earn in a career (18%), the second-highest rated criteria.

More than half of all teens (54%) perceived they were “extremely likely” or “very likely” to have their ideal job one day. This optimism was relatively uniform for gender (56% of males and 52% of females) and age (53% of teens 13-15 and 55% of teens 16-18).

Teens show a preference for working more hours to advance their career even if it means spending less time with their family. Thirty-eight percent of teens were either “extremely willing” or “very willing” to sacrifice family time to work more hours if this effort assisted in their career advancement. Male teens (41%) were slightly more likely to accept this tradeoff than their female colleagues (35%).

When identifying their future competition in the workplace, teens perceive that “people from different countries who come to work in the United States” (27%) pose the greatest job competition followed closely by “people my age living in my community” with 25%.

Nearly two-thirds of teens (64%) indicate they have a role model, someone they look up to or want to be like.

According to teens, the most important attribute in a role model is that he or she “truly cares about others,” (67%) followed closely by “is not afraid of failure (45%) and “tries to positively impact society through his/her business practices” (42%).

DETAILED RESULTS

Kids and Careers

Respondent Demographic Characteristics

A. Gender

	Frequency	Percent
Male	319	51%
Female	307	49
Total	626	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

B. Age

Age Range	Frequency	Percent
13-15	305	49%
16-18	321	51
Total	626	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

Question: Which one of the following skills is most important to you in getting a job or pursuing a career?

Of all respondents, 21% indicated that “critical thinking and problem solving” was the most important skill in getting a job or pursuing a career. Male teens (24%) were more likely than female teens (17%) to indicate this preference.

“Creativity and innovation” and “lifelong learning and self-direction” were tied for the second most frequent response with 17% of teens identifying these skills.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Critical thinking and problem solving	131	21%
Creativity and innovation	105	17
Lifelong learning and self-direction	104	17
Leadership	86	14
Teamwork and collaboration	80	13
Ethics and social responsibility	43	7
Reading comprehension	25	4
Global awareness	7	1
None of these	44	7
Total	626	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

	Male Frequency	Male Percent		Female Frequency	Female Percent
Critical thinking and problem solving	78	24%		54	17%
Creativity and innovation	52	16		53	17
Lifelong learning and self-direction	51	16		53	17
Leadership	38	12		49	16
Teamwork and collaboration	47	15		33	11
Ethics and social responsibility	19	6		24	8
Reading comprehension	6	2		19	6
Global awareness	3	1		4	1
None of these	25	8		19	6
Total	319	100		307	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

Age Ranges	13-15	16-18
Critical thinking and problem solving	20%	22%
Creativity and innovation	16	17
Lifelong learning and self-direction	18	16
Leadership	15	13
Teamwork and collaboration	12	14
Ethics and social responsibility	5	9
Reading comprehension	5	3
Global awareness	1	1
None of these	8	6
TOTAL	100	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

Question: Where do you think you will learn the skills you need for your future career?

Nearly half of teens (47%) selected a traditional fount of knowledge “classroom education” as the leading source to learn career skills. “On-the-job training” was a distant second choice with 24%. Teens 13-15 (54%) were more likely to select classroom education as their primary learning opportunity than their 16-18 year-old counterparts (41%). This older segment of teens attached more importance than younger teens to on-the job training by 29% to 19% respectively.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Classroom education (including both college as well as high school classroom instruction)	294	47%
On-the-job training	153	24
My parents or other family members	66	11
Volunteer opportunities	42	7
After-school clubs/programs	37	6
Some other place	34	5
Total	626	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

	Male Frequency	Male Percent		Female Frequency	Female Percent
Classroom education (including both college as well as high school classroom instruction)	157	49%		137	45%
On-the-job training	72	23		81	26
My parents or other family members	35	11		31	10
Volunteer opportunities	13	4		28	9
After-school clubs/programs	18	6		19	6
Some other place	24	7		10	3
Total	319	100		307	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

Age Ranges	13-15	16-18
Classroom education (including both college as well as high school classroom instruction)	54%	41%
On-the-job training	19	29
My parents or other family members	10	11
Volunteer opportunities	7	7
After-school clubs/programs	6	5
Some other place	4	6
TOTAL	100	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

Question: When applying for a job, which one of the following do you think is most important?

More than twice as much as many teens (41%) thought their communication or interviewing skills were the most important criteria when applying for a job compared to the next most frequently cited factor, “my life experiences” (16%).

Though students may consider grades a critical factor in college admissions, only 12% thought it played a major role in job applications. Age plays a role in the perception of grade importance. Seventeen percent of younger teens (age 13-15) were more likely to see grades as influential compared to only 7% of teens 16-18 years-old.

