Youth Offender Demonstration Project Process Evaluation Final Report: Round Two

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Lois MacGillivray, Project Manager
Ed Miller, Assistant Project Manager
Snehal Shah, Senior Research Analyst
Stephen Jenks, Senior Research Analyst

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U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N-5637
Washington, D.C. 20210

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Between 1989 and 1994, juvenile crime rates and gang activity exploded onto the public consciousness as the number of juveniles arrested for violent crimes (murder, non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery and aggravated assault) increased by 62%. While that trend has since declined and leveled off, the sudden peak in violent juvenile crime has had a substantial influence on bringing and keeping this population on the public radar screen.

Not surprisingly, given these trends, the country has experienced a dramatic rise in juvenile incarceration rates. In 1998, 1.8 million delinquency cases were heard in courts with juvenile jurisdiction throughout the United States. Of the 630,000 cases that were adjudicated, more than one-quarter resulted in out-of-home placements.

In Highlights of the 2001 National Youth Gang Survey (**Epley and Major, 2003**), 63% of communities with a high level of gang involvement reported that the return of gang members to their communities intensified the youth crime rate, particularly violent crimes and drug trafficking. Thirty-four percent of these communities also reported that their communities did not have programs to prepare youth to return to the community constructively.

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) initiated the Youth Offender Demonstration Project to identify, prepare and place this underutilized labor force into employment that would break both the cycle of crime and patterns of dependency on public support. The task is a challenge because of the multiple needs the youth bring to the projects that attempt to prepare them for legitimate work.

This report documents the implementation progress made by projects in the second cohort of the demonstration.

Goals of the Demonstration

The demonstration's goal is to assist youth at-risk of court or gang involvement, youth offenders, and gang members between the ages of 14 and 24 to find long-term employment at wage levels that would prevent future dependency and would break the cycle of crime and juvenile delinquency. The demonstration's objective is to identify effective community strategies that support youth in becoming work ready and capable of attaining and keeping employment that provides a future of economic stability and supports civic engagement.

The Youth Offender Demonstration focused community efforts on infrastructure development, building on systems already in place in the community for serving youth.

It also identified the range of services that some youth participants were likely to require, and provided technical assistance in meeting the challenges a community would address in changing the systems to serve targeted youth more effectively.

Goals of the Evaluation

The evaluation's goal was to document the implementation process of the nine Round Two projects over the duration of the demonstration. In addition, the evaluation was to note achievements and challenges as project staffs attempted to deliver coordinated services to targeted youth. The Department of Labor anticipated that the demonstration evaluation would surface mechanisms other communities could replicate to serve youth more effectively and in a sustainable way.

History of the Demonstration

Congress set aside $13.1 million in DOL's 1998 Program Year Pilot and Demonstration budget for programs to address the needs of youth who have been or who are at risk of being under juvenile or criminal justice supervision. In collaboration with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) in the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (DOL/ETA) awarded grants to the first set of Youth Offender Demonstration Projects in May 1999. Awards went to 14 entities: states, counties, cities, or nonprofit organizations. Grants were made for two years with the assumption that projects would need six months for planning and then would have 18 months for operations.

In June 2001, DOL awarded over $8.2 million in demonstration grants to nine new entities. Round Two (like Round One) projects fell into one of three categories of grants:

- **Category I – Model Community Projects** focused on impoverished, high-crime neighborhoods in large cities where they were required to expand work readiness and job placement services with gang prevention and suppression activities, alternative sentencing, aftercare and route counseling for neighborhood youth offenders and youth at risk of court or gang involvement. Round Two projects were located in:

  o Chicago, Illinois;

  o New York City, New York; and

  o Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

- **Category II – Education and Training for Youth Offenders Initiatives** were to provide comprehensive school-to-work (STW) education and training to incarcerated youth while they were in residential confinement and work

readiness, job placement, and aftercare/reentry services after they returned to their home community. The Round Two project was:

- o Colorado Department of Human Services.

- **Category III – Community-Wide Coordination Projects** focused on smaller communities with high youth crime rates and afforded funds for local service providers to develop linkages that strengthened the coordination of prevention and aftercare services. Round Two projects were located in:

    - o Cincinnati, Ohio;

    - o Des Moines, Iowa;

    - o Erie, Pennsylvania;

    - o Hartford, Connecticut; and

    - o West Palm Beach, Florida.

Round Two projects were funded for 30 months: 24 months of operation and a final six months for preparing case files and electronic databases and making them available to DOL evaluators.

Literature Review

The social development strategy that is the main design element of the demonstration is based on the concept of risk and protective factors. **Howell, Krisberg, and Jones (1995)** note that risk factors exist in multiple domains within which youth live and interact: family, school, peer, and community. **Benson, Galbraith, and Espelund (1995)** report, on the other hand, that protective factors, such as, a strong family and social ties (e.g., sports or church participation) protect youth from the risk factors that exist in their world.

While researchers encourage communities to enhance protective factors for their children, improving the protective factors for youth offenders or other vulnerable youth is an effective strategy as well. **Yohalem and Pittman (2001)** encourage a youth development approach among vulnerable youth, focusing activities on the developmental goals of youth and not on their deficits. **Finn-Aage Esbensen (2000)** also uses risk factors in predicting which youth will become gang members and recommends protective factors for gang prevention efforts, that is, positive and attractive youth activities.

Employment can be one protective factor for youth. Considering youth employment, in general, however, **Robert Lerman (2000)** reports that a substantial proportion of adolescent Americans lack the basic skills that all employers require and that the United States has a weak system connecting education and careers. These factors are exacerbated

for vulnerable youth, those who come from neighborhoods with high unemployment and social dysfunction.

Maria Buck (2000) reviews the experience of programs directed to helping offenders to get jobs when they return to their communities. She cites research indicating that offenders who had worked or been in school are less likely to re-offend. Those who had jobs before leaving incarceration also are less likely to re-offend. Research examining successful employment programs also noted the need for broad service delivery partnerships. Buck observes that offenders need "intensive supervision, mandatory substance abuse treatment, employability training (such as basic education, vocational training and job search assistance), housing, family intervention services, parenting skills, and medical and mental health services." She goes on to report that offenders need additional assistance such as computer skills to move beyond low-skill entry-level positions. These are features the Youth Offender Demonstration Project attempted to implement.

Another aspect of the demonstration recognizes that systems change is often slow and difficult **(Scott, 1992)**. Communities participating in the demonstration were encouraged to take a continuous improvement approach to implementing the services and coordinating mechanisms. DOL provided technical assistance to projects to assist them in making the incremental steps needed to engage stakeholders and partners, establish the service system, and negotiate the long-term coordinating mechanisms that would assure that services would be available as long as the youth needed them.

Evaluation Methodology

A process evaluation is a study of implementation, defined as, "the use of empirical data to assess the delivery of programs" **(Scheirer, 1994)**. A process evaluation assumes that consistent program outcomes will not be achieved until demonstration projects have resolved the challenges of structuring the activities and processes to serve the youth effectively. Researchers have found that projects that do not meet expected outcomes may not have implemented planned activities or enrolled members of the target population, so the study of implementation is a first step to assure that the project is doing what it planned before examining the outcomes.

With the emphasis on continuous improvement and organizational learning, evaluators chose a formative evaluation methodology. This approach is a process evaluation (study of implementation) that provides feedback to grantees, technical assistance specialists, and DOL project officers. The process evaluation approach assumed that demonstration grantees were willing to become learning organizations, that is, that they were open to organizational change even as they were in the process of supporting change in their clients.

Evaluation Design

The evaluation was designed to ensure that the issues of interest to DOL were addressed systematically. It examined the activities of key actors, dimensions of project organization, relationships among partners, and environmental characteristics identified in the literature and from the demonstration's first round as factors that affect project implementation success.

The process evaluation designed by evaluators followed the sequence of **Stufflebeam and Shinkfield's (1985)**: CIPP model — Context, Inputs, Process, and Product**. CIPP is a system-flow model that emphasizes tracking a program's temporal flow through its components. The Department of Labor provided the evaluation team with questions that were then aligned with the CIPP to guide the development of the evaluation. The process evaluation also used a Public Management Model (PMM) developed by the evaluation and TA teams and DOL staff during the demonstration's first round. The PMM served as a schema to gauge the progress that Round Two projects made toward achieving their objectives and goals. The evaluation team found that the model helped analysis and facilitated comparison of projects across categories.

The following research questions combined the topics of interest both to DOL and the PMM. DOL prepared eight evaluation research questions:

1. What is the context of each project and how did it influence the project development and implementation?

2. How did the community planning bodies charged with the on-going tasks of designing the integrated network of services function and what was the level of involvement of the stakeholders, including parents and youth?

3. What program components were implemented and how successful were the efforts to build on existing systems, establish new programs, and create an integrated network?

4. What methods of staff recruitment and training were used and how successful were they?

5. What methods were used to gain access to and recruit members of the target population as program participants and how successful were they?

6. What types of training, employment, and gang suppression programs were provided to the target population? What were the intensity, duration, and quality of those programs?

7. What steps have been taken to assure the continuation of the integrated services and activities after the project funding ends and what is the likelihood of success?

8. In what ways do employment and training projects serving youth who have been in the criminal justice system or who are at risk of such involvement differ from traditional approaches to serving youth?

Based on the development of the PMM, evaluators added two more research questions:

9. What was the status of the management information system that collects and maintains data on the clients?

10. What was the feedback system to enhance the ability of the projects to learn from their efforts, including those efforts that are either successful or unsuccessful?

The correspondence between the CIPP sequence and the research questions is clear:

- Context – Question 1

- Inputs – Questions 2, 4, 5, 9

- Process – Questions 3, 6, 8

- Products – Questions 7, 10.

The evaluation team drew upon an array of data sources at the nine project sites for both quantitative and qualitative data, which it used to answer the research questions:

- Observations,

- Unstructured interviews,

- Systems analysis,

- Information exchange with the technical assistance team,

- Document reviews, and

- Data abstraction of files.

Each project received three evaluation visits of two days each. The purpose of the **baseline evaluation visits** was to document the status of the projects early in their implementation of the DOL-funded changes. The **second evaluation site visits** occurred about one year after the baseline visits. The purpose of the visits was to collect information about the youth enrolled, youth retention, services delivered, and the day-to-day project activities. **Final evaluation site visits** commenced near the end of the grantees' period of performance, about Month 30 of the project. One purpose of the final visit was to document any important changes in context or organization of the projects

that had occurred since the time of the second visit. In this visit, evaluators emphasized describing each project's approach to sustaining its program after the end of DOL funding.

After each round of evaluation visits, evaluators convened to debrief the experience and recommend changes to the field guide or visit logistics. Findings of these meetings were complemented by analysis of field notes by an evaluator who had not made any of the visits, but knew the project well from earlier design meetings.

The analysis of data involves examining, categorizing, tabulating, and otherwise recombining qualitative and quantitative evidence (**Yin, 2003**). The evaluation team conducted the three fundamental analytic tasks during the process evaluation, as articulated by **Rossi and Freeman (1993)**:

- Described the project and how it was implemented;

- Compared sites within categories to determine commonalities, differences, barriers, and successes; and

- Determined whether the program conformed to its design.

Using both the qualitative and quantitative data collected, the first step of the analysis task was to give a full and accurate description of the actual project. A second task was to compare the implementation of the demonstration across sites so evaluators could better understand the basis of differences they observed. The third task was the fundamental one of asking whether the project, as implemented, conformed to its project design.

Limitations of the Research

This report assesses the progress Round Two grantees made in implementing their projects as they approached completion of the grant period. Similar to projects in Round One, grantees began at different places. Some added services to an existing program while others initiated new services tailored to the needs of targeted youth. No judgment can be made about the long-term success or promise of a particular service delivery profile at this time. At the time of the third visits, the demonstrations were continuing to refine and reshape the delivery of services to the youth participants.

OVERVIEW OF THE DEMONSTRATION

There were nine projects in round Two: three in Category I, one in Category II, and five in Category III.

Category I

Category I projects were located in Chicago, New York, and Pittsburgh.

The grantee in **Chicago, IL**, was the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development (MOWD). After some initial partners were unable to provide the intended services, MOWD subcontracted the service delivery aspect of the project to Goodwill Industries of Metropolitan Chicago, Inc., which used a network of youth service providers to deliver services. The target population was primarily youth 14-17 in three troubled neighborhoods.

The **Pittsburgh, PA**, grantee was a non-profit community-based organization, YouthWorks. The grantee subcontracted route counseling (case management) services for a portion of the grant period, but brought all the services in-house after a year. Its remaining partners came to the YouthWorks site to deliver services. The target population was primarily youth offenders.

The grantee in **New York City, NY**, was Friends of Island Academy (FOIA), a non-profit community-based organization that delivered almost all the needed services at its office in mid-Manhattan. The project targeted youth from all over the city who were being released from one of the four detention or correctional facilities for youth located on Rikers Island.

Category II

There was only one project funded in Category II, the **Colorado** Department of Human Services, Division of Youth Corrections. The target facility was Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center, the most secure correctional facility for male youth in the state. The project offered work readiness services while the young men were incarcerated and job placement and follow-up when they returned to any of seven counties upon release: Adams, Arapahoe, Clear Creek, Denver, Douglas, Gilpin, or Jefferson Counties.

Category III

There were five projects awarded grants in Category III.

The City of **Cincinnati, OH's** Workforce Development Division received a grant to design and develop an infrastructure of local service providers to support youth offenders in gaining employment. All youth were registered for service under the provisions of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) legislation. The city anticipated that the youth services would become sustainable through the youth services funding stream under WIA.

The Central Iowa Employment and Training Consortium (the One-Stop operator in **Des Moines, IA** received an award to provide services to both younger and older youth, both

offenders and youth at risk of court supervision. Iowa Comprehensive Human Services (ICHS) provided services to the younger youth while Spectrum Resources provided services to the older youth.

The grantee in **Erie, PA,** was Perseus House, a non-profit community-based organization with a history of providing services to youth offenders or wards of the court through both residential and day programs. It partnered with the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies to provide work readiness through an 8-week experience in boat-building and navigation studies. The target population was primarily younger youth, both offenders and youth at risk of court involvement.

The Capitol Region Workforce Development Board received a grant to develop the infrastructure for serving youth offenders throughout the greater **Hartford, CT** area. The project developed a database, "Hartford Connects," that would eventually integrate the case files for all youth coming for employment, health, or other services. It also established the Youth Development Practitioners Academy to provide cross-agency training in youth development principles and how to make the best use of Hartford Connects.

The Academy for Practical Nursing and Health Occupations received a grant to develop the work readiness infrastructure in **West Palm Beach, FL**. The academy began with a well-established reputation for training health care workers in the region. It partnered with Probationers Educational Growth and the Palm Beach County Workforce Development Board to offer both offenders and youth at risk of court involvement training for entry-level positions in the health care industry. The project provided the clinical training and the work readiness services, and referred the youth to the network of WIB-affiliated service providers for other services.

The projects operated during a time of economic struggle. The projects, almost universally, operated in an environment of reduced federal and local funding, cost cutting, economic downturn, increased risk of terrorism and uncertainty surrounding the war against terror. Due to budget cuts and a weak job market, many projects found it difficult to garner support from employers to provide opportunities for youth employment.

The projects enrolled increasing numbers of youth over the grant period, finishing with more than 1,800 enrollees. More of the youth were older (18-24) than younger (14-17), and they were 75% male. The majority (79%) were offenders. While there were youth of every major race, about half were black.

Projects recruited youth through referrals from parole or probation officers, schools or other organizations. Colorado and New York, in particular, recruited the youth directly from the correctional facilities where project staff met the youth before release.

Retention of enrolled youth was a struggle for all the projects. Some created a welcoming atmosphere where the youth felt comfortable spending time. All used incentives of some

kind, such as, transportation cards and child care; but some established formal incentives, such as stipends for attendance and for reaching milestones in their plans.

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT MODEL (PMM)

The evaluators used the Public Management Model as a lens for viewing the progress the projects were making toward implementation. It allowed the evaluators to focus on the system-level changes that the need for cross-agency service collaboration demanded.

Drawing on the work of **Richard Nathan (1988)**, the PMM focuses attention on systems change as the first of two steps in developing knowledge of what policy changes work. First, Nathan asserts, assure that the systems are in place, and second evaluate the impacts on individuals. He goes further to say that if systems change as designed, the individuals are likely to improve on the targeted dimension (school achievement, gaining employment, etc. (Page 199).
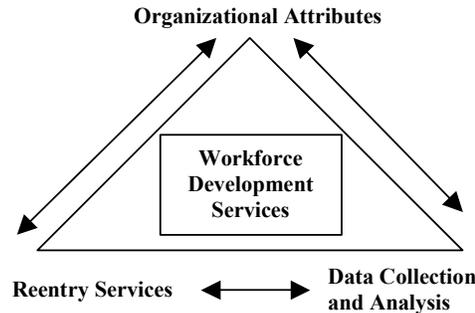
At the center of the graphic are the basic **workforce development services** available to all citizens through the workforce development system established under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. On the left-hand corner of the graphic are **reentry services**. While the services explain *what* the nature of the demonstration was, the organizational attributes describe *how* the successfully implemented projects managed the demonstration. At the apex of the triangle in the graphic are the seven **organizational attributes** of successfully implemented projects:

- **A well-conceived plan,**

- **Pre-existing experience between the workforce development, justice and health care systems,**

- **A strong community support network,**

- **Strong grantee involvement,**

- **Linkages among the workforce development, justice, health, housing and other major youth service providing organizations and services,**

- **The ability to leverage resources, and**

- **Shared information and leadership.**

The fourth element of the Public Management Model is **data collection and analysis**, which is found at the right angle of the triangle. An important realization during the demonstration was that projects were easier to keep on track when a good data reporting system alerted everyone involved in the project of the project's status. The dynamic of the Public Management Model is the **continuous improvement loop** (the arrows in the schematic). The assumption of **Nathan** is that attention to systems improvement gradually improves the circumstances of persons being served.

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT MODEL: SERVICES AND SERVICE DELIVERY MECHANISMS

The core of the demonstration is finding better ways to offer workforce and reentry services to the target population. A finding of the Round One projects was that the services typically identified as workforce or reentry were not sufficient to meet the myriad needs of some project youth. Staff and administrators offered other services, and the projects tended to characterize these services by the agency that offered them. Services provided could, therefore, be categorized differently at the project level. For the purposes of this report, services are discussed by the categories of workforce services, reentry services, commonly shared services, and support services.

The primary **workforce development services** were:

- **Work/Job Readiness** – teaching workplace skills in classes, vocational certification classes, leadership classes, and job shadowing;

- **Job Placement** – Activities to assist youth in learning about and exploring work opportunities, making appointments for interviews, and making the transition to a job; and

- **Job Retention** – Follow-up activities with the employed youth and his/her employer to work through concerns that threaten the youth's ability to retain the job.

The **reentry services** as defined for grantees in the Solicitation of Grants Announcement (SGA) included:

- **Anti-gang activity** – Both direct efforts to reduce violence in a neighborhood and indirect efforts to provide wholesome activities to engage the youth as a substitute for gang activity;

- **Alternative sentencing** – Community activities and special restrictions (like curfew) assigned to a youth convicted of a crime in lieu of assignment to residential confinement; and

- **Aftercare** – Activities and services assigned to a youth in an environment of graduated sanctions, both positive and negative, which are designed to have the youth accept greater responsibility for her/his behavior as her/his behavior improves.

There are some services that are sometimes referred to as either reentry services or workforce development services:

- **Assessments** – Screenings or careful analyses of youth attitudes, knowledge and behavior that are used to tailor program components to a youth's individual needs;

- **Academic education** - Basic literacy, pre-GED, GED, high school, or college classes that are part of the individualized work readiness or aftercare plans for a youth;

- **Vocational education** – Specific preparation for an occupation or industry, including practical experience, which can be part of the individualized work readiness or aftercare plan for a youth; and

- **Route counseling** – Assistance in realizing one's individualized case plan through the workforce development and/or the justice systems. Youth offenders in the demonstration typically had both a parole/probation officer and a workforce development specialist supporting their plan.

