



WWD The One Source News Source

Welfare-to-Work and
Workforce Development
Resource Network

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Adult Education

Improving the Economic and Life Outcomes of At-Risk Youth Ages 16-24

Past research indicates some of the activities intended to address the needs of at-risk youth fail because:

- Key subgroups are under-enrolled;
- There is inconsistent participation among enrollees not served long enough to earn education credentials, improve work readiness and life management skills, and acquire the technical skills needed to compete for a job; and
- Many programs have a high attrition rate.

Recommendations for overcoming these realities include:

- Helping strong programs reach and engage a harder-to-reach subgroup that are traditionally under-enrolled, using best practices and addressing the service gaps of past programs;
- Deciding where to target resources based on the heterogeneity of the at-risk 16- to 24-year-old population (those not involved in deviant behavior but who are suspicious of programs and those suffering from depression, abuse, and other mental health problems need preventative strategies; whereas those who participate in illicit activities, are incarcerated, or those students who succeed in school and a career need yet other strategies);
- Using special strategies for the 12- to 16-year-old adolescents from at-risk families;
- Assisting young, low-wage workers to use postsecondary education as a pathway to better jobs;
- Helping alienated and unmotivated young people enroll in the strongest youth programs;
- Adding clinical or therapeutic components to address reading and language difficulties, mental health problems, and conflict management issues;

- Working with local officials to develop clear, compelling goals; and
- Investing in revising youth policy and in service delivery systems.

For other recommendations or more information, access *Improving the Economic and Life Outcomes of At-Risk Youth* by MDRC at www.mdrc.org/publications/361/concept.html.

Keeping Youth in School and Connected to Work

A recent study finds that youth who participate in a job training program, job search, or school-to-work during their high school years are less likely to experience subsequent disconnection than youth who do not participate in these types of activities. However, youth who had already disconnected and participated in one of these activities did not appear to be more likely to become reconnected. It would appear that preventative activities are more effective than those that try to reconnect youth once they have disconnected.

In addition, the study found:

- Students with poor grades, poor health, who use drugs or associate with people that use drugs, and/or get into trouble were more likely to disconnect.
- Most youth reconnected by age 21.
- Three quarters of the students secured employment, 17 percent went back to school, and others got married or joined the military.
- Youth from low-income families were less likely to reconnect, as were black youth.

More information on *Youth Who Are "Disconnected" and Those Who Then Reconnect: Assessing the Influence of Family, Programs, Peers, and Communities* from Child Trends can be accessed at www.childtrends.org/Files//Child_Trends-2009_07_22_RB_DisconnectedYouth.pdf.

Old World Classroom - New World of Work

How are institutions of learning linking what happens in the classroom to the needs of a global worker? They require students to:

- Access and analyze information,
- Adapt,
- Collaborate,
- Communicate,
- Exhibit curiosity and imagination,
- Know how to think critically,
- Master the basics, and
- Take initiative.

There is emphasis on real world connections through:

- Partnerships with employers,
- Personalization,
- Project-based learning, and
- Teamwork.

One of the successful schools is High Tech High. Success is attributed to:

- Hands-on learning,
- Interdisciplinary projects, and
- Internships.

Discover more about High Tech High at www.hightechhigh.org/dc/index.php.

Another of the successful schools is Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center.

Success is attributed to:

- Individual learning plans,
- Interest-based learning, and
- Year-long learning.

Learn more about the Center at www.themetschool.org/Metcenter/home.html.

Obtain a copy of the book *The Global Achievement Gap: Why Even Our Best Schools Don't Teach the New Survival Skills Our Children Need-And What We Can Do About It* by Tony Wagner for more information.

Perkins Flexibility

The purpose of the Federal funding of Perkins IV is to prepare students for current or emerging high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand jobs. Through this Federal funding there is emphasis on career and technical education (CTE) that focuses on:

- Increased accountability for student outcomes;
- Enhanced coordination between secondary and postsecondary career and technical education;
- Increased state and local flexibility in providing CTE by involving multiple groups such as students, parents, and local administrators.

The Government Accountability Office found that states have great flexibility to design programs to meet the needs of students and businesses that work best for them, but this flexibility "...hinders Education's ability to gain a broader perspective on the success of state CTE programs." This is due to the fact that no two program, their data, and systems to monitor the programs are the same. The report, *Career and Technical Education: States Have Broad Flexibility in Implementing Perkins IV* (GAO-09-683), suggests policymakers will need to weigh the cost of requiring more data and/or analysis with the need for additional information. To access the report, go to www.gao.gov/new.items/d09683.pdf.

The U.S. Department of Education is planning to evaluate Perkins IV in 2011 to determine how state agencies and local providers are responding to the new legislation and how new provisions contained within the legislation are being implemented. To access more information on the evaluation, go to <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-18191.pdf>.