Response	Frequency	Percent
My communication or interviewing skills	255	41%
My life experiences	100	16
My grades	77	12
The way my resume looks	72	12
My personal appearance	60	10
The internships that I have had	24	4
Other skills	39	6
Total	626	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

	Male Frequency	Male Percent		Female Frequency	Female Percent
My communication or interviewing skills	122	38%		132	43%
My life experiences	57	18		42	14
My grades	42	13		34	11
The way my resume looks	29	9		43	14
My personal appearance	38	12		22	7
The internships that I have had	8	3		16	5
Other skills	21	7		17	6
Total	319	100		307	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

Age Ranges	13-15	16-18
My communication or interviewing skills	37%	44%
My life experiences	14	17
My grades	17	7
The way my resume looks	14	9
My personal appearance	10	9
The internships that I have had	3	5
Other skills	5	8
TOTAL	100	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

Question: Which of the following benefits offered in the workplace are most important to you?

In selecting the most important workplace benefit, teen preference for “flexible work schedule,” (37%) outpaces five other specific benefits including health care (26%). Older teens (42%) are much more likely to opt for flexibility in scheduling their hours as their most important benefit compared to only 32% of teens age 13-15.

The third most popular benefit cited was “tuition reimbursement for higher education,” selected by 17% of teens. Gender made no difference in the meager preference for maternity/paternity leave with only 2% of female and 1% of male teens perceiving this as their most important workplace benefit.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Flexible work schedule	232	37%
Health care	164	26
Tuition reimbursement for higher education	104	17
Vacation days	39	6
Paying for training opportunities at seminars and workshops	39	6
Maternity/paternity leave	7	1
Some other benefit	41	7
Total	626	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

	Male Frequency	Male Percent		Female Frequency	Female Percent
Flexible work schedule	120	38%		112	36%
Health care	76	24		88	29
Tuition reimbursement for higher education	53	17		51	17
Vacation days	18	6		21	7
Paying for training opportunities at seminars and workshops	21	6		18	6
Maternity/paternity leave	2	1		5	2
Some other benefit	29	9		12	4
Total	319	100		307	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

Age Ranges	13-15	16-18
Flexible work schedule	32%	42%
Health care	26	27
Tuition reimbursement for higher education	20	14
Vacation days	9	4
Paying for training opportunities at seminars and workshops	6	6
Maternity/paternity leave	*	2
Some other benefit	7	6
TOTAL	100	100

*Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%
* less than 1%*

Question: Which of the following is most important in choosing the career you want to pursue?

Engaging in work they enjoy (66%) is the top priority in career selection for teens and more than three times more important than the money they can earn in a career (18%), the second-highest rated criteria. Teens age 13-15 were more likely than teens 16-18 to be influenced by money (22% to 15%). However, older teens favored a career selection that would provide enjoyment (70%) more than younger teens (62%).

Male teens (71%) were more likely to select a career that allowed them to enjoy their work than female teens (61%). Female participants (17%) in the poll were much more likely to select “A career in this field will allow me to help people” than their male counterparts (5%).

Response	Frequency	Percent
I'm doing what I enjoy	413	66%
The amount of money I can earn	114	18
A career in this field will allow me to help people	69	11
Having prestige among my peers	6	1
It seems like an easy way to make a living	3	*
Something else	15	2
None of the above	7	1
Total	626	100

*Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%
* less than 1%*

	Male Frequency	Male Percent		Female Frequency	Female Percent
I'm doing what I enjoy	225	71%		187	61%
The amount of money I can earn	55	17		59	19
A career in this field will allow me to help people	17	5		52	17
Having prestige among my peers	2	1		4	1
It seems like an easy way to make a living	3	1		*	*
Something else	11	3		4	1
None of the above	5	2		1	*
Total	319	100		307	100

*Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%
* less than 1%*

Age Ranges	13-15	16-18
I'm doing what I enjoy	62%	70%
The amount of money I can earn	22	15
A career in this field will allow me to help people	12	10
Having prestige among my peers	1	1
It seems like an easy way to make a living	1	*
Something else	2	3
None of the above	1	1
TOTAL	100	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

** less than 1%*

Question: How likely is it that you will have your ideal job one day?

More than half of all teens (54%) perceived they were “extremely likely” or “very likely” to have their ideal job one day. This optimism was relatively uniform for gender (56% of males and 52% of females) and age (53% of teens 13-15 and 55% of teens 16-18). “Fairly likely” reflected the sentiment of 26% of teens.

Eighteen percent of teens responded they were “somewhat likely” to find their ideal job, while only 2% assessed their prospects as “not at all likely.”

Response	Frequency	Percent
Extremely likely	127	20%
Very likely	213	34
Fairly likely	162	26
Somewhat likely	112	18
Not at all likely	12	2
Total	626	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

	Male Frequency	Male Percent		Female Frequency	Female Percent
Extremely likely	74	23%		53	17%
Very likely	106	33		107	35
Fairly likely	74	23		88	29
Somewhat likely	61	19		51	17
Not at all likely	5	1		7	2
Total	319	100		307	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

Age Ranges	13-15	16-18
Extremely likely	17%	23%
Very likely	36	32
Fairly likely	26	25
Somewhat likely	19	17
Not at all likely	1	3
TOTAL	100	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

Question: On a scale of 0-4, where “0” means not at all willing and “4” means extremely willing, how willing are you to work more hours to get ahead in your career if it means spending less time with your family?