As the projects gained experience in the complexity of issues youth brought to the projects, staff integrated other services into the program that some youth in the project were likely to need. These could be provided through the workforce or the justice systems, and often partners to these systems supplied them. Such services include:

- **Substance abuse interventions** – Most youth in the projects have experienced problems with alcohol or other drugs in their own lives or in their families;

- **Mental health** – Recent research is uncovering an alarming degree of diagnosable mental health issues among incarcerated youth, particularly depression and the effects of abuse. Projects found mental health screening and services an important component for some youth;

- **Health** – Some projects assess health as part of the orientation; health issues surface for others as youth miss activities for health reasons;

- **Housing** – While rare, the youth who lacks a regular, fixed, adequate nighttime residence presents overwhelming needs to a project. Projects have needed to find

partners who can support youth through the process of finding such residence before either school or work patterns stabilize; and

- **Recreation** – Projects provide either episodic events, like trips to an amusement park, or regular opportunities for fun such as sports leagues.

Based on their own experience or that of the Round One projects, the project staff designed individual strategies for serving project youth tailored to individual needs. In an attempt to customize service delivery to youth participants, almost all projects used an individual service strategy that also incorporated a youth's input. At the core of this plan was the assessment system that screened the youth for past history or continuing signs of educational, mental, physical, behavioral or social problems.

Once the project and youth completed the individual service plan (ISP), the youth either received services directly from the grantee or was referred out to a partnering agency. Preparing a youth for work varied in format, duration, and intensity, with some projects offering hours of preparation while others offering months. Job placement and retention efforts were offered to some extent by all the projects, but staffs emphasized preparing youth for work more than helping youth keep jobs. Several projects learned through the grant period that youth needed more support during the early months of job placement than they were receiving, but they often did not have the resources remaining to allocate to this task.

Few of the projects offered reentry services directly with DOL funds. Parole or probation offices provided aftercare, and workforce specialists supported the youths' reentry plan by helping them observe curfew or other restrictions. A few projects served youth as alternative sentencing programs, and all the project staffs reported that their efforts to keep youth occupied in constructive activities constituted anti-gang efforts. Gang symbols and colors were banned at project activities by all the grantees. Community service was not generally a requirement of the projects, and many youth had met service and restitution requirements before enrolling in the project.

Educational Services

Of all the services offered through the DOL grant, educational services were the most generally provided to most clients. There were several reasons for this emphasis:

- A large number of youth (45% of the total or 834) were under the age of 18. Their main task was to remain in class and complete high school.

- Even those who were 18 and older needed additional schooling. Many had been unsuccessful in school; many had dropped out of school or had been suspended/expelled.

- Even some who had received GED certificates were unable to meet employers' expectations for reading or mathematics skills.

Projects learned that finding youth employment was markedly easier if they had acquired the skills and the certification of those skills before searching for a job.

Other Services

All projects offered support services. A substantial proportion of project youth needed a substance abuse intervention, and failing substance abuse tests was an occasion of job loss for some youth. Mental health, transportation, and child care services were among the other services youth needed.

Coordinating Mechanisms

A major demonstration goal was identifying effective mechanisms for serving high-need youth. The experience of both Rounds One and Two was that no one organization or agency could meet all these needs effectively. Partnerships of varying intensities were necessary to assure access to all needed services.

The chief coordinating mechanisms were:

- Individual service plans,

- Route counseling,

- Standard forms, definitions, and record-keeping,

- Automated or web-based management information systems (MIS),

- Referral agreements,

- Co-location of services or integrating/co-locating staff,

- Cross-agency training, and

- A team approach with coordination through periodic team meetings.

All the projects offered at least two coordinating mechanisms: individual service plans and route counseling. Other projects created a sense of place and peer support by offering services to groups of youth in stable meeting places. While all projects had at least a rudimentary MIS, few used the data to identify patterns of progress or difficulty in tracking the pathways of youth through the project. Cross-agency training, co-location of staff or regular staff meetings among service providers were used by some grantees. A question for future research is whether having more coordinating mechanisms in place is better than fewer.

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT MODEL: ORGANIZATIONAL ATTRIBUTES AND DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

All the projects demonstrated attributes of successfully implemented projects, but some of them struggled with one or more of the attributes. All the projects also made progress with developing data collection processes and varied in the extent to which they used the data for accountability, decision-making, and sustainability. These dimensions of the PMM were incorporated by projects differently and to varying degrees.

The Seven Organizational Attributes

The evaluation of Round Two projects confirmed that projects that had **well-conceived plans** implemented their plans with greater ease than those that did not. From the beginning of the grant period, projects were expected to include planning, not just for the grant period, but also for on-going operation after the grant funds were gone. As the projects progressed into their implementation phases, planning for sustainability became a more-pressing issue.

Successfully implemented projects, whether run by **workforce development or juvenile justice** agencies, were or became knowledgeable about the culture and operating procedures of the other system. Those that had **established good working relationships** on youth-oriented programs before the grant period gained valuable experience that made the implementation of the demonstration easier and quicker. Attribute No. 2 (pre-existing relationships) recognizes that demonstration projects had different starting points in partnership development. The partnership between workforce and justice systems is essential for addressing the needs of the target population. A community intending to serve the target population needs to make the development of this cross-system partnership an early and high priority.

The experiences of Round Two projects reinforced the importance for projects to have broad-based **community support**. Such support was essential, if they were to succeed at implementation and to develop the partnerships that increased the likelihood of a sustainable effort. The evaluation of the Round Two projects also recognized that well-managed and operated projects were those in which **grantees remained constructively involved** in all phases of the projects. It appeared essential that the grantees served as the lead agency and provided direction and coordination for the projects, even when they subcontracted project responsibilities to other organizations.

Staff of well-managed and operated projects not only had experience and knowledge about the workings of the workforce development and justice systems (organizational attribute No. 2), but they also expanded their network of partners to include **other service systems, especially health and education** to take advantage of resources available through those systems. To more fully integrate services, project staff also worked to enhance coordination among these systems.

The evaluators noted that well-managed and operated projects identified and used **other resources and funding streams** to support their goals. Strong linkages and collaborative partnerships, which allowed organizations to participate in joint activities, also encouraged development of innovative approaches for problem solving and delivery of services within the projects. The experiences of Round Two projects reinforced the value for lead agencies to **share both the leadership and the credit for the results** of their programs with other stakeholders. Successful programs shared information with other stakeholders so that fully integrated – and effective – services were provided to clients.

Data Collection and Analysis

DOL established 16 data elements that every project needed to collect and report to DOL quarterly; in addition every organization associated with the demonstration required some level of internal data collection and reporting. A few projects expanded both the range of data they collected and the ways that they used data for other than accountability purposes. Projects were encouraged to use data to guide project activities and to build a case for sustainability.

In general, all projects collected some individual data on project youth, usually in individual files used by route counselors. While grantees made progress in developing project-level databases, the projects did not systematically use data to support decision-making or for sustainability. The technical issues of designing a database were accomplished, but not the culture of decision-making within the partner organizations.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND TECHICAL ASSISTANCE

The approach to the evaluation and technical assistance to Round Two projects included a formative evaluation. The formative evaluation involved sharing information among key stakeholders: DOL, the projects, evaluators, and technical assistance specialists.

The evaluation of Round Two projects confirmed that successfully implemented projects conducted self-assessments and actively sought and accepted available technical assistance as part of their continuous improvement process. Successful projects also identified objectives they sought to reach as they prepared implementation plans and used them as milestones to gauge their progress. They then periodically assessed their progress toward reaching the objectives and took necessary corrective action when they did not.

Technical assistance was especially important to Round Two projects because it served as a valuable improvement and feedback mechanism. At grantee conferences, the evaluators and the technical assistance team met with each project team individually before or after the general sessions of the day to review issues and plan for the future.

All second round projects participated in multiple technical assistance sessions or events conducted by a Research and Evaluation Associates staff member or a consultant.

Technical assistance visits provided staff an opportunity to review each project's progress and needs for additional technical assistance. During the visits, technical assistance staff provided projects with a summary of their observations, including feedback and recommendations to project managers. Often, the need for technical assistance in specific areas became apparent to both the technical assistance staff and the project during site visits.

Another way that projects instigated a continuous improvement approach was how they used evaluations as tools to improve operations. Evaluators reviewed the evaluation report findings with the project staffs at subsequent evaluation visits, and projects introduced assessment practices into their on-going operations.

Projects closed the continuous improvement loop by making significant changes in their operations. The projects were encouraged to keep changing their implementation strategies until they served youth effectively.

On-going Struggles

Despite these advances, projects continued to struggle, even with issues that received considerable attention during the project. As the text described earlier, few projects made the best use of project data, and many projects failed to link successfully with the local One-Stop workforce development system. The demonstration did not develop a consistent approach to the design and delivery of workforce development activities. Despite repeated urging, sustainability strategies were not in place for several projects when DOL funds were depleted.

Many of these struggles can be traced to the difficulty of implementing the cross-system service delivery strategies envisioned by the demonstration. Projects had implemented the various services listed in the SGA, but the delivery and coordination mechanisms were still being developed. While Round Two projects developed data collection systems, few had developed the management skills to incorporate data findings into their stream of administrative decision-making.

One-Stop systems (even when the grantee was a One-Stop center) were still learning how to serve youth better and were preoccupied with serving displaced workers. The economic atmosphere within which the demonstration operated made the plight of displaced workers a higher priority, and these workers were generally easier to place than project youth.

STRATEGIES FOR SERVING YOUTH OFFENDERS AND YOUTH AT RISK OF COURT OR GANG INVOLVEMENT

The report of strategies projects used to realize their goals of serving the target youth is divided by funding categories: Category I - Model Community Projects, Category II –

Education and Training for Youth Offender Initiatives, and Category III – Community-wide Coordination Projects. As described earlier, grant awards differed in intent and funding level according to category:

- **Category I** projects were funded at the $1,500,000 level to expand work readiness and job placement services with gang prevention and suppression activities, alternative sentencing, aftercare and route counseling to youth offenders and youth at risk of court or gang involvement.

- The **Category II** project was funded at the $2,000,000 level to provide comprehensive school-to-work education and training to incarcerated youth while they were in residential confinement and work readiness, job placement, and aftercare/reentry services after they returned to their home community.

- **Category III** projects were funded at the $350,000 level to develop linkages that strengthened the coordination of prevention and aftercare services.

Beside the differences by category, projects differed as to the degree the grantee and the community had already been delivering services to the target population. Some projects had years of experience serving the target population while others were initiating such services. Some of the partners had years of experience with each other while others worked together for the first time during the proposal preparation or even after the grant was awarded.

Projects also differed in whom they identified as the target population. Within the age range of 14 to 24 years, some focused on 14-17 year olds while others focused on youth 18 years old and older. Some projects limited eligibility to youth offenders while others included both youth offenders and youth at risk of gang or court involvement. Generally speaking, project activities did not vary much by offender status, but they varied considerably by the age of participants. In other words, the services the youth received were not dependent on whether the youth was an offender, but younger youth were more directed to education activities than to employment activities and older youth were more directed toward work readiness and employment, regardless of their offender status.

While Round Two projects demonstrated a range of circumstances and models of service delivery, developing broad partnerships and attracting and retaining youth were on-going struggles for every project. At the beginning of Round Two, there was some optimism that learning from Round One projects which systems needed to collaborate to provide the needed services to the youth would make the second round easier. To some extent it did, but overcoming the entropy of a fixed way of doing things provided a challenge to many projects. The **coordination of systems** will likely always be hard work.

Project youth have generally not felt successful within public or private social systems: family, school, etc. Projects were always challenged by the need to attract youth, develop trust, and serve them; many youth did not persevere through this process. Meeting the youth while they were still incarcerated jump-started the trust building process, and many

more Round Two projects than Round One incorporated some level of pre-project outreach.

Projects that knew the youth well seemed to fare better. These projects saw the youth often, encouraged them to participate in project activities, had activities for them every day, etc. **Des Moines** staff members found that when they began to meet the older youth daily, youth and staff got to know each other better and retention improved. Projects that paid the youth for participation or paid for reaching milestones, believed that the incentives kept at least some youth from dropping out of the program.

Almost all the projects' staff remarked at some point during the evaluation visits that keeping the youth busy was an important feature in itself. The youth needed the work readiness experience of structured time and accomplishing tasks within a specified time. Youth needed an alternative to "hanging out;" busy and engaging projects served both as work readiness and as anti-gang activities.

Projects typically kept an open door policy to drop outs, encouraging them to pick up again where they left off. Staff with experience in substance abuse treatment went so far as to tell other project staff to expect dropouts and backsliding. It was part of the recovery process.

Several projects made an effort to change the youths' loyalties and developed peer support to reinforce these changes. By having the youth in one place to receive services, projects developed a sense of belonging as an alternative to the gang or rough crowd the youth had bonded with before the project. Projects went so far as to establish different clothing or professional identity to reinforce the new path the youth were following.

Four projects moved the majority of clients to employment: Pittsburgh (56%), Colorado (51%), Des Moines (67%), and West Palm Beach (96%). Some projects served youth too young for full-time employment. Many older youth, too, lacked the credentials that would position them for employment at wages that would break the cycle of dependency and recidivism. An exception was West Palm Beach, which reported almost all its clients found employment and were not required to earn a credential before beginning industry training. It will be important for future projects to learn which factors made the most difference for West Palm Beach. Was its success because the demand for health occupations was high? Was it because the demonstration focused on preparing youth for an industry it knew well and had contacts in? Was it because the agency was well-established and had a sound reputation for its training? Was it because it focused youth on industry preparation rather than earning a general credential, like the GED or a diploma?

Although several projects boasted of the number of service delivery partners they had attracted through the demonstration, none used more than a handful of partners to deliver services. It may take more coordination resources than communities can manage to keep a large group of organizations working together. Hartford will be interesting to watch because it has such high-level support for a community-wide service network.

With the exception of Cincinnati and Hartford, all the projects eventually assembled the range of services DOL thought necessary to serve the target youth effectively. Negotiating service availability is only a first step, as each service provider needs to develop shared expectations, training, and standards of quality for its part of the program. With all the progress made, only West Palm Beach implemented a nationally certified work readiness program, for example.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The report considers accomplishments of the second round of Youth Offender Demonstration Project under three headings:

- Individual accomplishments,

- Systems-level accomplishments, and

- Project accomplishments, as reported by the nine Round Two projects.

Individual Accomplishments

The second round of the Youth Offender Demonstration Project served **1, 852 youth** as of the final quarterly data report, December 31, 2003. Twenty-two percent of Round Two youth had the experience of unsubsidized employment. In addition, 12% of Round Two youth were in subsidized employment at one point. **Among the older youth 75% were able to obtain unsubsidized employment** and **25% had a subsidized work experience. Fewer than 4 % of the youth were convicted of a new crime** while they were active in the demonstration.

Just over 34% of enrolled youth received federally funded job training, and 21% received some other form of job training. Youth progress from basic education services to GED or other more advanced education, so the education data counts services rather than clients. In all 1,304 educational service assignments were made for project youth.

Systems-level Accomplishments

There were four major areas of accomplishments where projects seem to have made significant strides in achieving the demonstration's objectives:

- Building partnerships,

- Garnering new resources,

- Achieving sustainability, and

- Involving the community and employers in the program.

These four types of accomplishments are actually closely interconnected, so it is not easy to establish the results as independent of one another. In fact, it appears that the act of developing partnerships and collaborative arrangements has a direct impact on the ability of a project to leverage resources, to sustain the project (whether through new funding sources or through a collaborative approach to service delivery), and to facilitate community and employer involvement.

If an outcome is viewed as the result of changes brought about through an intervention, in the case of the demonstration the intervention is the receipt of a grant with expectations that the grantee would be able to do more things for target youth or do things differently.

Based on prior experience, including that of the demonstration's first round, DOL expected that projects would be better able to provide a more coordinated system for delivering services to youth if the project could bring together partners who may not have worked together to any extent in the past. There was substantial evidence in Round Two that demonstration grants were used to build new partnerships that did not exist prior to the grant, and that were also likely to be sustained.

Evaluators for all nine projects reported that service providers and other organizations that worked with youth had changed the way in which they operated as a result of the demonstration in their community. The degree of change, of course, varied across the nine projects, but it seemed clear that one accomplishment of the demonstration was that organizations – and their managers and front-line staffs – were working together more closely than they had prior to receipt of the grant. Consistently, evaluators found that project partners reported that they would not revert to the "old ways" of working, which were often independent of one another, and instead would naturally continue to work together to expand and improve service delivery, plan for sustainability, etc.

Without strong partnerships, projects often found themselves without political and financial support for their efforts. When reviewing the nine Round Two projects, the evidence was rather mixed as to whether the effects of developing partnerships extended to leveraging of resources. Though it might be argued that simply forming partnerships brought more services to targeted youth, a reflection of resource allocation, the net increase in resources, may have been modest. This was especially true if the partnering organizations had already been providing services to these youth, but not necessarily in a coordinated fashion.

According to the Institute For Educational Leadership (**Blank et al, 2000**), a project is sustained if: all or part of the project is "institutionalized" into the larger service system; it is the catalyst that leads to reform across the larger service system; or it leads to the development of new policy and practices that become an accepted way of "doing business" in that field. There were indications that the demonstration had an effect in several communities on the accepted ways of "doing business." As grant funding came

to a close for Round Two projects, there was substantial evidence that most, if not all, projects would continue to exist in some form.

Projects that developed strong relationships with the local workforce investment boards (WIBs), made progress in establishing connections with employers. Others developed advisory boards that included more than partner representation, including influential members of the local community. Still others began to develop networks of employers who were willing to hire project clients. In general, however, stronger connections with local employers remained a challenge for most projects.

Staff Reports of Project Accomplishments

Staff reports indicated that the Youth Offender Demonstration Project grants provided both tangible and intangible benefits. Among the tangible benefits, projects were able to serve more youth and develop partnerships that were making steady progress in serving the youth better. Among the intangible benefits, the grants served as catalysts for community change in attitudes toward the youth or toward the grantees' efforts to serve them.

SUMMARY

The second round of the Youth Offender Demonstration Project was still evolving when this report was written. The project's nine grantees were completing month 27 of the 30-month-long demonstration. Several of the projects had requested and received no-cost time extensions from DOL. In addition, six projects received supplemental funding that would allow them to continue to develop for another year or two. The summary includes findings, lessons learned, and recommendations.

Findings

Context and Environment

The projects in Round Two operated in a difficult economic climate that affected agency budgets and the ability of projects to find employment for clients when displaced workers' needs and abilities ranked them higher in priority.

Youth Characteristics

The demonstration project enrolled youth who were generally offenders, almost evenly divided between younger and older age groups. The youth were overwhelmingly male, and somewhat over half were black. Most were in school at some point in the demonstration. Projects reported that the clients referred to them over the course of the

demonstration presented deeper developmental needs and problem behaviors than the projects anticipated.

Recruitment and Retention

Youth were recruited generally by referral from another agency within the community. Retention proved to be a challenge for all the projects. Projects retained youth primarily by getting to know youth personally and following up if they began to miss activities. Several projects reported that using incentives improved attendance. Intangible incentives were introduced in several projects: positive peer pressure, new clothing in place of gang colors, a professional identity, and/or an atmosphere combining challenge and support.

Public Management Model

The Public Management Model focused attention on the larger system changes that needed to occur if the youth were going to experience the range of services they needed in a coordinated way. Driving the implementation and earning the central focus of the PMM was the implementation of the range of services outlined by DOL in the SGA. Seven organizational attributes characterized projects that were making steady improvements in implementing their youth offender employment projects.

The PMM emphasized that projects attempting to implement a cross-agency project needed data that reflected the cross-agency activities in order to make decisions that kept the project on track. The approach to implementation embodied in the PMM leads systems to progress incrementally toward greater coordination through a continuous improvement loop: offer services through sound management tactics, collect information about performance success and gaps, and close the gaps in performance.

