The Benefits of Unions for Young Workers

The Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR) finds a substantial boost in wages and benefits for unionized workers between the ages of 18 and 29:

- On average, unionization raises young workers' wages by over 12% – about $1.75 per hour (see [www.cepr.net/index.php/publications/interactive-reports/unions-and-upward-mobility-for-young-workers]).

- Young workers in unions are about 17 percentage points more likely to have health insurance than those not in unions.

- Young unionized workers are about 24 percentage points more likely to be in a pension plan than their non-union counterparts.

The benefits of unions are also high for young workers in typically low-wage occupations:

- For young workers in low-wage occupations, unionization raises wages by over 10%.

- Unionized young workers in low-wage occupations are 27 percentage points more likely to have health insurance and over 26 percentage points more likely to be in a pension plan.

Young workers have been the hardest hit by the stagnant wage growth over the last 30 years. Despite having higher educational attainment, the wage of the typical 18 to 29 year old worker was about 10% lower in 2007 than it had been in 1979 (see chart below).

![Figure 1: Median real wage growth, by age, 1979-2007](chart.png)
