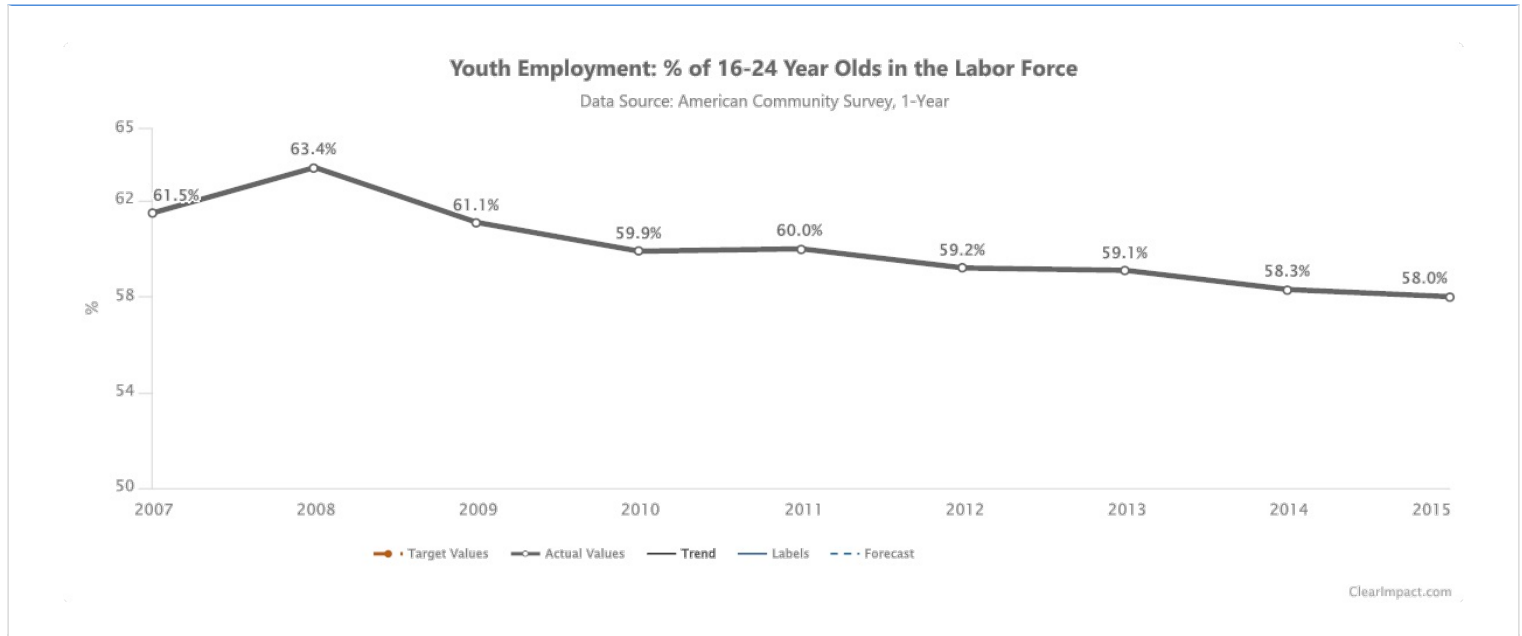


## R Youth Have Opportunities for Employment or Career Readiness (Statewide)

### I Youth Employment: % of 16-24 Year Olds in the Labor Force



### Story Behind the Curve

The Bureau of Labor Statistics defined “unemployed” youth as those who have actively sought employment during the last four weeks and currently are available to work. This definition does not include youth enrolled in job training programs or other “passive” methods of connecting with potential employers, such as reading job listings. This number does not capture “disconnected” or Opportunity Youth who are both unemployed and out of school.

The number of 16- to 24-year-olds who are unemployed jumped following the recession and has descended since that time. Maryland’s youth unemployment rate is about 2.5 times that of its 2015 adult unemployment rate, (4.9%). There are many reasons why young people are failing to enter Maryland’s adult workforce, including skills mismatch between the skills that employers want and the skills that youth have, stiff competition with more experienced adults for entry-level or unskilled jobs, and individual barriers such as lack of high school diploma or GED, caring for young children, transitioning from systems, lack of transportation, or substance use, to name just a few. The changing nature of the workforce has rapidly eliminated unskilled jobs; jobs that did not require a high school diploma will decrease from 72% in 1973 to an estimated 37% in 2018.<sup>[1]</sup>

[1] Maryland Economic Development and Business Climate Commission. 2014 Interim Report. February 2015.

## What Works

A critical goal of the Children's Cabinet is building human capital that leads to gainful employment. State agencies use coordinated approaches toward prevention of unemployment and creating pathways to employment. For youth with disabilities, the Department of Labor, Licensing, & Regulation is launching the Disability Employment Initiative, which will expand support services, job training, and outreach to businesses. These efforts will be coordinated with the Department of Education Division of Rehabilitative Services, Behavioral Health Administration, Department of Disabilities, and the Developmental Disabilities Administration. The Children's Cabinet will also be working toward two-generation strategies to connect parents of youth involved with child welfare with employment, to increase family economic stability and produce better outcomes for children and youth. A complete list of collaborative strategies and programs will be included in the Children's Cabinet's Three-Year Plan.

## Data Discussion

The percent of young adults ages 16 through 24 who are in the labor force.