Service Delivery Mechanisms

Projects differed in whether the grantee delivered services directly or through partners. In all cases, youth received an individual service plan based on assessments of the youth's needs. Depending in large part on the youths' age, clients were assigned primarily to educational activities or primarily to workforce preparation activities. Projects coordinated services through the oversight of route counselors, housing services in one facility, maintaining service information in an accessible management information system, and/or regular team meetings.

System-level Accomplishments

Partnerships played a crucial role throughout all aspects of a project – from planning through service delivery to sustainability. Bringing workforce and justice systems into partnership remained a crucial relationship. Projects made good use of their relationships with health and education agencies, and both health and education agencies tended to provide some resources from their budgets for serving the youth. Relationships with One-Stop centers remained challenging. Several admitted that they did not think that their agencies had the capacity to work with troubled youth, but those that worked with project

youth gained confidence that they could serve the target population. One of the most challenging elements of the demonstration was developing a network of employers willing to hire youth offenders and youth at risk of court involvement.

Youth Accomplishments

More than 1,800 youth received services through the demonstration grants. The majority of the youth clients were male and offenders. Most of the youth received some additional education under the auspices of the grant and a majority of the older youth received some type of employment experience. While they were active in the project, few youth were convicted of a new crime or incarcerated for a new crime.

Lessons Learned

Demonstrations by their nature are essentially learning experiences for all those involved in them – stakeholders, sponsors, evaluators, technical assistance providers, and others who support the effort.

1. A major lesson from Round Two is that **youth needs vary, and lock-step curricula are unlikely to address their different developmental and therapeutic needs.**

2. **Another lesson learned is the value grantees placed on route counseling, the "glue" that holds the cross-agency service delivery system responsive to individual youth.** Discussions of sustainability generally came down to the struggle to fund the route counseling system that kept youth on track and service providers engaged.

3. Despite the poor economic environment, budget cuts, and high unemployment, youth in Round Two were finding employment. A lesson to be observed is that **a discouraging environment is not a basis for avoiding youth offender employment efforts.**

4. It is hard to overestimate the importance of employment as a component of the services offered to youth offenders. **The chance for employment made the project attractive to youth and to the referral agencies.**

5. The demonstration projects received technical assistance that proved valuable in addressing the challenges of stakeholder development and sustainability. A lesson for administrators in particular, is to recognize that projects **need the support of coaching relationships** if they are going to accomplish the system-changes envisioned. Communities need to identify local and state staff with experience in serving such youth or facilitating cross-agency partnerships.

6. Round Two projects were successful at assembling a wide range of services, but the services themselves were not always developed using standards of quality and sufficiency. The lesson learned is that **offering the range of services was a challenging task, but it is only part of what needs to be understood to serve these youth effectively**.

7. The process evaluation of the nine Round Two projects demonstrated the utility of the Public Management Model as a lens for grantees, evaluators, and technical assistance specialists. The language of the **PMM** provided a way for grantees, evaluators, and technical assistance specialists to communicate about the projects in an analytic way. **Communities implementing a cross-agency project will need such a common frame of reference for communication, goal setting, and evaluation.**

8. The challenge to develop cross-agency partnerships and useful information systems came from the clear expectations included in DOL's SGA. Grantees will attempt difficult tasks such as these if it is clear that receiving funds to help clients is tied to their compliance. **Clear expectations can serve as a catalyst for producing system changes.**

Recommendations and Closing

Although the demonstration continues and a new project to evaluate formal demonstration outcomes is not yet complete, some recommendations seem clear.

Recommendation # 1

The effort to prepare youth for employment through coordinated services across the spectrum of workforce, reentry, education, health, housing, and other support activities is grounded in theoretical and evidenced-based research. Despite the difficulty of implementing such complex service arrangements, communities should be encouraged to develop coordinated service delivery mechanisms for the sake of the youth and for the economic and public safety well being of the community.

The alternatives are doing nothing or offering services in piecemeal fashion. Grantees already had enough experience with these options to know that they had to do better.

Recommendation # 2

System-by-system accountability standards are intended to focus agencies and subcontractors on performance, but these accountability structures may impede partnership arrangements where multiple organizations could take both responsibility and credit for accomplishments. Communities should be encouraged to develop standard enrollment and assessment instruments, build shared management information systems, and devise cross-agency performance standards and accountability structures. This

infrastructure is needed to support cross-agency/cross-system partnerships that share the burden of high-need clients and share the credit for their progress as well.

Recommendation # 3

While the discussion of sustainability can be very theoretical—what should be sustained, who will take responsibility, etc. The ultimate concern should be for the youth, especially youth who are suspicious of civil systems in which they have experienced failure (e.g., school and juvenile justice). Projects that have raised their hopes of a better life need to be resourceful in accommodating enrolled youth's needs for service or redirecting those they can no longer serve to other service providers.

Recommendation # 4

The risk conditions that increase the probability that youth will come under court supervision are not diminishing in our communities. Communities need to anticipate that youth will continue to be referred for a broad range of services to become work ready. Communities will be better served by more study of such factors as route counseling, duration and intensity of services, incentives use, or developing personal relationships with youth.

Closing

The demonstration allowed communities to find ways to reintegrate or reengage youth and prepare them for employment. Many of the observed success stories owe their inspiration to the vision, commitment and hard work of project administrators and staff, yet the youth deserve appreciation for entering the struggle to change the direction of their lives. Despite the headlines that opened this report, day-to-day project activity matched earnest youth and dedicated staff in learning activities that moved the youth closer to constructive life paths. Demonstration communities are strengthened and safer for their common efforts.

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Section I

IMPETUS AND BACKGROUND FOR THE DEMONSTRATION

Introduction

Between 1989 and 1994, juvenile crime rates and gang activity exploded onto the public consciousness as the number of juveniles arrested for violent crimes (murder, non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery and aggravated assault) increased by 62%. While that trend has since declined and leveled off, the sudden peak in violent juvenile crime has had a substantial influence on bringing and keeping this population on the public radar screen.

At the same time there has been a rise in the level of gang activity. The National Youth Gang Survey indicates that in 2000 (**Egley and Arjunan, 2002)** there were well over 24,000 gangs in 3,300 jurisdictions across the country with more than 770,000 gang members. While the numbers themselves are staggering, what is more important to realize is that the dynamics of juvenile crime and gang involvement have changed drastically, with gang problems now affecting more jurisdictions than ever before, including many smaller cities and rural areas and involving an increasing number of females and youth of all races.

Not surprisingly, given these trends, the country has experienced a dramatic rise in juvenile incarceration rates. In 1998, 1.8 million delinquency cases were heard in courts with juvenile jurisdiction throughout the United States. Of the 630,000 cases that were adjudicated, more than one-quarter resulted in out-of-home placements. With such a huge number of our country's court-involved youth entering residential treatment centers, juvenile corrections facilities, foster and group homes, the nation can expect a large number of youth will be leaving these facilities and returning home. Some estimates hold that as many as 625,000 offenders reenter their communities every year.

In Highlights of the 2001 National Youth Gang Survey (**Epley and Major, 2003**), 63% of communities with a high level of gang involvement reported that the return of gang members to their communities intensified the youth crime rate, particularly violent crimes and drug trafficking. Thirty-four percent of these communities also reported that their communities did not have programs to prepare youth to return to the community. The costs to a community of <u>not</u> intervening to prevent cycles of recidivism are high. A study by **Mark Cohen (1999)** estimated that the external costs imposed on society by the average career criminal are between $1.3 and $1.5 million. This figure accounts for only those costs incurred by society:

- Costs that the crimes impose on victims,

- Expenses borne by criminal justice system (investigation, processing and punishment), and

- Productivity losses caused by incarceration.

Although this kind of analysis is, by nature, somewhat speculative, these costs estimates help to paint a picture of the sort of economic waste involved in a life of crime and to suggest that even modest prevention efforts make good business sense. It is worth it to invest in these youth.

As to social costs, specifically public safety, studies show that having a job with decent wages is associated with lower rates of re-offending (**Harer, 1994**). So interventions that involve effective employment and retention services can actually help protect public safety by reducing recidivism.

There is, as well, the issue of labor market potential. Given the size of the youth population, this constitutes a large potential labor market pool, a substantial portion of which is not yet being tapped by the legitimate labor market. While the youth who participate in the demonstration projects have challenges, they also have skills and many of them have received some type of formal training in correctional facilities.

"Demographics are pointing to the fact that we are going to have a workforce shortage in the future, and it's critical that we build a competitive workforce to address that. So we need to look at all our resources, and that includes people who are coming out of the corrections system." Tom Phillips, executive director, Capital Region Workforce Development Board, Hartford, CT.

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) initiated the Youth Offender Demonstration Project to identify, prepare and place this underutilized labor force into employment that would break both the cycle of crime and patterns of dependency on public support. The task is a challenge because of the multiple needs the youth bring to the projects that attempt to prepare them for legitimate work.

The remainder of this section describes the goals of the demonstration and of the evaluation, reviews the history of the demonstration, cites some of the research literature on which the demonstration is based, and reports on the approach and methodology of the evaluation.

Goals of the Demonstration

The demonstration's goal is to assist youth at-risk of court or gang involvement, youth offenders, and gang members between the ages of 14 and 24 to find long-term employment at wage levels that would prevent future dependency and would break the cycle of crime and juvenile delinquency. The demonstration's objective is to develop effective community strategies that support youth in becoming work ready and capable of attaining and keeping employment that provides a future of economic stability and support civic engagement.

Based on the evaluation of its youth employment programs, DOL designed the demonstration to require a coordinated delivery of a spectrum of services to youth already under court supervision or who were at risk of court supervision either because of gang membership or other risky behavior in their communities. DOL's review of its carefully evaluated youth employment programs **(OYS, 2002)** recognized that effective interventions:

- Were intensive and long-term,

- Built on the principles of youth development,

- Addressed the range of educational, vocational, health, emotional, and recreational needs of youth participants,

- Included strong educational components,

- Involved partner agencies with shared mandates for serving youth, and

- Created systems for serving youth at the community level.

The Youth Offender Demonstration focused community efforts on infrastructure development, building on systems already in place in the community for serving youth. It also identified the range of services that some youth participants were likely to require, and provided technical assistance in meeting the challenges a community would address in changing the systems to serve targeted youth more effectively.

This report documents the implementation progress made by projects in the second cohort of the demonstration.

Goals of the Evaluation

The evaluation's goal was to document the implementation process of the nine Round Two projects over the demonstration. In addition, the evaluation was to note achievements and challenges as project staffs attempted to deliver coordinated services to targeted youth. The Department of Labor anticipated that the demonstration would surface mechanisms other communities could replicate to serve youth more effectively and in a sustainable way.

Research and Evaluation Associates performed the evaluation of both Rounds One and Two under contract with DOL. This report describes, assesses and summarizes the evaluation team's findings for Round Two. A major part of the evaluation focuses on the extent to which the projects were effective in building upon existing programs and systems to serve targeted youth. Research and Evaluation Associates also provided the technical assistance to the projects in Rounds One and Two. The evaluation and technical

assistance teams collaborated on several aspects of their efforts, and these will be described in the report as well.

History of the Demonstration

Congress set aside $13.1 million in DOL's 1998 Program Year Pilot and Demonstration budget for programs to address the needs of youth who have been or who are at risk of being under juvenile or criminal justice supervision. In collaboration with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) in the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (DOL/ETA) awarded grants to the first set of Youth Offender Demonstration Projects in May 1999. Awards went to 14 entities: states, counties, cities, or nonprofit organizations. Grants were made for two years with the assumption that projects would need six months for planning and then would have 18 months for operations.

In June 2001, DOL awarded over $8.2 million in demonstration grants to nine new entities. Round Two (like Round One) projects fell into one of three categories of grants:

- **Category I – Model Community Projects** focused on impoverished, high-crime neighborhoods in large cities where they were required to expand work readiness and job placement services with gang prevention and suppression activities, alternative sentencing, aftercare and route counseling for neighborhood youth offenders and youth at risk of court or gang involvement. Round Two projects were located in:

  - Chicago, Illinois;

  - New York City, New York; and

  - Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

- **Category II – Education and Training for Youth Offenders Initiatives** were to provide comprehensive school-to-work (STW) education and training to incarcerated youth while they were in residential confinement and work readiness, job placement, and aftercare/reentry services after they returned to their home community. The Round Two project was awarded to:

  - Colorado Department of Human Services.

- **Category III – Community-Wide Coordination Projects** focused on smaller communities with high youth crime rates and provided funds for local service providers to develop linkages that strengthened the coordination of prevention and aftercare services. Round Two projects were located in:

  - Cincinnati, Ohio;

- Des Moines, Iowa;

- Erie, Pennsylvania;

- Hartford, Connecticut; and

- West Palm Beach, Florida.

Round Two projects were funded for 30 months: 24 months of operation and a final six months for preparing case files and electronic databases and making them available to DOL evaluators. Research and Evaluation Associates received the contract award to provide both technical assistance and evaluation services through a competitive bidding process.

In June 2002, a third cohort of 29 communities received demonstration grants. The grants were made for 30 months as for the previous cohort, but categories of grant awards were more general:

- **Category A - Large Areas** - High-crime communities with a population of 400,000 and a high youth crime rate and a significant youth gang problem; and

- **Category B – Small to Medium-Sized Areas** - High-crime communities with a population of at least 100,000 and not greater than 400,000 with a high youth crime rate and a significant youth gang problem.

The demonstration has evolved over the three rounds. Projects were first funded just as the new Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) legislation was being implemented across the country. Connections between the projects and the local One-Stop system were tenuous at first. By the demonstration's second and third rounds, the WIA One-Stop system became a more central focus. (See Appendix A for the Solicitation for Grant Applications [SGA].)

Further evolution in the demonstration occurred through the expansion of federal partnerships. As mentioned earlier, the demonstration's first round was selected by DOL with the collaboration of OJJDP. By the third round, the demonstration solicitation was issued by DOL's Employment and Training Administration with the collaboration of the Department of Justice (Corrections Program Office, Office of Justice Programs, OJJDP, National Institute of Justice, and the National Weed and Seed Office), and the Department of Health and Human Services (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Treatment and Center for Mental Health Services).

This evolution stems from the increasing appreciation of the number and nature of the challenges targeted youth bring to the process of becoming work ready and finding long-

term employment. Projects learned that many youth had not succeeded in school for a number of reasons: family mobility, learning problems, truancy, etc. Also, many youth experienced problems with substance abuse – their own or within their families. Until these personal concerns were addressed, youth were not stable enough to succeed in either school or work.

The evolution of the demonstration over the three rounds is reflected in the DOL/ETA prepared statement of the principles that guided development of the demonstration **(DOL, May 16, 2002)**:

1. Expand workforce development partnerships within states and local areas by collaborating with justice, health care, housing and education agencies.

2. Determine what organizational interventions can be provided to states and local communities that serve youth offenders and youth at risk of gang or court involvement.

3. Encourage local One-Stop centers to be more active in increasing staff capacity to serve young job seekers.

4. Introduce young job seekers to the array of job search, training, and placement services and income support available at One-Stop centers.

5. Establish trust in government services and instill civic responsibility in young job seekers, promote youth development and advance public safety.

6. Provide employability services and employment opportunities to young job seekers.

7. Determine the efficacy of the Youth Offender and At-Risk Youth: Public Management Model (PMM) for State and Local Workforce Development Agencies that [surfaced among] initial demonstration sites that provided richer services [to targeted youth]. (The PMM is described and analyzed in later sections of the report.)

Earlier, this section quoted some of the research that underlines the urgency of the effort to find ways to support youth offenders and other vulnerable youth in their efforts to obtain and retain employment—both to enhance their economic well being and to help them remain free of involvement with the courts. The literature reviewed in the next portion of this section describes the theoretical and experiential literature that supports the design of the demonstration and of the evaluation.

Literature Review

Research in several areas provides the theoretical basis for the demonstration and the evaluation. These include:

- Youth development,

- Youth training and employment,

- The continuous improvement process, and

- Evaluation Methodology.

Youth Development

The social development strategy that is the main design element of the demonstration is based on the concept of risk and protective factors. **Howell, Krisberg, and Jones (1995)** note that risk factors exist in multiple domains within which youth live and interact: family, school, peer, and community. **Hawkins and Catalano (1993)** note further that the vulnerability to risk varies with age: home having the most effect until children begin school, and peer influences as youth enter adolescence. These risk factors transcend ethnic and economic boundaries, implying that all youth are vulnerable to risk factors.

Benson, Galbraith, and Espelund (1995) report, on the other hand, that protective factors, such as, a strong family and social ties (e.g., sports or church participation), protect youth from the risk factors that exist in their world. King County, Washington, moved to enhance protective factors for vulnerable youth in its Reinvesting in Youth (2001) program sponsored by the Seattle Human Services Department. It disseminated a reinvestment strategy paper within the community, eliciting grassroots involvement in developing such activities as after-school programs and early education activities. Under a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant, Portland, Oregon, is attempting to build protective factors by encouraging early substance abuse interventions with teens.

While these efforts aim to prevent risky behaviors among youth, other researchers have found that the youth development approach is also effective with youth who have already exhibited such behaviors.

Yohalem and Pittman (2001) encourage a similar approach to youth development among vulnerable youth, focusing activities on the developmental goals of youth and not on their deficits. **Finn-Aage Esbensen (2000)** also uses risk factors in predicting which youth will become gang members and recommends protective factors for gang prevention efforts, that is, positive and attractive youth activities.

Youth Training and Employment

Considering youth employment in general, **Lerman (2000)** reports that a substantial proportion of adolescent Americans lack the basic skills that all employers require and that the United States has a weak system connecting education and careers. These factors

are exacerbated for vulnerable youth, those who come from neighborhoods with high unemployment and social dysfunction. He further reviews employment programs targeting such youth, noting few strong positive outcomes.

Those that looked promising (Job Corps and Gulf Coast Trades) are residential in character and emphasized academic education aligned to strong vocational training. Another promising training project (Center for Employment Training and Focus: Hope) is strongly tied to industry jobs and employers.

Buck (2000) reviews the experience of programs directed to helping offenders to get jobs when they return to their communities. She reports that the evaluation research on programs from the Great Society of the 1960s to experiments and pilot demonstrations in the 1980s found that nothing really worked.

With the work of **Harer (1994)**, she reports, the research shifted from evaluating the success of programs to evaluating the success of former offenders. This research indicates that offenders who had worked or been in school are less likely to re-offend. Those who had jobs before leaving incarceration also are less likely to re-offend.

Research examining successful employment programs also noted the need for broad partnerships such as those indicated by the guiding principles. Buck observes that offenders need "intensive supervision, mandatory substance abuse treatment, employability training (such as basic education, vocational training and job search assistance), housing, family intervention services, parenting skills,

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Youth Risk Factors

In the Community

- Availability of drugs,
- Availability of firearms,
- Community laws and norms favorable toward drug use, firearms, and crime,
- Media portrayals of violence,
- Transitions and mobility,
- Low neighborhood attachment and community disorganization, and
- Extreme economic deprivation.

In the School

- Early and persistent anti-social behavior,
- Academic failure beginning in elementary school, and
- Lack of commitment to school.

In the Family

- History of problem behavior,
- Conflict management problems,
- Unfavorable parental attitudes, and
- Involvement in problem behaviors.

By the Individual/Among Peers

- Rebelliousness,
- Friends who engage in problem behavior,
- Favorable attitudes toward problem behavior,
- Early initiation of problem behavior, and
- Constitutional factors.

J.D. Hawkins and R. F. Catalano, (1993.)

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and medical and mental health services." She goes on to report that offenders need additional assistance such as basic education, a chance to earn a GED, vocational education and computer skills to move beyond low-skill entry-level positions. **Mukamal (2001)** supports the need for links to such services. She finds that it is necessary to assist the former offenders in meeting their personal needs for them to gain and keep employment.

