

MEDIA RELEASE

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School careers advice well received by students

A new study of young Australians' perceptions of the career advice received in secondary school has found that almost all students access career advice between Years 10 and 12 and believe the information provided met their individual needs.

The study, released today by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) concluded that a school's career advice program needs to encompass as many career advice activities as possible.

According to ACER's chief executive, Professor Geoff Masters, students have different needs from career advice and these needs can change over time, which indicates that breadth in programs is important.

"Young people appear to appreciate a wider variety of activities in their career advice program as it may provide them with more opportunities to find a career they wish to pursue," Professor Masters said.

The study was based on information collected from a group of more than 8000 young Australians who had been 15-years-old in 2003. Most were in Year 10 at that time. Information on how much career advice they accessed and their perceptions of the usefulness of that advice was collected through annual phone interviews from 2003-2005.

The most common type of career advice activity was the distribution of written material and handouts. This was followed by a talk from the school's career advisor.

Some types of career advice were seen as more useful than others by students. In years 10, 11 and 12, an individual conversation with the career advisor was perceived as the most useful. Group discussion was seen as the least useful by students at all three year levels.

"A pleasing finding from this study is that career advice appears to be delivered equitably to students across all schools and within schools," Professor Masters said. "Regardless of their background, students see career advice as useful and believe the advice they receive at school meets their particular needs."

Further information and additional findings are available in the report, *Career Advice in Australian Secondary Schools: Use and Usefulness*, by Sheldon Rothman and Kylie Hillman. The study is research report number 53 in the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY), a program funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) with support from state and territory governments.

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