

**Media Release: Embargoed 0.01am 5<sup>th</sup> Feb 2012**

## **Employer contact at school reduces likelihood of young people becoming NEET:**

***young adults who recalled 'four or more employer contacts' are five times less likely to be NEET than those who had no involvement***

Groundbreaking new research shows a significant link between young people's experience of the world of work whilst at school and the chances of them becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) as young adults.

The research '***It's who you meet: why employer contacts at school make a difference to the employment prospects of young adults***' by the charity the Education and Employers Taskforce is based on a survey undertaken pro-bono by YouGov which asked young adults aged 19-24 about their current employment status and to reflect on their experiences of the world of work whilst they were at school. The findings were striking:

26.1% of young people who could recall no contact with employers whilst at school went on to become NEET. This reduced significantly to 4.3% for those who had taken part in four or more activities involving employers (career insights, mentoring, work tasters, work experience etc). Importantly, robust statistical analysis demonstrates that these outcomes are not linked to academic achievement (see table in Notes to editors).

The survey is being published to coincide with the launch on Monday 6 February of a report by David Miliband MP, Chair of the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations' (ACEVO) Commission on Youth Unemployment.

**Christine Blower, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers (NUT)** says: "*It's really important for young people to get a chance to meet a range of people, doing a range of jobs. We need to do everything we can to tackle the crisis of youth unemployment.*"

**David Cruickshank, Chairman of Deloitte** says: "*We all know that we need to do something to address the high levels of youth unemployment. That is why we have been pleased to support the development of Inspiring the Future ([www.inspiringthefuture.org](http://www.inspiringthefuture.org)), a free service which will see tens of thousands of people from all sectors and professions going into schools and colleges to talk about their jobs, careers and the education route they took. The aim is to give young people a practical insight into jobs, higher education and training including apprenticeships.*"

**Hugh Lauder, Professor of Political Economy at the University of Bath** says: "*This hugely interesting analysis sheds new light on school-to-work transitions and the character of youth unemployment. The findings set out in the report demand closer attention.*"

In explaining the findings, the report draws on extensive UK and international research, including recent publications from the OECD, the International Labour Organisation and Harvard University. The report includes:

- Strong evidence that there is a misalignment between the career aspirations of many young people and real job prospects
- Compelling evidence that young people are especially attentive and trusting of first-hand information about jobs and career pathways received from employers
- The high adult labour market penalties demonstrated by longitudinal studies associated with teenage indecision or unrealism about career choices – regardless of qualifications achieved
- The fact that countries with greatest success in dealing with youth unemployment typically include extensive workplace exposure within educational programmes

The report argues that through employer engagement young people often gain access to new and trustworthy information and also useful contacts. In this way, a high number of relatively brief employer engagements play a significant role in helping young people to explore, clarify and confirm career choices. The result is to make it easier for them to navigate the increasingly difficult move from school or university to sustained, successful employment, and so compete more effectively for vacancies which are available.

The report is careful not to see school-mediated employer engagement as the solution to youth unemployment. It argues that the impacts of young people meeting adults from the world of work and getting insights into careers will only be optimised within an professional careers advice framework.

### ***The need for action***

The survey showed that unfortunately, only 7% of young adults surveyed recalled four or more activities having taken place. While 98% of 333 teenage pupils surveyed by Deloitte in 2010\* wanted to have more involvement with employers, only 42% had spoken to someone from the workplace about jobs and careers.

The greatest impacts can be expected on those young people whose families have weakest access to relevant sources of career insights (such as the two million children who live in workless households).

### **Media contact**

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**We can put you in touch with a variety of people who have visited state schools to talk to young people, including some *Speakers for Schools*. There are also opportunities to visit and write case studies about innovative schools.**

### **Notes to Editors**

#### ***The Survey***

The survey was conducted pro-bono by YouGov and has been subject to robust statistical analysis. The findings correlate with a study due to be published in mid-February by the Education and Employers Taskforce and the University of Warwick which looks at high performing independent schools and how they use links with employer to help with careers advice and getting a job.