Brown, et al. (2002) published "Barriers and Promising Approaches to Workforce and Youth Development for Young Offenders" as a toolkit for juvenile justice practitioners by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The authors identify three important lessons from the study:

- Employment and career-focused programs that promote self-sufficiency are those that are comprehensive, sustained, grounded in the principles of youth development, and are connected to further education or long-term career opportunities;

- Preparing youth for workforce success requires more than providing them vocational training and job readiness classes; and

- Youth programs face significant barriers, including insufficient funding for alternative strategies; taxpayer resistance; focus on punishment instead of empowerment; overwhelmed and dysfunctional courts; and

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Developmental Assets: An Overview Youth Protective Factors

External Assets

- **Support** -Young people need to experience support, care, and love from their families, neighbors, and many others. They need organizations and institutions that provide positive, supportive environments.
- **Empowerment** -Young people need to be valued by their community and have opportunities to contribute to others. For this to occur, they must be safe and feel secure.
- **Boundaries and expectations** -Young people need to know what is expected of them and whether activities and behaviors are "in bounds" and "out of bounds."
- **Constructive use of time** -Young people need constructive, enriching opportunities for growth through creative activities, youth programs, congregational involvement, and quality time at home.

Internal Assets

- **Commitment to learning** -Young people need to develop a lifelong commitment to education and learning.
- **Positive values** -Youth need to develop strong values that guide their choices.
- **Social competencies** -Young people need skills and competencies that equip them to make positive choices, to build relationships, and to succeed in life.
- **Positive identity** -Young people need a strong sense of their own power, purpose, worth, and promise.

Search Institute (2003)

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lack of interagency collaboration.

The authors also identify several features of programs, which they consider exemplary:

- Commitment to rehabilitation,

- Continuum of care,

- Integrated education,

- System collaboration,

- Support structures, and

- Accountability.

The Youth Offender Demonstration responds to the findings that protective factors can mitigate the effect of risk factors by requiring focused and intensive education and training for the workforce. It recognizes that workforce experience is likely to reconnect former offenders to their community and assist them in avoiding future brushes with the law. By recommending constructive and proactive efforts, the demonstration builds on youth development principles. With the focus on systems building involving multiple partners to share the responsibility and the costs of serving these high-need youth, the demonstration anticipates that communities will be able to sustain the services for long-term support.

Another aspect of the demonstration recognizes that systems change is often slow and difficult **(Scott, 1992)**. Communities participating in the demonstration were encouraged to take a continuous improvement approach to implementing the services and coordinating mechanisms. DOL provided technical assistance to projects to assist them in taking the incremental steps needed to engage stakeholders and partners, establishing the service system, and negotiating the long-term coordinating mechanisms that would assure that services would be available as long as the youth needed them.

Continuous Improvement and Organizational Learning

As a result of experience with the first round of demonstration projects, DOL identified the principle of continuous improvement as an important component to be incorporated into the planning, implementation, and management for the Round Two projects.

Affholter (1994) explains the continuous-improvement approach:

> **The essence of continuous quality improvement is the focused diagnosis of barriers to better performance, followed by the design of alternatives to remove or circumvent those barriers, the implementation of trials to test those alternatives, and finally the**

expansion of successful efforts to raise performance levels while shrinking variability.

In theory, the result of this effort to assess and change as needed will be that projects will improve their performance as they proceed through their implementation. On a more practical level, having a continuous improvement approach in place both helps projects identify barriers, and also assists them in designing alternatives to remove or circumvent them. The projects that do this are innovative enough to test strategies to overcome the barriers to see if they work. Above all, such projects discard those that fail to work and use those that do.

Continuous improvement becomes part of the organizational culture. More specifically, improvements in an organization's operation are achieved when all of its members understand how the continuous improvement process works and take responsibility to work toward several ends. These especially include achieving higher levels of organizational performance, efficient use of resources, and client satisfaction.

In recent years, given the proliferation of research on organizational learning, many definitions of the concept exist **(Huber, 1993)**. Three ways it has been described are that it is:

- More than the sum of individual learning;

- The process of improving actions through better knowledge and understanding; and

- A routine-based, history-dependent and target-oriented result.

Implicit in these definitions is the premise that the target entity, which includes organizations, groups, and projects, will eventually demonstrate evidence of learning at the institutional level through a continuous improvement process. The learning acquired by members of an organization becomes reflected in the culture, routines and procedures of the entity. Accepting technical assistance and being flexible to change procedures and organizational arrangements become signs of strength, not weakness. Organizational leaders and staff acknowledge to themselves that their task is not easily addressed, and that it is consistent with their commitment to quality to keep changing until they achieve their goals.

Benefits that a demonstration can derive from actively pursuing the goal of becoming a learning organization are manifold:

- First, being a learning organization helps the demonstration navigate through ambiguous territory, which might be characterized as events that are not under the demonstration's control. These include, for example, the possible end of grant funding, a change in the target population or a shift in public policy

priorities. The culture of experimentation and encouraging exploration of uncharted territories is the cornerstone philosophy of learning organizations.

- Second, organizational learning helps demonstrations adapt to their environment. In a learning organization, change is proactively managed rather than reactive to challenges, threats and changes in its operating environment. This attitude develops resiliency in the organizational structure of the projects and helps them exploit their environments by expanding their boundaries. For example, a demonstration might adapt successful practices in one area to a new policy arena where funding seems more promising.

- Finally, the third and the most-important benefit from organizational learning is derived from the cost saving and efficient use of resources. Case studies show that resilient organizational structures, an open learning culture, and good data management techniques (also known as the three basic foundations of a learning organization) lead to sizable cost saving and efficient use of resources.

The evaluation and technical assistance team emphasized that the demonstration was searching for mechanisms that other communities could replicate based on the learning by the staff and leaders of the demonstrations. Technical assistance was promoted as an opportunity for organizational and staff development. Tracking progress became a major concern for all involved because it was on such sound assessment that continuous improvement became possible.

The following portion of the section addresses the approach and methods used by the evaluation team in studying the process of implementation of the demonstration.

Evaluation Methodology

A process evaluation is a study of implementation and is defined as, " the use of empirical data to assess the delivery of programs … it forces clear thinking about what the program *is*" **(Scheirer, 1994)**. The process evaluation of the Youth Offender Demonstration assumes that consistent program outcomes will not be achieved until demonstration projects have resolved the challenges of structuring the activities and processes to serve the youth effectively. Researchers have found that projects that do not meet expected outcomes may not have implemented planned activities or enrolled target youth, so the study of implementation is a first step to assure that the project is doing what it planned before examining the outcomes.

The process evaluation methodology employed in the Youth Offender Demonstration was driven by the nature of the demonstration. Grantees varied considerably by type of agency providing services, types of services provided, and the characteristics of clients served. Some grantees were justice agencies, others workforce agencies, while others were community-based organizations. Grantees were states, counties, municipalities or

non-governmental organizations. Some target areas were counties; others were cities or a few neighborhoods within a city.

Program components also varied, and the common *data* elements required by DOL for project monitoring purposes did not always reflect common *program* elements. Together, these factors made cross-project quantitative comparisons impossible. Some projects tried to keep youth in school, and others recruited only youth over the age of 18. Comparing the employment figures for two projects that provided different services might make one look more successful than the other when the numbers really reflected different service delivery strategies or different target populations. Similarly, one project distributed application forms at youth group meetings and high school classes, but enrolled only those that came to project offices to get services. Other projects recruited and enrolled youth while they were incarcerated. Again, comparing the project recruitment and enrollment ratios or achievements of projects that recruited different types of youth (with different needs) could lead to misleading assessments of their success.

With the emphasis on continuous improvement and organizational learning, evaluators chose a formative evaluation methodology. This approach is a process evaluation (study of implementation) that provides feedback to grantees, technical assistance specialists, and DOL project officers. This formative approach allows the sharing of evaluation reports with demonstration stakeholders as an element in the continuous improvement feedback loop. Grantees were encouraged to experiment with alternative service delivery strategies and to change them as part of the continuous-improvement process until they achieved the project's goals.

The process evaluation approach adopted by Research and Evaluation Associates assumed that demonstration grantees were willing to become learning organizations, that is, that they were open to organizational change even as they were in the process of supporting change in their clients. A goal of the evaluators was to "play an expanded and more productive role *within* the organizations" **(Torres and Preskill, 2001)**.

A formative evaluation does have its critics. The chief criticism of this approach to evaluation is that it is difficult for the evaluator to maintain the role of the objective outsider. Objectivity was protected in this evaluation in several ways:

- Evaluators were not the only observers since there was a technical assistance team, technical assistance specialists, the DOL project officers, and the opinions and views of the grantees and their colleagues.

- The site visit evaluation team was composed of five experienced researchers who brought independent judgment to their efforts.

- Another researcher, who was not on the site visit team, performed much of the analysis of the qualitative data resulting from the site visits.

- The completed field guides of each visit were shared within the evaluation team and were the basis of a common debriefing.

- The debriefings from each round of site visits were done together, with evaluators probing each other for specific evidence in support of observations.

Evaluation Design

The evaluation was designed to ensure that the issues of interest to DOL were addressed systematically. The evaluation of the demonstration was designed to examine the activities of key actors, dimensions of project organization, relationships among partners, and environmental characteristics identified in the literature and from the demonstration's first round as factors that affected project implementation success.

Typically, process evaluations serve several broad objectives. The Youth Offender Demonstration Project targeted the following evaluation objectives named by **Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (1985)**:

- Providing feedback about the pattern and schedule at which the program activities developed, expected activities were carried out, and services were delivered to the expected audience;

- Assessing the extent to which program staff and administrators carried out their roles and partner organizations formed linkages; and

- Providing a record of the program that was actually implemented and how it may have differed from what was intended.

The ultimate goal of each project was to help participants secure long-term employment at wage levels that would break the cycle of dependency and delinquency. A major purpose of the process evaluation, therefore, was to assess the implementation process of each project and to gauge the extent to which each was effective in building upon existing programs and systems to deliver coordinated services to the target population and in turn reach this goal.

Evaluation Framework

In addition to using Stufflebeam and Shinkfield's objectives, the process evaluation designed by Research and Evaluation Associates followed the sequence of their CIPP model — Context, Inputs, Process, and Product**.** CIPP is a system-flow model that emphasizes tracking a program's temporal flow through its components, including project design, start-up, and implementation phases. According to Stufflebeam and Shinkfield, the context in which a program is implemented helps explain how inputs and processes (techniques and interventions) work to produce the product – or the outcomes that realize the objectives.

In the case of the demonstration, each project's context consisted of several different dimensions: demographic characteristics of the community; the economic conditions of the community such as the rate of unemployment; the degree of cohesiveness of existing service delivery systems prior to the start of grant activities; and aspects of the local culture that made some delivery techniques and interventions more appropriate than others. Within this context, project officials designed and implemented their projects. Each step of the process was structured in such a way that one preceded another, ending with the product of the project.

In addition to the CIPP system-flow model, the process evaluation also used a Public Management Model (PMM) developed by the evaluation and technical assistance teams and DOL staff during the demonstration's first round. The initial model was further refined during the second round, and served as a lens for the evaluators, the technical assistance team, and the project staff and leadership to view demonstration activity from a systems perspective.

Although findings through two rounds of the demonstration do not indicate that there is a single effective approach to service delivery, the findings have identified components shared by the most successfully implemented projects that appear to have universal application. It is the contention of Research and Evaluation Associates and DOL that organizations that structure their work around these components will better formulate, implement, and administer an effective project that targets youth offenders and youth at risk of court or gang involvement.

Given this contention, DOL agreed that the PMM could serve as a schema to gauge the progress that Round Two projects made toward achieving their objectives and goals. The evaluation team found that the model helped analysis and facilitated comparison of projects both within and across categories. The results of the application of the model are presented in Sections III, IV, and V.

Research Questions

DOL provided the evaluation team with eight questions to guide the development of the evaluation. These questions fit into the CIPP sequence and could be addressed through the evaluation framework of the PMM. During the evaluation design phase, however, the evaluators added two additional research questions to accommodate all the elements of the PMM. The questions were:

1. What is the context of each project and how did it influence the project development and implementation?

2. How did the community planning bodies charged with the on-going tasks of designing the integrated network of services function and what was the level of involvement of the stakeholders, including parents and youth?

3. What program components were implemented and how successful were the efforts to build on existing systems, establish new programs, and create an integrated network?

4. What methods of staff recruitment and training were used and how successful were they?

5. What methods were used to gain access to and recruit members of the target population as program participants and how successful were they?

6. What types of training, employment, and gang suppression programs were provided to the target population? What were the intensity, duration, and quality of those programs?

7. What steps have been taken to assure the continuation of the integrated services and activities after the project funding ends and what is the likelihood of success?

8. In what ways do employment and training projects serving youth who have been in the criminal justice system or who are at risk of such involvement differ from traditional approaches to serving youth?

9. What was the status of the management information system that collects and maintains data on the clients?

10. What was the feedback system to enhance the ability of the projects to learn from their efforts, including those efforts that are either successful or unsuccessful?

The correspondence between the CIPP sequence and the research questions is clear:

    a. Context – Question 1

    b. Inputs – Questions 2, 4, 5, 9

    c. Process – Questions 3, 6, 8

    d. Products – Questions 7, 10.

Question No. 10 took on particular importance as DOL viewed the concept of continuous improvement as the feedback mechanism that helps bring about institutionalized change at the system level, which ultimately affects individual outcomes in positive ways.

The questions not only formed the framework for the evaluation site visits, but also helped determine the kind of technical assistance recommended for each site. The questions reflected the comprehensive scope of the project and the importance of tracking youth through every stage of the intervention to assure grantees, stakeholders, and DOL that the project sites were implementing the project as the projects proposed and intended.

Data Collection

As explained in the preceding section, the system-flow model, the Public Management Model, and the 10 evaluation questions formed the basis for addressing the major areas of study identified by the evaluation team. The evaluation team drew upon an array of data sources at the nine project sites, both quantitative and qualitative, which it used to answer the research questions. These methods included:

- Observations of project planning meetings and program operations;

- Unstructured interviews with program planners, program implementers, youth, parents, community representatives, employers, and other stakeholders during visits to project sites;

- Systems analysis (i.e., identifying the interconnected systems that supported project development and implementation such as community and faith-based organizations, One-Stop centers, schools, courts, employment and training programs, local businesses, etc);

- Exchange of information with the demonstration's technical assistance team;

- Document reviews (e.g., project statements of work, needs/strengths assessments, strategic and implementation plans, records of court involvement by youth, etc.); and

- Abstractions of data from project records and standardized reports about the outcomes for members of the target population.

In the design for the process evaluation, the evaluation team identified data elements it would likely need to answer the DOL questions (See Appendix B for the Data Collection Plan). Evaluators also aligned the questions with components of the PMM. From these two sources, the evaluation team prepared field guides for each of a series of site visits to the nine projects. (See APPENDIX C for the field guide used for the final site visits conducted in the fall of 2003.) After approval of each field guide by DOL, evaluators held an orientation meeting with all evaluation team members to review the field guide and to clarify any questions. To ensure validity and reliability of the data collected, evaluators used standard triangulation techniques and multiple sources of information, as practical.

Each project received three evaluation visits of two days each. Table 1 reports the schedule of the three visits to the projects in Round Two. Below the table, there is a description of each visit.

Table 1. Site Visit Schedule for Round Two Projects

Grantee	Baseline Visit	Second Visit	Final Visit
Chicago, IL	March 13-14, 2002	November 5-6, 2002	September 15-16, and October 6-7, 2003
Cincinnati, OH	January 10-11, 2002	December 16-17, 2002	October 14-15, 2003
Colorado	January 9-11, 2002	November 5-6, 2002	September 23-24, 2003
Des Moines, IA	December 13-14, 2001	November 20-21, 2002	September 22-23, 2003
Erie, PA	December 11-12, 2001	November 18-19, 2002	September 28-30, 2003
Hartford, CT	December 19-20, 2001	January 14-15, 2003	September 17-18, 2003
New York City, NY	November 28-30, 2001	November 18-19, 2002	September 30-October 1, 2003
Pittsburgh, PA	January 3-4, 2002	November 18-19, 2002	September 10-11, 2003
West Palm Beach, FL	November 27-28, 2001	December 5-6, 2002	September 8-9, 2003

First Site Visit. The purpose of the baseline evaluation visits was to document the status of the projects early in their implementation. The emphasis was on gaining rich detail of:

- The project's goals, the partnerships in place and planned, especially the crucial partnership between the workforce development and justice agencies;

- The planning process and status of implementation planning;

- The sources of the target youth, planned approach to service delivery, and the expectations of service demands;

- The status of the project hiring process, the skills and background of project staff, and the plans for orienting staff members to their role and the goals of the grant;

- The community context for the grant activity: the economy, the employers likely to employ youth, other youth service organizations that target youth could access and the political support for the project; and

- The management information system in place or planned for the project and the experience of the grantee with using data for managing, accountability, and sustainability.

Each visit included lengthy interviews of the grantee representative and representatives of each partner. Visitors went to offices where youth were being (or would be) served and met project frontline staff. Several projects were adding services to existing youth service projects, so there were some youth to interview.

A few grantees already were serving youth, and evaluators collected data on services for these. For most grantees, however, collecting information about enrollment and services was deferred to the second visit. Each evaluator prepared a report on the baseline visit, answering as many of the study questions as possible, given each project's development. Reports of these visits were submitted to DOL, which in turn, submitted them to the DOL project officers and the grantees. Reports were also sent to the technical assistance team.

Grantees were asked to comment or raise questions about the reports after reading them. While several projects returned corrections of factual material, such as the spelling of a person's name, none raised substantive questions.

Second Site Visit. The second evaluation site visits occurred about one year after the baseline visits. The purpose of the visit was to collect information about youth enrolled, youth retention, services delivered, and day-to-day project activities. The field guide for the second visits emphasized questions to identify the extent to which the organizational attributes were characteristic of grantees one year after funding and after two training events for grantees focused on their importance. The technical assistance events were at grantee conferences held in October 2001 and April 2002. Evaluators looked for evidence that the projects used data for continuous improvement. They also looked at ways that the workforce development, justice and other systems worked collaboratively.

These visits included a second lengthy interview with the grantee and representatives of the partners. By the time of the visit, all the projects had hired staff members who could be interviewed as well. All but one project had enrolled youth at this time, so youth were also interviewed. Site visit reports were submitted to the DOL Federal Project Officer (FPO), who in turn distributed them to the DOL project officers and the grantees.

Third Site Visit. Final evaluation site visits commenced near the end of the grantees' period of performance, about Month 27 of the project. One purpose of the final visit was to document any important changes in context or organization of the projects that had occurred since the time of the second visit. Evaluators emphasized describing each project's approach to sustaining its program after the end of DOL funding. Projects were to have not only built a case for sustainability based on their results to date, but also to have planned for ensuring that services would continue to target youth.

At this final visit, evaluators also collected data on youth outcomes as well as information on the extent to which the projects had changed the service delivery system within their communities. For this latter accomplishment, evaluators looked for evidence of new partnerships and collaborations that were expected to continue to provide an array of services for workforce development, reentry, and other support areas. Finally, evaluators identified barriers and challenges facing the projects at this stage in the grant period, as well as evidence of significant project accomplishments and lessons learned.

After each round of evaluation visits, evaluators convened to debrief the experience and recommend changes to the field guide or visit logistics. Findings of these meetings were complemented by analysis of field notes by an evaluator who had not made any of the visits, but knew the project well from earlier design meetings. The results of these analyses appear in Section II and succeeding sections

Data Analysis. The analysis of data involves examining, categorizing, tabulating, and otherwise recombining qualitative and quantitative evidence **(Yin, 2003)**. In preparation for data analysis, evaluators compared data from different sources and attempted to identify and reconcile discrepancies. The evaluation team conducted the three

fundamental analytic tasks during the process evaluation, as articulated by **Rossi and Freeman (1993)**:

- Described the project and how it was implemented;

- Compared sites within categories to determine commonalities, differences, barriers, and successes; and

- Determined whether the project conforms to its design.

