

Strategies for Opportunity Youth Economic Empowerment

Patrick Hart

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Choice Means Choice Conference

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Who are Opportunity Youth and Where do They Live?

- Approximately *5.5 million* young people between 16 and 24 in US currently who are out of work and out of school
- Approximately 30% lack a HS diploma or equivalent, and for another 50%, that is the highest degree they've achieved

Who are Opportunity Youth and Where do They Live? (continued)

Choice Neighborhood Metro Area	Percentage of Youth (ages 16-24) Disconnected	Number of Youth Disconnected
Atlanta	14.9	111,423
Boston	8.2	49,229
Chicago	12.5	147,508
Cincinnati	12.8	38,312
Columbus	11.0	30,403
Kansas City	12.3	30,795
Memphis	21.6	44,928
Milwaukee	10.7	20,219
New Orleans	18.2	26,234
Norwalk	7.7	8,207
Philadelphia	14.3	107,246
Pittsburgh	10.2	30,575
Sacramento	14.8	42,782
San Antonio	14.8	46,512
San Francisco	10.4	50,593
Seattle	12.4	50,593
Tampa	14.8	46,361

Evidence-Based and Promising Programs

Program Name	Key Features	Evidence Base
Year Up	6 months of technical and professional skill building (in which participants can earn college credits) followed by 6-month paid internship	Significant positive impact on earnings and sector of employment (Economic Mobility Corporation impact study, 2014)
YouthBuild	Education and vocational training for young people who've left high school; generally provided in group environment	Currently under study; impact findings expected 2018
National Guard Youth Challenge	Residential military-style setting for 16-18 year-olds who've left high school; includes education, community service, and post-program mentoring	Increase in high school equivalency attainment, earnings, and employment (MDRC impact study, 2011)
Youth Villages	Intensive case management and support for young people exiting foster care or juvenile justice system	Increase in earnings and employment; decrease in homelessness and health problems (MDRC impact study, 2015)
Latin American Youth Center Promotor Pathways	Long-term one-on-one mentoring/case management program for disconnected youth facing a range of obstacles	Positive impact in reducing homelessness and teenage pregnancy and increasing school enrollment (Urban Institute impact study, 2016)
Project Rise	Yearlong program for out of work, out of school youth who lack a HS diploma; includes cohort approach, paid internship, and HSE prep	Higher rates of HSE attainment than comparable programs (MDRC implementation study, 2015)

Common Themes

- Cohorts/Groups – Peer engagement matters!
- Flexibility *and* Accountability – they go together!
- Meaningful Work Experience with Pay
- Importance of Strong Bridges/Connections to Next Step

New Policy and Research Developments

- WIOA

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (2014) is the new law that governs the nation's workforce funds.
- 75% of WIOA youth funds *required* to serve out of school youth (up from 25% under previous law).
- Several organizations including [CLASP](#) and [MDRC](#) have put out guides about how to most effectively use WIOA funds to support Opportunity Youth.

- STED

- The Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration is an HHS-funded research project looking at the impact of a variety of subsidized job models, including NYC's Young Adult Internship Program. Results are expected over the coming years and will help us learn more about what works for this population. An overview of the program can be found [here](#).

Questions?

Patrick Hart

Senior Policy Associate

CUNY Institute for State and Local Governance

Patrick.Hart@islg.cuny.edu