Applicable to Multiple Audiences

Common Core Standards Adopted by Forty-Nine States and Territories

The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices; Council of Chief State School Officers; Achieve, Inc.; ACT; and the College Board are in the process of developing college- and career-ready standards that can be internationally benchmarked to top-performing countries throughout the world. "Governors and state commissioners of education from across the country committed to joining a state-led process to develop a common core of state standards in English-language arts and mathematics for grades K-12. These standards will be research and evidence-based, internationally benchmarked, aligned with college and work expectations, and include rigorous content and skills." For more information, access www.corestandards.org.

Insure Kids Now!

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is launching a campaign to ensure all kids are insured. Access their web site at <http://insurekidsnow.gov/word.asp> for more information.

Marriage and Relationship Skills: Education as a Way to Prepare Prisoners for Reintegration

A study by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services looked at the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative to discover how education is being used as a strategy to prepare prisoners for reintegration. According to the report, their success was founded on the following strategies for conducting marriage and relationship skills education in prison systems.

- There must be the desire to improve relationships and an interest in improving chances for parole, creating strong dual motivations to participate in the program.
- A program like this one must address the unusual relationship dynamics experienced by male inmates.
- Workshops for couples must address the challenges of working with couples together (e.g., transportation of the spouse to the inmate, child care, security).
- Inmates must see immediate tangible benefits in their relationships. When spouses cannot attend, inmates recommended making the curriculum relevant to other relationships.
- Female inmates' histories of abusive relationships has led to a focus on helping them prepare for future relationships even more than helping them nurture current relationships.

For more information on these and other strategies, access

www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/pdfs/family_support/OMI_prisonreintbrief.pdf.

Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

HIV/AIDs Information Available From the U.S. Agency for International Development Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

Transcripts of the meeting held on Thursday, July 16, 2009 are available at www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_partnerships/fbci/index.html. The presentations and other information will be available on the site. The topics at the conference included:

- Functional and technical capacity building,

- Gender issues,
- Maternal and child health,
- New partner programs,
- Nutrition,
- President's emergency plan for AIDs relief, and
- Prevention and treatment.

Updated Web Sites

Visit the following Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnership web sites, previously known as the Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives:

- U.S. Department of Commerce at www.commerce.gov/OS/CFBCI/index.htm
- U.S. Department of Education at www.ed.gov/about/inits/list/fbci/index.html
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services at www.hhs.gov/fbci

Welfare/TANF Initiatives

A Study of States' TANF Diversion Programs

Two different Temporary Assistance for Needy Families diversion programs were part of a study sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The two programs included:

- Crisis stabilization and
- Employment.

The information available by state includes:

- Emergency payments transition to TANF,
- Implementation date,
- Program requirements, and
- Target population.

For an overview by state of key dimensions and characteristics of temporary support programs, access this report at

www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/welfare_employ/identify_promise_tanf/reports/tanf_diversion/tanf_diversion.pdf.

State-by-State Information on Programs

For information such as policy manuals, descriptive information, applications, and state low-income benefit programs, access a document designed by Budget and Policy Priorities at www.cbpp.org/files/1-14-04tanf.pdf. Information is available on the following programs:

- Child Care,
- Medicaid,
- State Children's Health Insurance Program,
- State Food Stamp, and
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

Workforce Development

Apprenticeships: Benefits and Challenges

With the need for today's and tomorrow's workers to demonstrate increasingly more demanding skills, apprenticeships provide a viable means for workers to learn these skills. The U.S. Department of Labor has just released the resource *The Benefits and Challenges of Registered Apprenticeship: The Sponsor's Perspective*, accessible at http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/The%20Benefits%20and%20Challenges%20of%20Registered%20Apprenticeship%20Sponsors%20Perspective%20%2D%20Final%20Report%2Epdf.

The Department also offers a Community of Practice on Registered Apprenticeships at <http://21stcenturyapprenticeship.workforce3one.org>.

The Ill-Prepared U.S. Workforce Exploring the Challenges of Employer-Provided Workforce Readiness Training

Of the 200 employers that responded to a survey conducted by multiple entities, almost half offer workforce readiness training programs. Why? Because many in the workforce are not work ready. What makes people ill prepared? The results of the survey indicate that people are most ill prepared in the following areas:

- Creativity/innovation,
- Critical thinking/problem solving,
- Ethics/social responsibility,
- Lifelong learning/self-direction, and
- Professionalism/work ethic,

Therefore, work ready people will need to demonstrate related skills and behaviors in these areas. Adult training programs can help people learn and demonstrate these skills and behaviors.

In addition to these gaps in applied skills, survey results also indicated new employees are deficient in reading comprehension and writing in English.

For a copy of the report sponsored by Corporate Voices, The Conference Board, American Society for Training and Development, and the Society for Human Resource Management, access www.shrm.org/Research/SurveyFindings/Articles/Documents/BED-09Workforce_RR.pdf.

Calendar of Events

**Updates are constantly being added to the 2009 Calendar.
To access new information please visit the
[One Source Calendar](#).**