An important part of the evaluation was examining the data to determine whether each project was achieving the its desired results. In addition, evaluators used qualitative and quantitative data, as appropriate, to inform analyses about significant changes in project plans; contextual changes; and unexpected consequences resulting from the project, as well as barriers, challenges, and successes. Evaluators examined initial reports of youth achievements, as well: increased schooling, subsidized and unsubsidized employment, and avoidance of conviction and incarceration.

The approach to data analysis, in general, followed standard qualitative and quantitative methods used during process evaluations. These are:

- **Qualitative Methods:** These generally consist of description and interpretation. In addition, the methods include development of a grid for studying and comparing qualitative data at different points in the project. This approach is particularly valuable in identifying where linkages break down or fail and when components of programs either are poorly implemented or not implemented at all.

- **Quantitative Methods:** In process evaluations these consist of descriptive statistics. Particularly important are demographic features and initial outcomes data, such as placements in jobs. The field guide and final design document ensured that measures identified were appropriate and that they sufficiently cover a range of activities projects were expected to implement.

Using both the qualitative and quantitative data collected, the first step of the analysis task was to give a full and accurate description of each project. This focused on such elements as:

- What partnerships were in place;

- What activities the partners were producing together that they could not do singly;

- What audience was being served;

- What proportion of the intended audience was being served;

- What services were received by youth; and

- What project goals were being met (for the demonstration, the goal was long-term employment of youth at wage levels that would prevent future dependency and break the cycle of crime and juvenile delinquency)?

A second task was to compare the implementation of the demonstration across sites so evaluators could better understand the basis of differences they observed. This analysis also addressed the extent to which standardization versus flexibility of program characteristics contributed to program implementation success in different settings.

The third task was the fundamental one of asking whether the project, as implemented, conformed to the project design. The approach to this process evaluation recognized that any technical assistance projects received, as well as community contextual factors, might have changed the project design as it was implemented. The analysis compared the operative project description in the implementation plan with the implementation observed during each site visit. As with any demonstration, this approach surfaced variations among sites, which indicated other approaches that produced positive outcomes for both youth and employers.

Limitations of the Research

This report assesses the progress Round Two grantees made in implementing their projects as they approached completion of the grant period. Similar to projects in Round One, grantees began at different places. Some added services to an existing program while others initiated new services tailored to the needs of targeted youth. In the case of both rounds, the depth of needs of youth varied by project. Some projects worked with youth offenders who had multiple and deep service needs while others worked more with youth at risk of gang and court involvement.

No judgment can be made about the long-term success or promise of a particular service delivery profile at this time. At the time of the third visits, the demonstrations were continuing to refine and reshape the delivery of services to the youth participants. As mentioned earlier, demonstration goals varied by site, so the evaluation team reports salient features of the nine projects in a way to discourage facile comparisons.

The goal of the demonstration was to have each grantee achieve the goals it set in collaboration with DOL. Numeric goals, in particular, were not the highest priority; the highest priority was learning which mechanisms helped the youth achieve their goals and the goals the project had set with them. That goal was to identify promising strategies for assisting youth achieve employment at wage levels that would avoid future dependency and break the cycle of recidivism.

Organization of the Report

Eight major sections follow this introduction to the Final Report:

- **Section II** introduces the nine projects and the patterns observed at the project level. The descriptions include context, type of grantee and different forms of partnership models. They also describe youth participants at an aggregate and project level.

- **Section III** introduces the Public Management Model (PMM) and describes the theoretical basis for it and how it applies to the nine projects of Round Two. This section also lists and describes the services the projects delivered.

- **Section IV** focuses on the service delivery aspect of the Public Management Model.

- **Section V** describes the organizational attributes and data collection and analysis components of the PMM.

- **Section VI** describes the continuous improvement approach of the projects and the technical assistance that supported it.

- **Section VII** summarizes the main strategic mechanisms the projects used to achieve their goals.

- **Section VIII** provides an overview of youth-specific and system-level accomplishments at an aggregate level.

- **Section IX** serves as a summary of the Final Report. It draws together lessons learned and provides recommendations for communities interested in mounting a cross-agency service delivery mechanism to serve the target population.

- **References and Appendices** follow **Section IX**.

Section II

OVERVIEW OF THE DEMONSTRATION

This section consists of two parts. The first part describes the patterns observed at the project level, type of grantee, and different forms of partnership models the projects followed. It closes with a description of the context within which the projects operated. The second part describes project youth at an aggregate level and at the project level. Discussions include youth status, whether they were offenders or at risk of court and gang involvement, age, gender and other demographic characteristics.

Project Goals and Objectives

The demonstration's goal is to assist youth at-risk of court or gang involvement, youth offenders, and gang members between the ages of 14 and 24 to find long-term employment at wage levels that would prevent future dependency and would break the cycle of crime and juvenile delinquency. The demonstration's objective is to identify effective community strategies that support youth in becoming work ready and capable of attaining and keeping employment that will provide a future of economic stability and support civic engagement.

In June 2001, DOL awarded demonstration grants to nine entities. Grants were for 30 months: the first 24 months were devoted to providing program services and the final six months were for preparing case files and electronic databases and making them available to DOL evaluators.

DOL awarded the grants based on three categories of projects. Category I projects were in large cities with a high crime rate, and the projects were primarily to offer a rich array of services to youth based on their needs.

The Category II project was awarded to states for school-to-work activities for youth while they were incarcerated, support activities during their transition back to the community, and work readiness and job placement services once they were home.

Category III awards went to small communities with high youth crime rates. The emphasis in Category III projects was on building infrastructure to support the delivery of services to the target population.

Projects By Categories
Category I
▪ Chicago, IL   ▪ New York City, NY   ▪ Pittsburgh, PA
Category II
▪ Colorado
Category III
▪ Cincinnati, OH   ▪ Erie, PA   ▪ Des Moines, IA   ▪ Hartford, CT   ▪ West Palm Beach, FL

As the projects evolved, the distinctions among the three categories became less apparent. Category III projects such as **Hartford** and **West Palm Beach**, for example, realized that their major concern was not just about developing partnerships and building the service delivery infrastructure, but also about enrolling youth and providing them services. By the time DOL issued the SGA for Round Three, the distinctions were blurred to the extent that the categories of the grant awards were more general: Category A was for large areas; and Category B was to consist of small to medium-sized areas.

As a prelude to analysis, the following short profiles introduce each project and provide project-specific information about the nature of grantee, partnerships, sub-contractors and pre-existing structures among service providers. (See Appendix D for third evaluation site visit reports.)

Category I Projects

Table 2a. Project Characteristics: Chicago

Grantee	Project Name	Sub-Contract for Primary Services	Partners at Project Inception	Partners for Services	Pre-Existing Conditions	Change in Partners or Roles
Mayor's Office of Workforce Development (MOWD)	YouthLink	Goodwill Industries of Metropolitan Chicago	MOWD and Goodwill Industries of Metropolitan Chicago	Thirteen Consortium members	NONE	Two new CBO partners provide case management services

Chicago, IL. The Chicago Mayor's Office of Workforce Development (MOWD) subcontracted management of the project's day-to-day operations to Goodwill Industries of Metropolitan Chicago, Inc. A consortium of 40 community-based organizations provided the project's core structure. The project linked 13 service providers, subcontractors to Goodwill, and their referral networks and resources to deliver what the project called a holistic response to project participants. The project initially served both older and younger youth. In June 2002, when Goodwill itself received a Round Three grant, however, youth were separated with the Round Two project serving mostly younger youth. Route counseling was initially provided by a single agency, but during the project's last year these responsibilities were divided between two subcontractor agencies, which served youth according to the Zip code where they lived.

Table 2b. Project Characteristics: New York

Grantee	Project Name	Sub-Contract for Primary Services	Partners at Project Inception	Partners for Services	Pre-Existing Conditions	Change in Partners or Roles
Friends of Island Academy (FOIA)	NONE	NONE	Robin Hood Foundation Pinkerton Foundation Department of Education	Human Resources Administration Department of Education	Grantee already offered delinquency gang prevention and post-incarceration services	New partnerships developed to increase sustainability and to help secure additional funding

New York City, NY. Friends of Island Academy (FOIA) received the New York City grant. FOIA is a non-profit organization founded in 1990 to provide mentoring and employment assistance primarily to youth leaving the Rikers Island Youth Correctional Facilities. Before the DOL grant, FOIA offered both delinquency and gang prevention and post-incarceration services. Grant funds were used to expand educational services for youth after incarceration, to add a formal Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) program for 60 youth, increase the presence of transition outreach workers to youth in both the young men's and the young women's correctional facilities on Rikers Island, initiate an employment retention effort, and expand prevention outreach to high schools and public housing projects. Neither the ATI program nor the employment retention activities were continued after the DOL funding ended. (Although youth returning from Rikers Island are the main target group, youth incarcerated elsewhere in New York who are released to the city are also eligible to be members of FOIA.)

Table 2c. Project Characteristics: Pittsburgh

Grantee	Project Name	Sub-Contract for Primary Services	Partners at Project Inception	Partners for Services	Pre-Existing Conditions	Change in Partners or Roles
YouthWorks, Inc. (Non-profit)	BluePrint	Life's Work of Western PA provided most of services initially. YouthWorks assumed case management responsibilities	TRWIB (CareerLink One-Stop)	Addison Behavioral Care Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic	YouthWorks worked with youth in the target area for years	University of Pittsburgh school of social work and local AmeriCorps chapter provide workforce development services

Pittsburgh, PA. YouthWorks, Inc., a non-profit organization founded in 1994 which received a demonstration grant, plays a key role in the Pittsburgh region's youth workforce development. YouthWorks submitted its application in collaboration with the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board. The project targeted adjudicated youth within

the city's Community Development Block Grant Area. YouthWorks initially subcontracted all aspects of service delivery to other organizations, including Life'sWork of Western Pennsylvania, which provided route counseling and project coordination. During the summer of 2003, however, YouthWorks assumed route counseling responsibilities. Other major partners included Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic and Addison Behavioral Care, Inc., which received subcontracts to provide youth mental health and substance abuse services, respectively.

Category II Project

Table 2d. Project Characteristics: Colorado

Grantee	Project Name	Sub-Contract for Primary Services	Partners at Project Inception	Partners for Services	Pre-Existing Conditions	Change in Partners or Roles
Department of Human Services - Division of Youth Corrections (DYC)	Y.E.A.R.S.	Center for Network Development Tri-county Workforce Center	DYC Tri-county Workforce Center Center for Network Development	Tri-county Adams, Arapahoe-Douglas, Denver Workforce Dev. Centers; Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center	Strong aftercare program already in place	Department. of Vocational Rehabilitation became a partner with state funds

Colorado Department of Human Services. Colorado's Department of Human Services, Division of Youth Corrections received the only Category II grant. The grant targeted Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center (LMYSC) for project efforts. LMYSC is the most secure facility for young males in the Division of Youth Corrections system, and receives youth from throughout the state; most youth were 18 by the time of their release. The Division of Youth Corrections subcontracted out the entire project. A small portion went to the Center for Network Development for assistance in developing a youth employer network and for facilitating the development of the stakeholders into full partnership. The Tri-county Workforce Center, the Workforce Investment Board for Jefferson, Gilpin, and Clear Creek Counties, received the remainder of the funds; it was the fiduciary agent for the grant. Tri-county Workforce Center subcontracted part of the funds to each of the other workforce development centers serving youth in the central region of the state: Adams, Arapaho-Douglas, and Denver Counties' workforce development centers. LMYSC already had well-developed aftercare activities in place before the grant; the grant was used to add workforce development activities within LMYSC and job placement and follow-up support after release.

Category III Projects

Table 2e. Project Characteristics: Cincinnati

Grantee	Project Name	Sub-Contract for Primary Services	Partners at Project Inception	Partners for Services	Pre-Existing Conditions	Change in Partners or Roles
City of Cincinnati's Workforce Development Division	NONE	Work Resource Center's Service Navigator Unit	NONE	Work Resource Center's Service Navigator Unit	NONE	NONE

Cincinnati, OH. The grantee was the City of Cincinnati's Workforce Development Division, which serves Cincinnati and surrounding Hamilton County. The grantee contracted provision of direct services to the Work Resource Center (WRC), a non-profit organization that has grown to include several community-based employment and education sites throughout Greater Cincinnati since it was founded in 1972. WRC's Service Navigator Unit is funded by Cincinnati and Hamilton County to provide services to youth under the Workforce Investment Act. Most of the youth enrolled were older youth, and all were offenders.

Table 2f. Project Characteristics: Des Moines

Grantee	Project Name	Sub-Contract for Primary Services	Partners at Project Inception	Partners for Services	Pre-Existing Conditions	Change in Partners or Roles
Central Iowa Employment Training Consortium (One-Stop operator)	NONE	Iowa Comprehensive Human Services (WIA-Youth), Spectrum Resource Program (Non-profit)	NONE	Iowa Comp. Human Services (WIA-Youth), Spectrum Resource Program (Non-profit)	NONE	County health care system provides mental health/ substance abuse services to youth

Des Moines, IA. While the grantee was the Central Iowa Employment and Training Consortium, two subcontractors primarily carried out service delivery: Iowa Comprehensive Human Services and Spectrum Resource Program. Intake occurred at either location, and from that point, caseworkers met with clients to complete an individual service strategy form. Comprehensive information about each youth was collected, including employment history, education, public assistance, household

situation, health care, and status with the justice system, if any. Des Moines planned to enroll youth in small increments, so that it could adjust project activities and organization as it got more experience. It provided education and work readiness services primarily.

Table 2g. Project Characteristics: Erie

Grantee	Project Name	Sub-Contract for Primary Services	Partners at Project Inception	Partners for Services	Pre-Existing Conditions	Change in Partners or Roles
Perseus House (Non-profit)	BroadReach	Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies	Perseus House Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies	NONE	Grantee already providing services to at-risk youth and strong inter-agency alliances	Local school district, Office of Children and Youth, Juvenile Probation, and Department of Mental Health partnering to provide summer learning program

Erie, PA. The BroadReach project was built upon two existing programs that had close ties to the community's agencies and youth programs. Strong interagency agreements and alliances were in effect when the program was initiated. Primary services were provided by Perseus House, the grantee, and by the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies through a subcontract. Perseus House, a non-profit organization, provides services for youth who are at risk for becoming or already are involved in the juvenile justice system. The Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies, also a non-profit organization, provides maritime experiences to teach citizenship, discipline and teamwork, self-esteem and confidence, and craftsmanship. The center works with neighboring school districts, the Erie Catholic Diocese, all of the juvenile placement facilities in Erie County, Scout groups, and others.

Table 2h. Project Characteristics: Hartford

Grantee	Project Name	Sub-Contract for Primary Services	Partners at Project Inception	Partners for Services	Pre-Existing Conditions	Change in Partners or Roles
Capital Region Workforce Development Board (CRWDB)	Hartford Youth Access Program (HYAP)	NONE	NONE	Youth Opportunity, Hartford Health and Human Services, Hartford public schools	NONE	23 MOUs signed

Hartford, CT. From the project's conception, the Capital Region Workforce Development Board as grantee envisioned a comprehensive system for improving the integration of delivery of services to targeted youth. The central feature of this system was Hartford Connects, an internet-based database of route counseling information on youth who receive services. The program had Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with 23 local agencies that agreed to provide services to youth, with the full range of needed services encompassed by these agencies. Agencies continue to be added to the consortium. Hartford anticipates that it will take an additional five years to have all youth serving agencies in the community connected through Hartford Connects and all the agencies' staffs trained in its use and in a common approach to youth development.

Table 2i. Project Characteristics: West Palm Beach

Grantee	Project Name	Sub-Contract for Primary Services	Partners at Project Inception	Partners for Services	Pre-Existing Conditions	Change in Partners or Roles
Academy for Practical Nursing and Health Occupations (APNHO)	NONE	NONE	Probationer's Educational Growth (PEG), Palm Beach County WDB	PEG Palm Beach County WDB	APNHO was a well established trainer for health careers	PEG received its own grant funding

West Palm Beach, FL. The grantee, the Academy for Practical Nursing and Health Occupations (APNHO), works with its primary partners, Probationers Educational Growth and Palm Beach County Workforce Development Board, to identify youth for the program and then to coordinate service delivery. The youth recruited during the demonstration were preparing for entry-level positions in the health care field. APNHO has a coordinator for route counseling, instructor/case managers at the four area high schools where the program operates, and at APNHO itself, where a case manager works with students from training through placement and the initial stage of employment. While DOL funds were used to develop the infrastructure of the program, partners have raised additional funds for assessments, work readiness, support services, job placement and follow-up.

Contextual Aspects

At the demonstration's heart was the notion that system-wide coordination – brought about by developing partnerships, leveraging resources, and engendering community support – helps youth achieve positive outcomes. This notion suggested that the socio-economic and political context within which the projects operated would influence their ability to help youth achieve desired outcomes and perhaps vice versa. This understanding also was reflected in the research question posed by DOL, which became a part of the evaluation design:

What is the context of each project and how did it influence the project development and implementation?

Round One projects were initiated in 1999, a time when the United States was experiencing an unprecedented economic boom. The generally excellent national economic picture that continued well into 2001 was reflected in low unemployment and inflation rates as well as increases in worker productivity. Faced with a tight labor market, many employers were eager to find workers – both skilled and unskilled.

In spite of a strong economy, the Round One projects benefited only marginally from the economic boom. Placing project clients in jobs with long-term career potential became a difficult task for most projects in all three categories of the demonstration. The reason was that many clients were ill-prepared for the workforce, primarily because they lacked diplomas or GED certificates, had low academic skills, had debilitating personal problems, and had been offenders. As a result, the jobs that were found for many clients were in the service sector, primarily in fast food restaurants, janitorial services, and the like, which required little education or few technical skills. **Miller and MacGillivray (2001)** in the Final Evaluation Report for Round One of the demonstration noted that in the absence of a strong economy, the task of placing project clients in jobs undoubtedly would have been even more daunting.

Unfortunately, the economy facing Round Two grantees proved less robust. The projects, almost universally, operated in an environment of reduced federal and local funding, cost cutting, economic downturn, increased risk of terrorism and uncertainty surrounding the war against terror. A report issued in June 2003 by the National Governors Association and National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO), aptly summarizes the extent of budget cuts across different states, noting that state budget woes persisted from 2002 into 2003. While in fiscal year 2002, a record 37 states cut their budgets by nearly $13 billion, a comparable number of states cut their budgets by $14.5 billion in 2003, the highest dollar amount of cuts in the history of the Fiscal Survey conducted by NASBO. This compares to reductions totaling $4.5 billion during the last recession in fiscal year 1992.

The potential impact of such cuts on the demonstration was evident from the NASBO's December 2002 issue. NASBO reported a range of targeted cuts among the strategies being implemented in the states facing shortfalls. The cuts included state employee pay raises, elimination or reduced funding for lower priority programs or high priority programs (e.g., optional Medicaid services, drug treatment and rehabilitation programs for prison inmates, reduced flu vaccine stockpile, reduced pay for substitute teachers, delayed school start date, reduced support for people with developmental disabilities, closed offices, reduced state assistance to the aged, blind and disabled, and reduced programs for troubled youth).

Table 3 shows the barriers reported by the projects at the mid-point of project activity and at the time of the third evaluation visit. While some barriers were internal to the projects

(and discussed in later sections), the contextual problems of high unemployment, budget cuts and the lack of employability skills challenged the projects as well.