Teens show a preference for working more hours to advance their career even if it means spending less time with their family. Thirty-eight percent of teens were either “extremely willing” or “very willing” to sacrifice family time to work more hours if this effort assisted in their career advancement. Male teens (41%) were slightly more likely to accept this tradeoff than their female colleagues (35%).

Age of teens made little difference in the decision to tradeoff family time for career advancement.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Extremely willing	81	13%
Very willing	159	25
Fairly willing	220	35
Somewhat willing	124	20
Not at all willing	42	7
Total	626	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

	Male Frequency	Male Percent		Female Frequency	Female Percent
Extremely willing	43	14%		38	12%
Very willing	87	27		72	23
Fairly willing	107	34		113	37
Somewhat willing	57	18		67	22
Not at all willing	25	8		17	6
Total	319	100		307	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

Age Ranges	13-15	16-18
Extremely willing	12%	14%
Very willing	26	25
Fairly willing	37	34
Somewhat willing	20	20
Not at all willing	5	8
TOTAL	100	100

Question: Who do you feel is your biggest competition in the workplace?

When identifying their future competition in the workplace, teens perceive that “people from different countries who come to work in the United States” (27%) pose the greatest job competition followed closely by “people my age living in my community” with 25%. Male teens (32%) are more likely to perceive immigrant workers as a competitive force than female teens do (23%).

Few teens view adults in their second career (9%) or workers living in a different country (7%) as workforce rivals.

Response	Frequency	Percent
People from different countries who come to the United States to work	171	27%
People my age living in my community	158	25
Adults in their second career	57	9
Workers living in a different country	44	7
Other	68	11
No one	129	21
Total	626	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

	Male Frequency	Male Percent		Female Frequency	Female Percent
People from different countries who come to the United States to work	101	32%		70	23%
People my age living in my community	74	23		84	27
Adults in their second career	19	6		38	12
Workers living in a different country	26	8		17	6
Other	32	10		36	12
No one	68	21		61	20
Total	319	100		307	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

Age Ranges	13-15	16-18
People from different countries who come to the United States to work	26%	2%
People my age living in my community	25	25
Adults in their second career	10	8
Workers living in a different country	8	6
Other	10	12
No one	21	20
TOTAL	100	100

Question: Do you have a role model (for example, someone you look up to or someone you want to be like?)

Nearly two-thirds of teens (64%) indicate they have a role model, someone they look up to or want to be like. Sixty-eight percent of younger teens (ages 13-15) have role models compared to 61% of teens age 16 to 18. An equal percent of male and female teens (64%) indicate they have role models.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	402	64%
No	100	16
Unsure	124	20
Total	626	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

	Male Frequency	Male Percent		Female Frequency	Female Percent
Yes	204	64%		198	64%
No	50	16		50	16
Unsure	65	20		59	19
Total	319	100		307	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

Age Ranges	13-15	16-18
Yes	68%	61%
No	12	19
Unsure	20	20
TOTAL	100	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100%

Question: Which of the following are qualities you look for in a role model?

According to teens, the most important attribute in a role model is that he or she “truly cares about others,” (67%) followed closely by “is not afraid of failure (45%) and “tries to positively impact society through his/her business practices” (42%).

Preference for role model qualities vary by gender more than age. Female teens are 15% more likely to select “truly cares about others” than male teens (74% to 59% respectively). Male teens (39%) are more likely to identify their role models as someone who has “success in business.” Only 30% of female teens perceive this attribute as important for a role model.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Truly cares about others	418	67%
Is not afraid of failure	281	45
Tries to positively impact society through his/her business practices	261	42
Success in business	217	35
Raises awareness about social issues that are important to me	145	23
Donates generously to charity	85	14
Another quality	136	22
I don't know	33	5

Due to multiple response options, percentages do not add to 100%.

	Male Frequency	Male Percent		Female Frequency	Female Percent
Truly cares about others	189	59%		228	74%
Is not afraid of failure	140	44		141	46
Tries to positively impact society through his/her business practices	124	39		137	45
Success in business	125	39		91	30
Raises awareness about social issues that are important to me	62	20		83	27
Donates generously to charity	51	16		34	11
Another quality	67	21		69	22
I don't know	26	8		7	2

Due to multiple response options, percentages do not add to 100%.

Age Ranges	13-15	16-18
Truly cares about others	67%	67%
Is not afraid of failure	46	44
Tries to positively impact society through his/her business practices	40	43
Success in business	34	35
Raises awareness about social issues that are important to me	26	21
Donates generously to charity	17	10
Another quality	19	25
I don't know	6	4

Due to multiple response options, percentages do not add to 100%.