



Data dishing on H.S. career counseling

What kind of career counseling do high schoolers receive? A recent survey of public high school counselors, conducted by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, answers that and other related questions.

The survey measured the availability and use of

offered them in 2002, and the percentage of juniors and seniors who participated in the activities if they were available.

The survey measured how the use of these activities varied by school size and demographics. Counseling priorities, counselors' professional development, and

Activity	Percent of public high schools offering	Percent of juniors and seniors participating
Career tests	93%	56%
Vocationally oriented presentations by speakers	87	44
Co-ops, internships, and other exploratory programs	85	23
Jobsite visits	78	22
Job shadowing	74	17
Career days or nights	73	45

counseling programs and services in 2002, including those related to career planning. Nearly all high school counselors (98 percent) who responded to the survey reported that their schools offered individual counseling, with most (78 percent) of the juniors and seniors participating. Fewer high schools offered courses in career decisionmaking (57 percent).

The table shows some other widely offered career-counseling activities, the percentage of schools that

the schools' use of written plans and standards for their counseling programs also were recorded.

For a free copy of the "High School Guidance Counseling" report, which contains the survey results, call the National Center for Education Statistics' Fast Response System toll-free, 1 (877) 4-ED-PUBS (433-7827); write the center's Institute of Education Sciences, 1900 K Street NW., Washington, DC 20006; or go online: www.nces.ed.gov/surveys/frss/publications.

Serve your country, help yourself

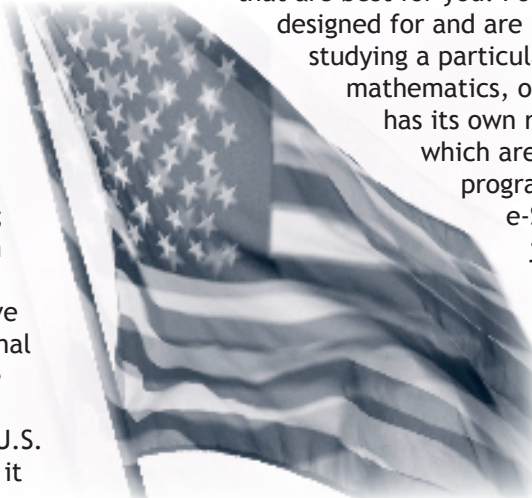
Are you long on career goals but short on required education or experience? Uncle Sam might be able to assist you.

Each year, the Federal Government offers more than 400 educational scholarships, fellowships, grants, internships, and co-op programs. Some provide financial support, and others give students a chance to gain work experience; still others do both. Offerings vary, from scholarships for nursing students to internships with Federal agencies, but have a common purpose: to provide educational enrichment or support and to encourage public-service careers.

A new website, e-Scholar, from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, makes it

easy to compare benefits of programs to find the ones that are best for you. For example, many programs are designed for and are limited to students who are studying a particular subject, such as science, mathematics, or engineering. Each program has its own requirements, the details of which are available on the individual programs' websites via links from the e-Scholar site: www.student-jobs.gov/e-scholar.asp.

Information also is available by writing to the Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street NW., Washington, DC 20415-1000, or by calling (202) 606-1800.



New Handbook's greatest hits

Helping others—including serving our country—seems to be the unifying theme among people seeking career information from the new *Occupational Outlook Handbook* online. In the first 3 months since the 2004-05 *Handbook* became available on the Internet (in late February), 8 of the 10 most visited *Handbook* statements were ones with information about people-helping occupations.

Visits to the occupational statement for pre-school, kindergarten, elementary, middle, and secondary teachers topped the list, with more than 271,000 total visits for March, April, and May combined—including nearly 97,000 in March alone. The statement for registered nurses was next most popular, with a total of more than 261,000 visits. Career surfers might be pleased to discover that these occupations are projected to have good to excellent opportunities over the 2002-12 decade. New jobs are



expected to number about 666,000 for the teachers and 623,000 for the registered nurses.

Rounding out the top 10 for *Handbook* statements visited online during the 3-month period were those for designers (with 258,000 visits), physicians and surgeons (232,000), lawyers (198,000), job opportunities in the U.S. Armed Forces (188,000), police and detectives (177,000), psychologists (171,000), social workers (154,000), and advertising, marketing, promotions, public relations, and sales managers (145,000).

Overall, the *Handbook* had more than 5½ million hits in each of the months studied.

Visit the *Handbook* on the Internet at www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm and use the online index or search feature to learn more about the occupations that interest you.

The who, what, and how often of volunteering

Many career counselors recommend volunteering, in part to gain work experience. New surveys from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) shed light on who volunteers, what they do, and how often they do it.

According to BLS, 29 percent of people over age 16 volunteered between September 2002 and September 2003. Teens aged 16 to 19 were slightly ahead of that average, with a volunteer rate of almost 30 percent. The most common volunteer activities for teenagers were coaching, tutoring, or teaching; providing labor; and fundraising or selling items to raise money. But some teens performed more unique work: 6 percent provided professional or management services, such as serving on a planning committee; 19 percent did artistic work; and 5 percent gave counseling, medical, or protective services. Overall, teens worked a median of 40 volunteer hours over the year.

Young adults aged 20 to 24 had a volunteer rate of 20 percent. Adults aged 35 to 44 volunteered most often; those 65 and over volunteered least often, but the ones who did led all volunteers in the number of hours donated.

Overall, people were more likely to volunteer if they were college graduates, married, the parents of children under age 18, or working part time.

Offering another look at volunteerism is the Na-

tional Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 from the U.S. Department of Education's NCES, which focuses on the volunteer activities of teenagers and young adults. The survey follows the volunteer activity of people who were high school seniors in 1992. Within that group, 46 percent of people volunteered in high school: 38 percent did so freely, with 18 percent required to give of their time and talents. Mirroring the results of the BLS survey, the study shows that volunteering decreased dramatically 2 years and 8 years after graduation.

People who volunteered in high school were more likely to volunteer as adults, but this result held only for those who had volunteered freely. Those who were required to volunteer had adult rates that were nearly identical to rates for people who had not volunteered.

Students in the highest socioeconomic category had the highest rates of volunteering in high school and later. Those in the lowest socioeconomic category had the lowest rates, but the gap narrowed over time.

The results of the BLS survey, "Volunteering in the United States, 2003," are available by calling (202) 691-5902; they are also online at www.bls.gov/news.release/volun.toc.htm. The NCES survey, "Volunteer Service by Young People from High School through Early Adulthood," is available by calling toll-free, 1 (877) 4-ED-PUBS (433-7827), or visiting online at nces.ed.gov/pubs2004/2004365.pdf.