Table 3. Barriers Faced by Round Two Projects

	At the Time of the 2nd Site Visit	At the Time of the 3rd Site Visit
Chicago	▪ Reluctance of employers to give youth a chance; ▪ Personal challenges and unrealistic expectations of youth.	▪ Youth entering with more severe problems and requiring more intensive care; ▪ Increased serious crime and lack of affordable housing.
Cincinnati	▪ DOL data not in MIS; only client data available; ▪ Confidentiality issues limit availability and sharing of data.	▪ Non-intersecting system-level and individual-level efforts hinder service delivery; ▪ Lack of educational options for offenders.
Colorado	▪ Personal challenges and needs of youth; ▪ Lack of local-level strategy for sustaining project.	▪ Budget cuts throughout social services; ▪ Loss of employment among consortium board members; ▪ Youth needs are greater than expected.
Des Moines	▪ Few entry level jobs; ▪ Reluctance of employers to hire project participants when experienced adults are available.	▪ Insufficient local advocacy for improving opportunities for youth employment (compared to adult workers); ▪ Continuing competition for entry-level low-wage jobs.
Erie	▪ High unemployment; too few jobs available for project participants; ▪ Age of youth in project precludes job placement.	▪ Major cuts in state funding for human services; ▪ High unemployment; ▪ Failing school system.
Hartford	▪ Effects of implementing project late in project's tenure; ▪ Overcoming fragmented service delivery system.	▪ One-Stop not youth-friendly; ▪ Major budget cuts at state and local levels, particularly in education; ▪ Significant increase in youth crime and gang involvement.
New York	▪ Special needs of project youth; ▪ Low job retention among youth.	▪ High unemployment and homelessness; ▪ Budget cuts in state and city services; ▪ Increased problems of incoming youth beyond expectations or previous experience.
Pittsburgh	▪ High unemployment; ▪ Lack of resources for case managers; ▪ High workload of project coordinator.	▪ Bleak economic and employment environment; ▪ Resurgence of crime and violence in the community.
W. Palm Beach	▪ Difficulty recruiting employers outside of health care industry.	▪ Identification of employers outside of health care industry; ▪ Restrictive nature of WIA list of Targeted Occupations reflecting lack of understanding of the importance of getting youth in training programs and jobs, even low-paying, not health-related, jobs.

Effects on Projects. Due to budget cuts and a weak job market, many projects found it difficult to garner support from employers to provide opportunities for youth employment. For example, **Erie** County and the City of Erie were in an economic transition. Many factory jobs were eliminated as large plants closed. Much of the inner

city contained the empty buildings where workers and jobs used to be. Like other states, there had been dramatic cuts in state funds for health, education, and other human services. While federal funds had replaced reduced state funds in the latest budget cycle, the long-term availability of adequate resources was questionable. Another example of a weak economy was found in **Colorado.** Denver's economy had been hit hard in the current recession, and some counties, such as Adams County, were particularly hard hit because they were essentially bedroom communities for the city. The more rural counties had even fewer resources to support unemployed residents than Denver and the counties closer to it.

The unemployment situation faced by **Pittsburgh's** BluePrint project reflected a more general trend that was characteristic of tough economic times. Area unemployment rates tended to be about the same or below the nationwide rate: in August 2003, the city had a 5.3% unemployment rate, and the rate in Allegheny County was 5.1%, compared with a national rate of 6.1%. Jobs continued to be lost and unemployment rates declined because large numbers of people had stopped looking for work. The unemployment rates and numbers of discouraged workers who were not counted in the unemployment equation were undoubtedly higher among the project's target group. Employment opportunities for project youth also were limited by the relatively large pool of older and more skilled workers – generally without criminal records – available for employment.

Apart from the economic downturn, some projects faced a tough social environment with respect to problems with the educational system and increased levels of crime. For example, **Pittsburgh** had faced a growing gang problem since 1991 when the mayor and chief of police for the public schools declared the city had no gang problem at all. In 1997, 52 gang members were prosecuted and convicted under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act. After many of them were released from prison, beginning in 2002, the community saw a resurgence of drug- and gang-related violence. In August 2003 alone, there were 18 homicides reported in the city – most involving youth or young adults in the target area. Youth already participating in BluePrint, as well as others the project has tried to recruit, were directly and indirectly affected by the climate of violence: one BluePrint participant was slain in August and others came to the project after their friends were killed.

In the case of education, **Hartford's** project faced a deeply ingrained challenge. The general perception of those with whom evaluators met during their initial site visit was that persons economically able to exercise choice flee the city when their children reach adolescence, largely due to the poor reputation of the Hartford school system. The public school dropout rate was estimated at more than 50%. According to one staff member, fewer than 40% of youth who enroll in ninth grade graduate from high school in Hartford Public Schools.

Erie's project faced a slightly different challenge. Eighty percent of all Northwest Pennsylvania regional employers required technical training beyond a high school diploma or GED. However, 26% of Erie adults had not completed their high school education and only 13% had college or graduate degrees. Student academic performance

as measured by state achievement tests was in the bottom quartile, and takeover of the school district by the state was being considered in fall 2003.

In summary, Round Two projects faced a tough economic and social environment that made implementation of project plans an even a bigger challenge than what may have seemed the case in the beginning of the demonstration. Subsequent sections of the Final Report describe the projects' success with service delivery, use of the Public Management Model, and achievement of outcomes. The reader of the report should bear in mind the difficult environmental conditions within which the projects operated.

Project-level Characteristics

This part of Section II describes <u>characteristics of the projects</u> and <u>characteristics of youth</u> at the project-level. Project characteristics include the nature of the partners, sub-contractors, and the prevalence of pre-existing partnerships – factors that the projects have some control over and that were expected to affect project implementation. Youth characteristics include enrollment rates, age, offender status, gender, race and ethnicity, and education.

Nature of Grantee

Grantees varied considerably in terms of their organizational type: one was a justice agency; others were workforce agencies; while still others were community-based organizations (CBOs). Grantees included states, counties, municipalities and non-governmental agencies. The geographic areas served by the projects also varied. Some targeted areas were counties; others were cities or a few neighborhoods within a city.

Of the nine Round Two projects, four grantees were affiliated with the workforce development system. In **Chicago, Cincinnati,** and **Hartford,** grantees were workforce development boards or agencies. In **Des Moines,** the grantee was the region's One-Stop Center operator and WIA Title I Adult Program provider. The other grantees were not-for-profit organizations: Perseus House in **Erie,** YouthWorks, Inc. in **Pittsburgh,** and Friends of Island Academy in **New York.**

At least two of the nine projects, **West Palm Beach and Pittsburgh,** adopted the approach of entering into a partnership from the beginning when potential grantees submitted a proposal in response to DOL's SGA for the demonstration. At the time of the first site visits, evaluators observed that six of the nine grantees had entered into a relationship with sub-contractors either to carry out day-to-day operations or for service delivery: **Chicago, Cincinnati, Colorado, Des Moines, Erie,** and **Pittsburgh.**

At least three of the nine projects had the advantage of pre-existing partnerships and/or infrastructures to deliver youth-related services. These were **Colorado, Erie,** and **New York.** The **Hartford** and the **Cincinnati** projects had to build relationships and

infrastructure and **West Palm Beach** had to adapt its existing structure to fit the needs of the target youth.

The following tables, graphs, and descriptions report the aggregate characteristics of the youth. Evaluators developed a profile of youth served by the Round Two projects at the aggregate level using quarterly report data submitted by the grantees. The data reported are drawn from reports of the cumulative data submitted as of December 31, 2003.

Table 4. Characteristics of Youth Enrolled in Round Two

Category	Characteristic	Total
Enrolled	Enrolled	1,852
Age	14-17	834
	18-24	1,023
Status	Youth-at-Risk	402
	Youth Offender	1,450
Gender	Male	1,388
	Female	470
Race	White	257
	Black	1,122
	Hispanic	399
	Native American	6
	Asian	7
	Multiracial	44
	Other	17
School	In-School	1,099
	Out-of-School	794

The numbers in Table 4 exclude **New York's** at-risk population, because this grantee reported data that included at-risk youth who were not officially enrolled in the project and had not received any services through the DOL grant funds, except violence prevention presentations.
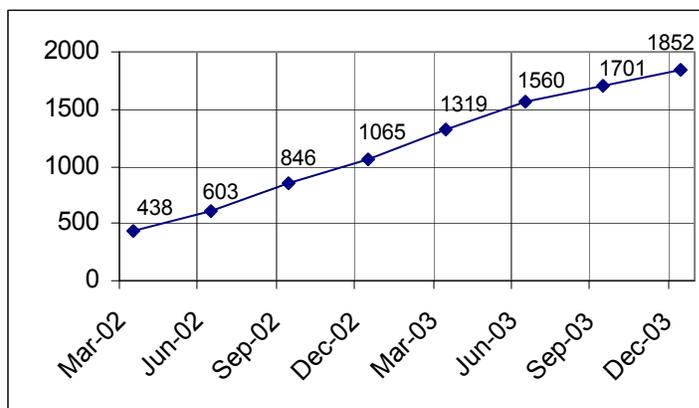
Figure 1. Total Youth Enrolled by Quarter

In March 2002, 438 youth were enrolled in the Round Two projects, and there was a steady increase in enrollment each quarter. Overall, as of December 31, 2003, there were 1,852 youth enrolled across all nine Round Two projects. The graph in Figure 1 presents data beginning in March 31, 2002, since it was the first quarter during which projects started reporting enrollment data.

Youth Characteristics

The tables, charts and graphs provided in this sub-section give an overview of youths' characteristics, such as their demographic profile, as well as their offender status. The data are not intended to compare projects, but to illustrate the diversity of the youth served. Table 5 summarizes these characteristics, and the following paragraphs describe each feature.

Table 5. Project Characteristics

Project	Number Youth Enrolled	Age	Status	Gender	Ethnicity	In School*	Out of School*
Chicago	192	63% 14-17	55% Offenders	67% Male	72% Black	72%	26%
New York	641	76% 18-24	100% Offenders	85% Male	68% Black	55%	45%
Pittsburgh	147	54% 18-24	82% Offenders	77% Male	90% Black	55%	43%
Colorado	215	59% 18-24	100% Offenders	100% Male	39% White 36% Hispanic	62%	72%
Cincinnati	107	55% 18-24	100% Offenders	77% Male	80% Black	45%	55%
Des Moines	99	60% 18-24	66% Offenders	69% Male	80% Black	27%**	55%**
Erie	159	90% 14-17	59% at-Risk	70% Male	64% White	88%**	6%**
Hartford	189	62% 14-17	57% at-Risk	61% Male	49% Black 40% Hispanic	62%	38%
West Palm Beach	103	51% 14-17	53% at Risk	92% Female	82% Black	59%	41%

* In-school and out of school data elements reflect status during the project period. One youth can be counted in both if he/she was in school at one point and out-of-school at some other time.

** Projects did not report school status or counted youth only if status changed. For example, if youth were not in school to begin with then they were not counted at all.

Total Number of Youth Enrolled. The total number of youth enrolled by December 31, 2003 was 1,852. The number of youth enrolled in different projects ranged from a low of 99 (**Des Moines**) to a high of 641(**New York)**.

Interpretation of enrollment numbers here requires caution. Most project databases did not differentiate between youth currently enrolled and active and those no longer actively involved. As a result, enrollment numbers may not reflect the actual number of active youth in the projects.

Youth by Age. Of all the youth enrolled, 55% in the Round Two projects were older youth who fell into the 18-24 age group and 45% were younger youth who fell into the 14-17 age group (See Figure 2). This pattern differs from that found for Round One projects where 44% were older youth and 56% were younger youth.
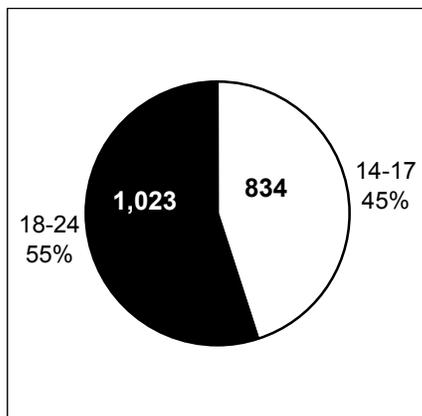
Figure 2. Enrolled Youth by Age Group
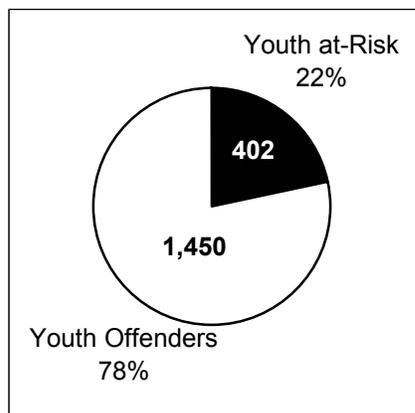
Figure 3. Enrolled Youth by Offender Status

Among the individual projects, **Pittsburgh**, **West Palm Beach, Cincinnati, Des Moines,** and **Colorado** had a fairly equal distribution of youth aged 14-17 years and older youth (18-24). **New York** enrolled primarily older youth (18-24 years) and **Chicago, Erie,** and **Hartford** enrolled a larger proportion of 14 to 17-year olds than older youth.

Youth by Offender Status. A high percentage of youth enrolled across all nine projects were offenders (78%) while the remaining youth were youth at-risk of court or gang involvement (See Figure 3). Three out of nine projects served 100% offenders as a result of their direct relationship with correctional facilities. Round One projects enrolled fewer offenders; 64% of all enrolled youth were offenders.

Four out of nine projects served a high percentage of the youth offender population with **New York, Colorado** and **Cincinnati** serving 100% offenders. **Colorado** served offenders from a juvenile correctional facility. Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center (LMYSC), the target facility, was the most secure facility for young males in the Division of Youth Corrections system, and received youth from throughout the state. In the case of **New York,** the Friends of Island Academy (FOIA), the grantee, was a non-profit organization that provided mentoring and employment assistance primarily to youth leaving four youth correctional facilities on Rikers Island. **Pittsburgh** served some youth at risk of court involvement, but 82% of its enrollees were offenders.

Chicago, Erie and **Hartford** served a higher percentage of youth at risk of court or gang involvement rather than youth offenders. The higher number in **Chicago** reflects the intentional decision a few months into the project on the part of the Goodwill Industries (the subcontractor) to use the Round Two grant for younger youth who were less likely to be involved with the justice system. Toward the end of the grant period, Chicago went back to serving youth along the whole age range.

Gender: Figure 4 shows that about 75% of all project youth were males and 25% were females. These percentages reflect the fact that all projects except **West Palm Beach** enrolled a considerably higher proportion of males than females. Round One projects also displayed this pattern, with 72% of all enrolled youth being male. **New York** (85%), **Cincinnati** (77%), **Pittsburgh** (77%) and **Colorado** (100%) enrolled over 70% male enrollees. Only **West Palm Beach** had more females than males (92%). The grantee's central focus for service delivery was on training youth for jobs in the health care field, which attracted females.
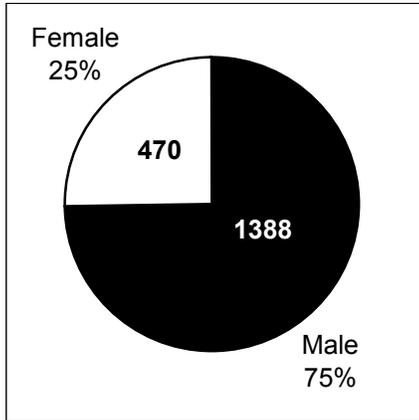
Figure 4. Enrolled Youth by Gender
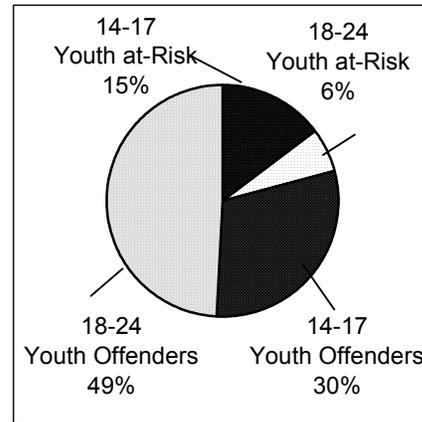
Figure 5. Offender Status by Age Group

Youth Age by Offender Status. Figure 5 shows the combination of youth age and their status as offenders or as youth at risk of court involvement. A higher percentage of both older and younger youth enrolled in the projects were offenders (49% and 30% respectively). Given the targeting of youth offenders by the Demonstration, this high proportion of youth offenders is not surprising.

Ethnicity. Figure 6 shows that black[1] youth constituted the majority (61%) of project participants, followed by Hispanics (22%) and then whites (14%). In Round One projects, 42% of youth were black while the percentage for whites and Hispanics were almost equal (about 21% for each group).

Six out of nine projects had a majority of black youth. These projects were: **Chicago, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, New York, Des Moines,** and **West**
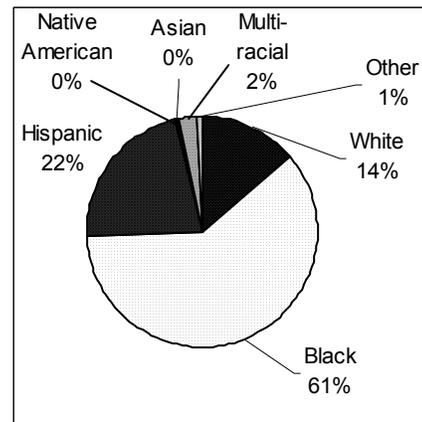
Figure 6. Racial Background/Ethnicity

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[1] The term black is preferred in the context of the demonstratic   Caribbean, as well as African American youth.

Palm Beach (percentages ranged from 90% in Pittsburgh to 68% in New York). In **Erie** there were more youth who reported "white" as their race/ethnicity (64%) while **Hartford** had enrolled 49% black youth and 40 % Hispanic youth. [See Table 5 page 35.]

School Status. At an aggregate level, there was a higher percentage of youth enrolled in school at some time during the project (58%) as compared to the number of those who were out of school (42%) at some time during the project (See Figure 7). This figure portrays school status over the period of grant. Projects could report at one point that a youth was out of school, and then report later that the youth returned to school, so there may be some double reporting.

Considering only the 14-17 age group, it is interesting to note that a substantially higher percentage of these youth (75%) were in school (see Figure 8). These data are consistent with the expectation that younger youth in the demonstration would still be in school. Although older youth would not necessarily be in a traditional school setting (e.g., high
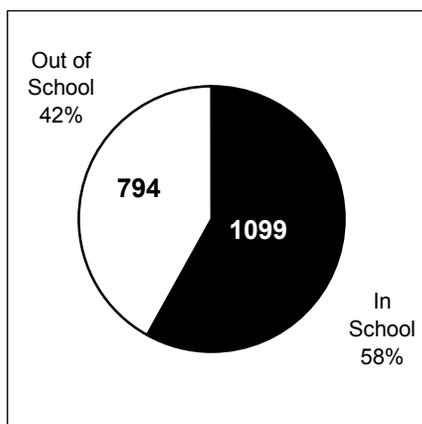
Figure 7. School Status
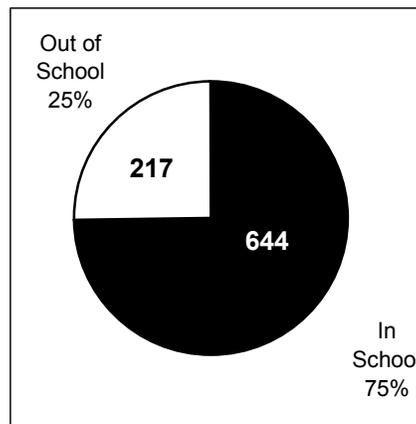
Figure 8. School Status for the 14-17 Age Group

school), a substantial proportion of them (44%) did participate in educational activities such as GED preparation, occupational training programs, etc. (See Figure 9).

