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For immediate release

**TACKLING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT NEEDS NATIONAL APPROACH SAY
MAYORS**

The Mayors Taskforce for Jobs is calling for a national youth transitions strategy and action plan to more strongly support youth employment.

The calls follow the release of its report “Supporting Youth Transitions” on how communities assist young people transition from school to further education, training and employment.

MTFJ chair Dale Williams says the report revealed a growing level of ‘youth disengagement.’

“This is symptomatic of a range of factors which confirm findings from our previous reports which show young people are still struggling with moving from school into work, study or training, no matter what their background or where they live.

“The report showed while young people are eager for work experience, most felt they had limited or no access to good career information and resources. Many felt they lacked the right support at the right time to make informed decisions.”

Mr. Williams says there is a clear need for a unified national youth transitions strategy which would include developing a clear process to ensure young people remain connected into their communities, reviewing career education and developing new vocational education and training pathways.

“Developing a cohesive national strategy underpinned by local solutions to keep young people from disconnecting from their communities, is key to realising the potential of all our young people. The economic consequences of allowing young people to languish without consistent and cohesive support systems are serious.

“Quite simply there is an economic imperative to develop a comprehensive national strategy with central government working more closely with local government.”

He says the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs is particularly concerned with the high numbers of Maori and Pacific young people who are not in work, training or study, with unemployment rates for Maori at over 30 per cent and almost 26 per cent for Pacific young people, compared with an overall youth rate of 18%. This is clearly unacceptable and to say we simply don’t know where they are is not good enough – they need to be on our radar and communities need to work out who is best to begin the process of re-engagement.

The Taskforce commissioned the report as part of its strategy to achieve “zero waste of young people”. The report is available on www.mayorstaskforceforjobs.co.nz

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