A copy of the full report *It's who you meet: why employer contacts at school make a difference to the employment prospects of young adults'* is available on request. Here are two key tables from the report

Table 1 shows: Correlation between NEET status at 19-24 and number of employer engagement activities undertaken whilst in education (aged 19-24).

|  |          |   |   |       |       |       |           |
|--|----------|---|---|-------|-------|-------|-----------|
| <b>Taskforce/YouGov survey</b><br><br>Sample Size: 986<br><br>Fieldwork: February 2011 (Great Britain) |          |   | Some schools and colleges arrange for their students (aged between 14 and 19) to take part in activities which involve employers or local business people providing things like work experience, mentoring, enterprise competitions, careers advice, CV or interview practice. On how many different occasions do you remember such employer involvement in your education? |       |       |       |           |
|  |          |   | 0   | 1     | 2     | 3     | 4 or more |
| Which of the following BEST applies to you?  | NEETs    | % | 26.1%   | 23.4% | 16.6% | 15.6% | 4.3%      |
|  | Non-NEET | % | 73.9%   | 76.6% | 83.4% | 84.4% | 95.7%     |
| Weighted Number  |          |   | 272   | 350   | 145   | 64    | 69        |

Statistical note: Kendall's Tau C produced a statistically significant P value of .001 at the 10% level

Table 2 shows: Occupational preferences of Year 7 pupils mapped against UK labour force by sector, 2009. Extracted from Atherton, G et al (2009), *How young people formulate their views about the future – exploratory research*. DCSF 18.

| Industry                                    | Total number employed in that industry | % employed in that industry |
|---|--|-----------------------------|
| Agriculture & Fishing                       | 250,943                                | 0.9                         |
| Energy & Water                              | 171,718                                | 0.6                         |
| Manufacturing                               | 2,875,201                              | 10.6                        |
| Construction                                | 1,280,044                              | 4.7                         |
| Distribution, Hotels and Restaurants        | 6,477,187                              | 23.8                        |
| Transport and Communication                 | 1,580,448                              | 5.8                         |
| Banking, Finance and Insurance              | 5,760,210                              | 21.2                        |
| Public Administration, Education and Health | 7,329,546                              | 27                          |
| Others                                      | 1,455,977                              | 5.4                         |

### What is Inspiring the Future?

It is a new free service also run by the Education and Employers Taskforce which aims to get 100,000 people from all sectors and professions volunteering to go into state schools and colleges to talk about their jobs, careers, and the education routes they took. Everyone from CEOs to apprentices can volunteer for *Inspiring the Future*.

Recent graduates, school leavers and people in the early stages of their career can be inspirational to teenagers - being close in age they are easy to relate to; while senior staff have a wealth of knowledge and experience to share. Talking with young people in a school or college can make a real difference to their perceptions of what jobs are available, and it may inspire them to consider options that they had previously never thought about. Talking to working professionals can also help

them get a realistic view on the different routes into jobs and careers. Through *Inspiring the Future*, employers and their staff can volunteer in schools and colleges at no cost. Volunteers and schools are connected and communicate with each other through this simple, secure website developed pro-bono by Deloitte. Visit: <http://www.inspiringthefuture.org/>

### **About the Education and Employers Taskforce**

The Education and Employers Taskforce was launched as a small independent charity on the 15th October 2009, and has seven staff. Its aim is to ensure that every school and college has an effective partnership with employers which provides young people with the inspiration, motivation, knowledge, skills and opportunities they need to help them achieve their potential and so secure our national prosperity. The Taskforce's Partnership Board comprises the leaders of the main representative organisations from education and employment and the Trustees are principally senior business leaders with an interest in education. For more details please see [www.educationandemployers.org](http://www.educationandemployers.org)

### **Research**

A key priority is to ensure that policy and delivery (by the Taskforce and others) is informed by high quality research on the most effective and efficient means to engage employers with education. Access to high quality evidence provides a primary means to influence government policy. The Taskforce has created a unique community of interest which works collaboratively to make it significantly easier to access and understand key research findings and to work strategically to build the evidence base [www.educationandemployers.org/research.aspx](http://www.educationandemployers.org/research.aspx). The thirty-strong Taskforce Research Group includes policymakers, practitioners and leading UK academics. It oversees monthly free seminars, summaries of key publications, an email group updating subscribers on publications and events, and an annual research conference (2011 keynote: Prof Robert Schwartz, Harvard University). The Taskforce also works with partners, typically on a pro bono basis, to fill the most pressing evidence gaps. Projects include work to increase and share understanding on: the scale, delivery and impact of historic UK employer engagement; how and why high-performing independent schools engage with employers (with Warwick University); the outcomes associated with different employer engagement interventions for different types of people; and, the role of work experience in helping young people to access work and university opportunities.

### **Footnote:**

*Helping young people to succeed: How employers can support careers education (Deloitte 2010)\**

To see the full report:

<http://www.educationandemployers.org/media/7630/deloitte%20eet%20young%20people%20succeeded%20report%20final.pdf>

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[www.educationandemployers.org](http://www.educationandemployers.org)

[Employers' Guide and Teachers' Guide](#) - show the ways in which employers and education can work together  
[Inspiring the Future](#) – 100,000 people talking about their careers, jobs, and education route  
[Speakers for Schools](#) – 1,000 high profile speakers talking about the big issues of the day



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