Projects in **Chicago** and **Erie** had the highest percentage of in-school youth (72% and 88% respectively). (See Table 5.) Both projects primarily served younger youth (63% and 90% respectively) who were more likely to be in school. **Cincinnati** and **Des Moines** had the lowest percentage of in-school youth (45% and 27% respectively).
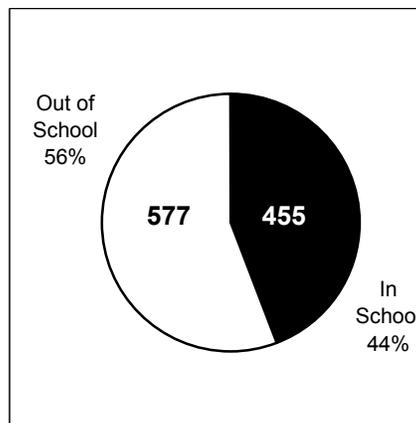
Figure 9. Educational Status for 18-24 Age Group

Projects in **Colorado, Cincinnati** and **Des Moines** had the highest percentage of youth who were out of school (72%, 55%, and 55%, respectively). (see Table 5) The numbers reported for in-school youth and out-of-school youth do not always add up to 100%. A particular youth may be counted twice if he/she was in school and then dropped out during the project period or vice versa.

Recruitment and Retention. Round Two projects differed substantially from each other with respect to strategies adopted for recruiting youth into the projects. One meaningful way to document these different strategies was to understand and compare what the projects had expected to do as articulated in their initial plans and what they actually did. The evaluation team observed that while some projects remained consistent with their initial plans, others had to change their strategies mid-stream.

Projects in **Erie** and **Cincinnati,** for example, deviated from their initial plans. In Erie, the initial plan was to recruit youth from existing Perseus House programs. These included residential programs for court-ordered youth, community-based programs for court-ordered youth, and the Erie City School's Alternative Education program housed at Perseus House. During the first year, the project found it difficult to retain youth from these programs. The youth participated on a voluntary basis. A second plan was developed and implemented in the second year that increased the number of organizations from which referrals were sought. Also, project staff arranged with the WIB to pay youth $3.25 per hour for participating in the 8-week Bayfront program. The two strategies helped the project recruit and retain sufficient numbers of youth and to expand the program to more of the community's youth.

The project in **Cincinnati** had difficulty keeping with the initial plan for two main reasons. First, because of its emphasis on starting with capacity building, the project did not start recruiting youth until about October 2002. Of those recruited, about half were youth whose "service start date" was before October 2002. That is, they enrolled in WIA and were later counted as project youth even though they were unaware that they were enrolled in a separate program and received no services different from what they would have received if the project did not exist. Second, the project had expected to enroll more older youth, but the eligibility documentation requirements made it especially hard to enroll them. Often parents and others, such as a girlfriend or boyfriend the youth was living with, were reluctant to provide documentation of their incomes. Documentation requirements also kept the project from starting to work with younger youth while they were incarcerated because they had difficulty getting information from parents to support the youth's eligibility.

On the other hand, projects in **Pittsburgh** and **Des Moines** were good examples of showing consistency with their project plans. In Pittsburgh, both the number of youth served and their demographic profile were in line with what the project planned, primarily black male offenders.

Des Moines provided an interesting example of consistency. The initial project plan called for recruitment of an average of 10 youth per quarter, or 40 per year. Each person was expected to be in the program at least two years and thus the project expected to have served approximately 80 clients by the end of the first two years of the grant. Project staff indicated at the first site visit that they intended to start with a small number of clients to evaluate an initial group as the clients move through the process, and make refinements before a large number entered the program. Project staff were concerned that they not "oversell" the program at the beginning, and believed that there would be more than sufficient referrals from community partners to meet the goal of 10 clients per quarter. The project retained that steady approach to recruitment throughout the grant, eventually enrolling 99 youth.

The evaluation team also observed patterns in the methods adopted for recruiting youth across the nine Round Two projects. For some projects, referrals of youth came from their relationship with the justice system. For example, in the **Chicago** project, 90% of the referrals came from the parole officers. Similarly, in **Pittsburgh,** probation officers and judges were increasingly aware of the project as a valuable resource and made formal and informal referrals to the project. In the case of the projects in **New York** and **Colorado,** youth were directly recruited from correctional facilities by virtue of the grantee's direct relationship with the facilities. For the rest of the projects, the main source of referrals of youth came from partners (**Erie, Hartford** and **Des Moines**) or the distribution of flyers, presentations, word of mouth, etc. (**West Palm Beach,** and **Cincinnati**).

The projects recognized that retaining youth with challenging personal issues was a daunting task. In spite of this difficulty, some projects tried putting appropriate retention strategies in place. As one example, at least four of the nine projects used monetary incentives to keep the youth in the program (**Colorado, New York, Erie** and **Des Moines**).

The project in **Des Moines** was an interesting case in point. The project developed a new approach for working with out-of-school youth that seemed to have a positive effect on retention. Youth who participated in a daily, one-hour life skills and leadership class, and then continued on directly to a 2-hour GED preparation class experienced high rates of retention and persistence towards achievement of the GED certificate. Youth were paid stipends (minimum wage) for the three hours in the morning and then received further compensation through a new arrangement with YouthBuild, or in other subsidized work experiences, in the afternoon. Project staff reported that youth had specifically said they would not have stayed in the program without the financial incentives. In addition, compensation for GED participation was paid only if the instructor certified the youth was making progress. This approach had been in effect since December 2002, and as of the third site visit in the fall of 2003, no youth had quit the program and a number of them had completed a GED, at a faster rate than had been the experience earlier in the program. For in-school youth, the project also had provided subsidized work experiences from the beginning of the demonstration, and there had been a high rate of retention in school for this group as well.

For projects in **New York** and **Pittsburgh,** retention strategies were linked to the positive project culture developed for the youth and the commitment of the project staff. In Pittsburgh, for example, the project encouraged retention by fostering youths' sense of identification with the project by bringing them to a central project space for most services and providing t-shirts and other items with the BluePrint logo. Weekend trips and in-town events also were used as incentives for active, continued participation. New York created a sense of identification with FOIA by calling participants members and providing services to members in a dedicated space. At meetings every Thursday evening, the members reported in turn on their progress and their struggles. The group affirmed their achievements and encouraged them to keep trying during difficult times.

Interestingly, **West Palm Beach** adopted a different, but unique, approach to retention. The approach reflected the central focus on training for specific jobs in the health care field. The project director believed that many youth in this target group did not want to be in a traditional academic program where there was no proven connection to a job. This was especially true for older youth who did not graduate from high school; in her experience, these youth were not interested in GED programs where it was not clear that completion would lead to a job or a career. In fact, typically many of these youth did not succeed in a traditional educational setting to begin with and did not want more of the same. She found that youth significantly improved their math and reading competencies by having to learn and use these skills in practice-oriented classes. This also developed a personal sense of success in education, thus making it more likely they would go on to a GED and further education once they entered a career. Staff found that the length of time youth had to spend in a GED program (due to relatively low grade levels in math and reading) was too discouraging. Of the health occupations for which APNHO offers training, only the LPN requires a GED or high school diploma. Project staff also found that youth in both high schools and at APNHO really needed jobs, which in turn helped keep them engaged in the occupational program because of the high likelihood of getting a job in the health care field. West Palm Beach also created a new identity for its participants by having them wear their health worker uniforms to class, a visible sign of an emerging professional identity.

Summary

Round Two projects operated in an environment of reduced federal and local funding, cost cutting, economic downturn, increased risk of terrorism and uncertainty surrounding the war against terror. Apart from these factors, some of the projects faced a tough social environment with respect to problems with the educational system and increased levels of crime.

At the project level, grantees varied considerably: some were justice agencies, others workforce development agencies, while others were community-based organizations. Grantees were states, counties, municipalities or non-governmental organizations. Some target areas were counties; others were cities or a few neighborhoods within a city.

In terms of partnerships, the **West Palm Beach** and **Pittsburgh** projects adopted the approach of entering into a partnership right from the beginning of the grant period. On the other hand, **Chicago, Erie, Des Moines** and **Cincinnati** chose to sub-contract with external agencies either to carry out day-to-day operations or for service delivery. Projects such as **Colorado** and **New York** had the advantage of building upon an already existing structure of partnerships and/or linkages for delivering youth related services while projects in **Hartford** and **Cincinnati** had to start from scratch.

Round Two projects differed substantially from one another with respect to strategies adopted for recruiting youth into the projects. While some projects remained consistent with their initial plans, others had to change their strategies mid-stream. In all, 1,852 youth were enrolled across all nine projects. Most were youth offenders, older youth, males, and black. These observations were more or less similar to what was found for Round One projects.

Finally, projects recognized that retaining youth with serious personal issues was a daunting task. In spite of this difficulty, projects made a sincere effort in putting appropriate retention strategies in place such as incentive plans, a supportive youth culture, and hiring a committed project staff.

Section III

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT MODEL (PMM)

The Public Management Model surfaced in response to a query from DOL about which projects had made good progress in implementing their goals. It developed as a lens for viewing the projects at the system-level.

Overview

About half way through Round One of the demonstration the evaluation and technical assistance teams and the DOL staff began to identify and compile promising practices they had noticed during implementation of the 14 projects. In testing a variety of service delivery strategies in a diverse set of communities, these practices formed a set of nine organizational attributes shared by the projects that were implementing a coordinated array of services most successfully.

By the end of the first round process evaluation, a more complete model that included additional components had begun to take shape. Soon after the start of the demonstration's second round in summer 2001 the model's four elements were structured into what DOL identified more formally as an "organizational footprint" for effective implementation practices, or the Public Management Model (PMM).

As indicated by Figure 10, the five components of the Public Management Model became:

- Workforce Development Services,

- Reentry Services,

- Organizational Attributes,

- Data Collection and Analysis, and

- Continuous Improvement Loop (Double-headed Arrows).
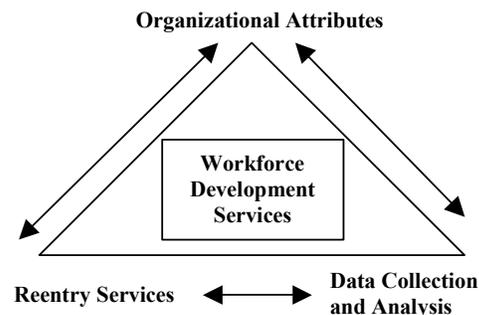
Figure 10. Public Management Model

In developing the PMM, the evaluation and TA teams and the DOL staff paid particular attention to each project's service delivery strategies as well as institutional and organizational approaches. Drawing on the work of **Nathan (1988)**, the PMM focuses attention on systems change as the first of two steps in developing knowledge of what policy changes work. First, Nathan asserts, assure that the systems are in place, and second evaluate the impacts on individuals. He goes further to say that if systems change as designed, the individuals are likely to improve on the targeted dimension (school

achievement, gaining employment, etc. This was in accordance with DOL's long-term vision for the multi-phased demonstration, which essentially was to illuminate how institutional change resulting from a continuous improvement process employed by the projects ultimately would affect individual outcomes in positive ways.

By the mid-way point in the second round projects, the evaluators, technical assistance team and DOL further refined the PMM to eliminate a few overlaps in the nine organizational attributes that resulted from expansion of the model. More specifically, the nine organizational attributes were reduced to seven. Eliminated from the attributes were "collected and maintained data," which was replaced by the Data Collection and Analysis component; and "strive for continuous improvement," which became the feedback loop resulting from the five components working together properly.

The observation of the evaluators is that:

> **When the PMM components exist together in an operating environment, the project has a greater likelihood of achieving successful implementation. Based on Nathan, successful implementation is hypothesized to lead to collaborative efforts within a community that will be sustained in such a way that the needs of youth are better met and ultimately affect them in positive ways. In effect, the project can produce change within a community's organizations and institutional structure by virtue of the means by which it continuously improves the collective, coordinated delivery of services through those partners.**

Future Uses of the PMM

After more thorough testing of the PMM, DOL hopes to progressively export the model for use by state and local workforce development organizations implementing service strategies that seek to serve youth offenders and other vulnerable youth. This assessment effort already has begun with the evaluation of the third round of projects, which continues through 2004.

At the local and state levels, this will mean that workforce development agencies that structure their work around the PMM should be better able to formulate and implement service delivery strategies for youth offenders and other vulnerable youth that respond to local needs. More specifically, the PMM will help future projects to:

- Assess the unique needs of the community;

- Identify key stakeholders and partners integral to the success of the projects;

- Map and access resources within the community; and

- Better implement an effective coordinated service strategy tailored to meet the community's specific needs.

Orientation of Projects to Model

Unlike first round projects, which were started before development of the PMM, second round projects were oriented to the organizational attributes component of the model during the post-award conference held in Arlington, VA, in October 2001. Then, in April 2002, during the second conference for grantees that was held in New Orleans, LA, Round Two grantees were re-introduced to the organizational attributes and also provided more details about the PMM, specifically the model's other components. During another conference held in Kansas City, MO, in October 2003, both second and third round grantees were briefed on the theory behind the PMM and how the model should be implemented.

During the conferences, presenters stressed the importance of using the model in the project's planning and implementation phases. In theory, they were told, projects that closely followed the model and applied a continuous improvement approach were more likely to experience successful implementation and to become sustainable than those that did not follow the model.

Why the Model is Important

The PMM is especially important for project and community leaders. One of their major tasks as leaders is to build partnerships with other service providers that can share the human resources and financial burden of meeting the service demands of high-need youth.

For Round Two projects, the PMM directed these efforts in constructive ways. At the most basic level, the model helped projects avoid many of the pitfalls that slowed down and discouraged other projects during the demonstration's first round. For the technical assistance team, the model served as a framework for identifying project strengths and challenges. As a result, the technical assistance team was better able to recommend options for working through barriers and arranging for expert technical assistance, customized to the specific circumstances, to address the barriers. The model also may help communities in the future to bring together resources, in the form of service providers, to better serve the needs of their youth.

The demonstration's first round appeared to show that youth were best served when projects provided an integrated approach to meeting each youth's individual needs, rather than providing services in a piecemeal or lock-step fashion. Thus, evaluators concluded from observations of Round One that projects that did not exhibit a preponderance of the nine organizational attributes were less likely to experience successful implementation. Community leaders and staff of projects that never implemented their designs were likely

to become discouraged in their efforts to serve the youth while successful implementation implied a more efficient and effective use of existing community resources in meeting youth's needs.

At the same time, and because the model stresses the importance of collaboration among service providers, it appears that service delivery approaches are more effective when youth are served in a holistic manner. This approach should increase the likelihood that the youth will progress toward employability and refrain from destructive behavior.

Focusing attention on cross-agency approaches to serving youth raises the appreciation of community leaders on the importance and difficulty of building an interagency/inter-organizational system of services. Developing this understanding will be key, especially if agencies and community organizations hope to attempt to replicate the demonstration in their communities after DOL grant funds end – and without an influx of additional grant funds.

We now introduce each element of the PMM. The discussion focuses on Workforce Development Services; Reentry Services; Seven Organizational Attributes, Data Collection and Analysis; and the Continuous Improvement Loop. More complete discussion of services is found in Section IV; the attributes and data collection and analysis are discussed in Section V; and technical assistance and the continuous improvement loop are described in Section VI.

1. Workforce Development Services

At the center of the graphic are the basic services available to all citizens through the workforce development system established under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. The services include:

- Work readiness information and training,

- Job placement,

- Job retention, and

- Supports to reduce the barriers to employment (transportation and child care costs, for example).

Each One-Stop center located in communities across the nation is also able to provide eligible youth with intensive services, such as literacy classes, work experience and internships, occupational training, and counseling. The Youth Offender Demonstration Project allowed all target youth to receive these intensive services for the duration of the grant.

2. Reentry Services

On the left-hand corner of the graphic are reentry services. These usually are defined as:

- Gang prevention and suppression activities,

- Alternative sentencing for offenders,

- Aftercare, and

- Route counseling (case management).

These services are typically offered by the justice system while the youth remains on probation or parole. The demonstration projects tended to support the youth in meeting obligations, such as making sure a youth was home by curfew after an event or by assisting a youth with finding ways to meet restitution requirements.

Workforce development and reentry services are discussed further in Section IV.

3. Organizational Attributes

While the services just presented explain *what* the nature of the demonstration was, the organizational attributes describe *how* the successfully implemented projects managed the demonstration. At the apex of the triangle in the graphic are the seven attributes of successfully implemented projects:

1. **A well-conceived plan.** Successfully implemented projects had or developed a plan with a clear and focused vision, where goals and objectives were realistic and measurable, and involved major stakeholders, including youth and families.

2. **Pre-existing experience between the workforce development, justice and health care systems.** Projects moved toward integrating multiple services for youth if the grantee had developed good working relationships with the other systems. While experience among all three was important, previous experience between the workforce development and justice systems was essential for implementing the Youth Offender Demonstration Project within its short time frame.

3. **A strong community support network.** These projects developed good relationships with the community, including the faith community, other non-profits, Chambers of Commerce, and most importantly employers willing to employ youth, especially youth offenders.

4. **Strong grantee involvement.** It was important for the grantee to be actively involved with the project, even if the project operations were contracted out to one or several service providers in the community.

5. **Linkages among the workforce development, justice, health, housing and other major youth service providing organizations and services.** Successfully implemented projects recognized that the grantee did not have the expertise to meet all the needs of youth itself and built partnerships throughout the community for education, health, housing, mental health, and substance abuse services.

6. **The ability to leverage resources.** Further, grantees leveraged resources for these services through partnerships and collaborations. Such partnerships that leveraged resources were a key to any community's dream of continuing on-going comprehensive services to troubled youth.

7. **Shared information and leadership.** A major dimension of the continuous improvement effort was a growing openness to share information and leadership in the process of serving the youth.

A more complete discussion of each attribute follows in Section V.

4. Data Collection and Analysis

The fourth element of the Public Management Model is use of project data, which is found on the PMM schematic at the right angle of the triangle. An important realization during the demonstration was that projects were easier to keep on track when a good data reporting system alerted everyone involved in the project of the project's status. In addition, data drove the continuous improvement process that allowed cross-agency service providers to recognize gaps in service or in youth recruitment and retention efforts. This component of the PMM is discussed further in Section V.

5. Continuous Improvement

The dynamic of the Public Management Model is the continuous improvement loop. **Nathan's (1988)** assumption is that attention to systems improvement gradually improves the circumstances of the individual persons being served. The focus is on the services to be implemented and coordinated; the organizational attributes are features of the service project that assist in the effective delivery. The approach is monitored through data collection and analysis that lead to improvements in the delivery and coordination of services.

The technical assistance offered by the Department of Labor is described in Section VI in conjunction with the continuous improvement loop because its goal was to assist projects in making the changes needed to address the needs of the youth. Communities attempting to implement a coordinated service delivery system will likely have to offer local resources to assist project staff over hurdles similar to those demonstration projects addressed in implementing the demonstration.

Working from the systems perspective means that the links between systems change and individual benefit cannot be viewed during an implementation study, but an outcomes study performed after an implementation study will shed light on these linkages. Such an outcomes study is underway during the third phase of the demonstration evaluation.

Summary

This section introduced the Public Management Model, a way of viewing and organizing a coordinated service delivery project with the goal of placing youth offenders and youth at risk of gang and court involvement in employment that will break the cycle of crime and dependency. The discussion addressed the reasons a community would attend to the system-level issues in implementing such a project, and each element of the PMM was described briefly. The following three sections analyze the projects using the components of the PMM. The next section will discuss the services; Section V will describe the attributes and the data collection and analysis; and Section VI will review the technical assistance and the continuous improvement loop.

Section IV

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT MODEL: SERVICES AND SERVICE DELIVERY MECHANISMS

Overview

The Public Management Model discussed in Section III listed all the demonstration services intended for project youth under the rubrics of workforce or reentry services. The core of the demonstration is finding better ways to offer workforce and reentry services to the target population. A finding of the Round One projects was that the services typically identified as workforce or reentry were not sufficient to meet the myriad needs of some project youth. Staff and administrators offered other services, and the projects tended to characterize these services by the agency that offered them. Services provided could, therefore, be categorized differently at the project level. For the purposes of this report, services are discussed by the categories of workforce services, reentry services, commonly shared services, and support services (See Table 6 on page 53). The primary workforce services were:

- **Work/Job Readiness** – teaching workplace skills in classes, vocational certification classes, leadership classes, and job shadowing;

- **Job Placement** – Activities to assist youth in learning about and exploring work opportunities, making appointments for interviews, and making the transition to a job; and

- **Job Retention** – Follow-up activities with the employed youth and his/her employer to work through concerns that threaten the youth's ability to retain the job.

Reentry services, as the term is used in the justice literature, categorizes the services and activities used to assist youth transitioning back to a community from detention or incarceration. In the context of the demonstration some reentry services have been offered to youth who have not been convicted or adjudicated. The reentry services at least include:

- **Anti-gang activity** – Both direct efforts to reduce violence in a neighborhood and indirect efforts to provide wholesome activities to engage the youth as a substitute for gang activity;

- **Alternative sentencing** – Community activities and special restrictions (like curfew) assigned to a youth convicted of a crime in lieu of assignment to residential confinement;
- **Aftercare** – Activities and services assigned to a youth in an environment of graduated sanctions, both positive and negative, which are designed to have

the youth accept greater responsibility for her/his behavior as her/his behavior improves.

There are some services that are sometimes referred to as reentry services and sometimes as part of workforce development services. Their commonly shared services include:

- **Assessments** – Screenings or careful analyses of youth attitudes, knowledge and behavior that are used to tailor program components to a youth's individual needs;

- **Academic education** – Basic literacy, pre-GED, GED, high school, or college classes that are part of the individualized work readiness or aftercare plans for a youth;

- **Vocational education** – Specific preparation for an occupation or industry, including practical experience, which can be part of the individualized work readiness or aftercare plan for a youth; and

- **Route counseling** – Assistance in realizing one's individualized case plan through the workforce development and/or the justice systems. Youth offenders in the demonstration typically had both a parole/probation officer and a workforce development specialist supporting youth in his/her plan.

As the projects gained experience in the complexity of issues youth brought to the projects, staff integrated other services into the program that some youth in the project were likely to need. These were provided through the workforce or the justice systems, and often partners to these systems supplied them. Such support services include:

- **Substance abuse interventions** – A majority of the youth in the projects have experienced problems with alcohol or other drugs in their own lives or in their families;

- **Mental health** – Recent research is uncovering an alarming degree of diagnosable mental health issues among incarcerated youth, particularly depression and the effects of abuse. Many demonstration youth experienced these issues;

- **Health** – Some projects assess health as part of the orientation; health issues surface for others as youth miss activities for health reasons;

- **Housing** – While rare, the youth who lacks a regular, fixed, adequate nighttime residence presents overwhelming needs to a project. Projects have needed to find partners who can support youth through the process of finding such residence before either school or work patterns stabilize; and

- **Recreation** – Projects provide either episodic events, like trips to an amusement park, or regular opportunities for fun such as sports leagues.

Much of the literature reviewed earlier in this report notes the importance of having each youth connected to a caring adult. Some projects attempted formal mentoring as a response. This was not a required element of the demonstration however, so the evaluators found that projects had not kept comparable records from which they could comment.

Assessments and Service Plans

If projects had not learned it on their own, Round Two projects learned from Round One projects that they needed to design individual strategies for serving project youth. In an attempt to customize service delivery to youth participants, almost all projects used an individual service strategy that also incorporated a youth's input. At the core of this plan was the assessment system that screened the youth for past history or continuing signs of mental, physical, behavioral or social problems. (See Table 6.)

Table 6. Types of Assessments

	Education	Risk	Substance Abuse	Mental Health	Other
Chicago	▪	▪	▪	▪	Health and Finances
Cincinnati	▪			▪	Health, Living Situation, Readiness, Job Skills
Colorado	▪	▪	▪	▪	Vocational Rehabilitation
Des Moines			▪	▪	Health
Erie	▪	▪	▪	▪	Health, Family, Employment, Readiness
Hartford	▪				Life Skills, Vocational Assessments
New York	▪	▪	▪	▪	Health, GED Predictor
Pittsburgh	▪		▪	▪	Employment, Social/ Personal Skills
West Palm Beach	▪			▪	Physical Health, Aptitude, Family Health, Learning Style

Assessments also were used to help identify service needs. In this regard, most projects had a comprehensive system for assessments that looked at issues involving education, risk, substance abuse, and mental health. All projects either made assessments themselves or used the assessments made by a partner agency: school district, justice agency, or another human service agency. The specific domains of assessments offered are reported in Table 6.

<p style="text-align: center;">**Table 7. Services Offered by Round Two Projects**</p>

		Chicago	Cincinnati	Colorado	Des Moines	Erie	Hartford	New York	Pittsburgh	W. Palm Beach
Workforce Services	Job Placement	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	Job Retention	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■
	Work Ready	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Reentry Services	Aftercare			■			■			
	Alternative Sentence						■	■	■	■
	Anti-gang	■		■			■	■	■	■
	Community Service	■			■		■	■		■
Services Commonly Offered Through Multiple Agencies	Assessments	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	Education Academic	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	Education Vocational	■		■	■	■	■		■	■
	Route Counseling	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Support Services	Health	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■
	Housing	■	■	■		■	■	■		■
	Mental Health	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
	Substance Abuse	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

■ Indicates presence of specific service provided by the grantee or partner through DOL or leveraged funds.

Once the project and youth completed the individual service plan (ISP), the youth either received services directly from the grantee or was referred out to a partnering agency. Table 7 also reports all the services available to youth through the project. Because the service plans were individualized, however, youth might not have received all services accessible through the project. For example, youth in **Chicago** were typically in the 14-to-17-age range; so many of them did not receive job placement or retention services. In the **Colorado** project youth were all over 18 by the time they left LMYSC; they had either earned a diploma or a GED before release or they were judged unlikely to ever earn high school equivalency. They received job placement and retention services after release, but few educational services. (Also see Appendix E for a more complete description of services offered by each project.)

Some youth resisted referrals to some services. Some projects had particular problems getting youth to attend mental health counseling or substance abuse treatment and maintenance services. **New York** had an in-house psychological counselor available on site where she could connect informally with youth who were struggling with mental health issues. **Pittsburgh,** however, brought counselors into the project location from the Western Psychiatric Institute; yet the youth resisted attending appointments with the counselor. **Colorado** had reinforcement from parole officers while the youth remained on parole, but staff found it hard to keep youth attending therapeutic services when they

were released from parole supervision. The Colorado workforce specialists found that some youth stopped taking medication once they were released as well.

We turn now to reviewing the services each project offered youth and the mechanisms that projects used to coordinate those services for individual youth.

Workforce Development Services

Preparing a youth for work varied in format, duration, and intensity (See Table 8). **Des Moines** incorporated work readiness into the first hour of the GED school day; **Colorado** incorporated a one-half hour session twice a month into its GED class at Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center (LMYSC). Just before release from LMYSC, workforce specialists, who would help youth find employment after release, led the young men through a week-long five and one-half hour a day program. These workforce specialists developed the "Striving Toward Employment and Personal Success" (STEPS) work readiness curriculum during the DOL grant, revamping it as they gained more experience with what did and did not work in
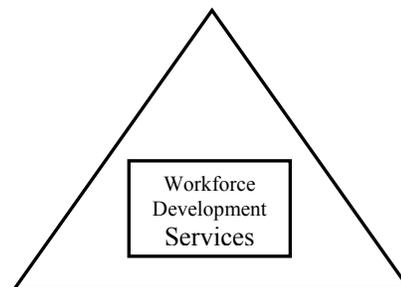
Table 8. Work Readiness Training Program Intensity and Duration by Project

Project	Intensity	Duration
Chicago	Periodic workshops.	Periodic workshops (Latino Youth) or a 2-week class (Y.E.S.) for older youth.
Cincinnati	There are six providers; intensity varies.	There are six providers; duration varies.
Colorado	In LMYSC: ½ hour, two times a month. Just before release: five and ½ hours per day for a week.	Entire semester through the Metro Lab School; STEPS using workforce specialists for a week before release. Additional assistance also offered at the workforce centers as needed after release.
Des Moines	Every morning for an hour.	Until the youth finishes a GED.
Erie	One-two hours per day.	Eight weeks; also a program through the Boy Scouts.
Hartford	Just being implemented.	N.A.
New York City	Two hours per day scheduled in morning and afternoon.	One to four weeks or until the youth is placed.
Pittsburgh	One 7-hour session with one-to-one follow-up for those that need more.	Daylong workshop.
West Palm Beach	90 hours.	Built into the clinical experience explicitly as work readiness with an emphasis on the health professions.

helping youth find jobs. **West Palm Beach** made work readiness an element of its clinical training curriculum, and it gave 90 hours to it during the clinical training. **New York** focused its work readiness on those with the lowest skills—those least likely to complete a GED. The curriculum emphasized the basics of completing applications, preparing a resume, and conducting an interview. The length of work readiness depended on the needs of the youth. Youth who were more likely to complete their schooling were encouraged to attend education classes until they had the GED; they usually had fewer problems preparing for and finding work.

Job placement and retention efforts were offered to some extent by all the projects, but staffs emphasized preparing youth for work more than helping youth keep jobs. Several projects learned through the grant period that youth needed more support during the early months of job placement than they were receiving, but they often did not have the resources remaining to allocate to this task.

The technical assistance team arranged a conference call on developing an employer network about mid-way during the project, but it was not until the end of the project period that grantees realized how intractable the job retention problem remained. The technical assistance team arranged a second conference call to address this problem and developed a Fact Sheet to summarize the key strategies. (See Appendix F for the Fact sheet.)

New York offered youth the services of a retention specialist. She contacted employers and visited employment locations. She believed that she was able to work with employers and youth employees to resolve issues before youth quit or were fired. Once DOL funding was depleted, the project retrenched to protect the educational and work readiness services. The retention specialist was able to detect the effect of not having time for retention, but she believed that the changes made to the work readiness training after her experience with retention helped more youth remain employed – even without special interventions.

The **Colorado** project was designed to provide job placement and retention services to the young men at LMYSC after their release. Most of the men had a GED or diploma and had had an intensive work readiness experience at LMYSC; yet the workforce specialists needed to work both with the youth and the employers to keep youth employed. **Pittsburgh** youth typically found jobs in entry-level retail positions, and the project provided case managers to follow-up with the youth for a year. **West Palm Beach** also maintained contact with the primary employer of its graduates. **Des Moines** did not have a retention specialist, but case workers believed that youth would come to them if they needed child care, transportation, or faced other threats to their job status. **Chicago** and **Erie** provided few employment retention services because their clients were younger youth. Staff at Goodwill in **Chicago** had, however, developed an employer network and had broad experience in matching first-time workers with jobs. **Hartford** was just beginning to offer job placement and retention services while **Cincinnati** depended on six providers; each had its own service pattern and length of follow-up.

Reentry Services

Table 6 on page 53 reports which reentry services each project offered. The services reflected each project's design.

Notice, for example, that alternative sentencing is not offered in **Colorado** because all the young men were adjudicated and incarcerated when they entered the project. Similarly, youth in the **Pittsburgh** project generally were former offenders, but some judges asked the project to take youth they believed would

Reentry Services

not benefit from incarceration. **Erie** tended to get youth into the program after they fulfilled their alternative sentencing obligations. **Des Moines** accepted youth who were given alternative sentencing. Staff supported youth with such activities as going with them for court appointments, rather than offering alternative sentencing services directly. **New York City** instituted an alternative sentencing component with DOL funds, but it was cut as part of the retrenchment mentioned earlier. The project and Judge Corriero, an advocate of reducing the number of youth incarcerations, thought that the example of the demonstration would attract local funds to continue an alternative sentencing program. With city budget cuts, however, there were no funds for alternative sentencing. (See Appendix E for more detail on reentry services offered project-by-project.)
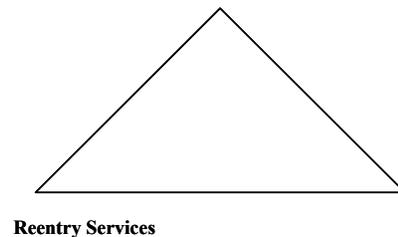
Few of the projects offered aftercare services with DOL funds. **Chicago, Cincinnati, Des Moines, Erie, New York, Pittsburgh,** and **West Palm Beach** projects supported youth who were under court supervision without actually providing any aftercare services directly. The **Colorado** project was awarded to a justice agency that provided a rich array of aftercare services. By design the project added a workforce development component to the aftercare profile. With state budget cuts, the DOL project began funding some of the mental health and substance abuse services for youth after release – services that were a part of the aftercare program initially. Although it did not offer formal aftercare services, **Erie** used the Anger Replacement Therapy (ART) with its youth, and **Colorado** referred some youth to the Gang Reduction and Support Program (GRASP). Both of these would be considered aftercare measures. The mental health counseling offered to youth by several of the projects was often instigated by an anger event, so they could also be considered aftercare in nature. Aftercare, strictly defined, refers to such services offered to returning offenders although the projects may offer them to other youth as well.

Anti-gang activities can be direct, such as offering the GRASP curriculum, or indirect, such as keeping youth occupied in activities that are alternatives to gang activities. In this latter sense, all the projects offered anti-gang activities whether they had been designed explicitly to be so or not. Creating a sense of trust among youthful clients, occupying their time with constructive activities, developing rules against wearing gang marks or colors during project activities – all mitigated the effects of gang involvement. **New York** had the youth meet as "members" every Thursday night to share their successes and struggles; **West Palm Beach** had its youth join a health occupation club – a positive,

professional association. **Colorado's** project would not allow gang insignia on grounds, and put two gang leaders through a cooperative ropes course before assigning them to work together. For some youth, the project was neutral ground where gang members could study and work together amicably, even though the hostilities emerged outside the project. **Pittsburgh** created an alternative to gang colors through the BluePrint clothing youth received.

Chicago and **Pittsburgh** had specific anti-gang activities. In **Chicago,** caseworkers attempted to build the trust of youth and help extricate them from gang activity should they want to change. **Pittsburgh** staff worked in the streets during unrest to keep as many youth as possible from getting involved. **Pittsburgh** staff asked another demonstration project to take one youth into its protection when he wanted to leave a gang, but had reason to fear for his life if he stayed in the area. **Cincinnati** helped to establish a Youth Offender and Gang Prevention Advisory Board to share information and strategies among other youth service agencies aware of the deleterious effects of gang membership on their efforts to keep youth engaged in constructive activities.

Community service was required for all participants only in **West Palm Beach,** where it was designed as a group activity that the youth enjoyed working on together. For most other projects, community service was a court requirement for certain youth, but not a specific project activity. In **Erie,** project activities qualified as community service, and stipends youth received could be applied to restitution requirements. In **Colorado,** extra-curricular efforts by the young men at LMYSC served as their community service requirement, and work stipends paid most restitution requirements before they were released. Five or six youth at Friends of Island Academy (FOIA) in **New York City** were trained each year to provide anti-gang/anti-violence presentations to junior high schools, high schools, and at public housing projects. With DOL support, FOIA members reached more than 800 youth in the city with their message.

Educational Services

Of all the services provided by the DOL grant, educational services were the most generally provided to most clients (See Table 9.). There were several reasons for this emphasis:

- A large number of youth (45% of the total or 834) were under the age of 18. Their main task was to remain in class and complete high school.

- Even those who were 18 and older needed additional schooling. Many had been unsuccessful in school; many had dropped out of school or had been suspended/expelled.

- Even some who had received GED certificates were unable to meet employers' expectations for reading or mathematics skills.

Table 9. Educational Services Offered by Projects

Project	Literacy/Pre-GED	GED/ Diploma	Post GED	Vocational Training
Chicago	Self-paced computer class for those reading under Grade 5; English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) as needed	Diploma for those enrolled in alternative high schools; GED for others	None	An arts module was available at Latino Youth
Cincinnati	Basic skills through subcontractors	Major effort of project	None	None
Colorado	Metro Lab School at LMYSC offered; none after release	Major emphasis at LMYSC	Red Rock Community College while at LMSYC; only a few aspire to go on after release	While at LMSYC: Silk screen printing, construction, culinary arts, computer assembly, horse trailer remodeling and detailing
Des Moines	Offered tutoring, but no longer has funds to continue	GED class daily until complete	Des Moines Community College	Youthbuild and Spectrum Resource Program offer construction experience to some
Erie	Broadreach does not offer, but Perseus House does for those who are also part of it	Has three computer-based training packages	None	Boat building through the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies –all day Saturday for eight weeks
Hartford	Hartford Schools	Hartford Schools	None	None
New York City	Literacy and pre-GED classes offered daily as long as needed	GED classes offered daily	A few attend CUNY	Referred to nearby training centers
Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh Board of Education Regular and Alternative Schools	Pittsburgh Public Schools/Alternative Schools; Connelley Vocational School	None	Vocational Technology School Pittsburgh Board of Education; Connelley Vocational School, Letsche Alternative School; Manufacturers 2000
West Palm Beach	English and mathematics remedial classes with pre- and post-tests	Not required to begin postsecondary health professions training	APNHO is a post-secondary training facility	Health-related occupational training with emphasis on OJT

Projects learned that finding youth employment was markedly easier if they had acquired the skills and the certification of those skills before searching for a job. **New York** is a good example. It initially intended to work only on the GED, but when staff assessed the youth, they found that some needed the most rudimentary training. Staff redesigned the educational program to provide a sequence of four levels: literacy, basic skills, pre-GED and GED classes. Youth were tested regularly and moved through the sequence at their own pace. If youth seemed unable to move through the sequence to high school equivalency, they were referred for work readiness training and directed to jobs they could accomplish with low literacy/numeracy skills.

West Palm Beach took a different tack. When youth demonstrated the competence to enter the health academy, they were offered reading and math support, but they were not asked to earn a GED before beginning health-careers training. A diploma or GED is not required to earn the certificates for some entry-level positions in health care. The focus in **Cincinnati, Des Moines** and **Colorado** was on earning the GED, and substantial resources were funneled into the GED programs there. **Chicago, Hartford,** and **Pittsburgh** put their emphasis on keeping youth in schools operated by the local school districts; many youth were in district-run alternative high schools.

At the time of the third evaluation site visit, **Erie** was redesigning its educational programs as a result of the DOL grant. The Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies and Perseus House agreed that the 8-week boat-building program did not provide sufficient time to meet the needs of the youth. Perseus House formed a charter school, and the successful elements of the Broadreach project software and activities curriculum were integrated into the new school offerings. The charter school will give more focused and consistent attention to the educational development needs of project youth.

Notice in Table 9 that a few other projects gave youth specific occupational training. Clearly, **West Palm Beach** was an exception with its focus on training for careers in the health care system**. Colorado** also offered all youth some occupational training while they were incarcerated. The young men ran a silk screening project, and they were offered instruction in culinary arts, construction, computer assembly, and horse trailer repair and detailing. (The last-named was new, but the facility is in a horse-sports area. The youth repair the vehicles and add decorative detailing as an extra.) Many youth have found work in an occupation for which they trained, especially culinary arts jobs. The project hoped to attract the interest of unions in apprenticeable occupations to begin apprenticeship training while the young men are incarcerated and continue with them after release. YouthBuild of **Des Moines** gave project youth some construction experience, but it did not admit them into formal training as part of the project.

Other Support Services

All projects offered support services. A substantial proportion of project youth needed a substance abuse intervention, and failing substance abuse tests was an occasion of job loss for some youth. Several projects reported that, no matter what they were told by staff, youth did not think marijuana use constituted using drugs. All projects except

Cincinnati and **Hartford** screened for substance use. **Cincinnati** and **Hartford** depended on partner agencies to detect substance use, although both had partners to whom youth could be referred should substance abuse services be needed. (See Table 6 on page 53 for support services provided; see Appendix E for more detail on support services.)

Assessments for mental health services were routinely made by most projects: **Chicago, Colorado, Des Moines, Erie, New York, Pittsburgh** and **West Palm Beach.** Of these, Des Moines, Erie, Pittsburgh, and West Palm Beach made referrals for services. The other projects provided the services themselves.

Few projects had occasion to provide health assessments. **Colorado** did as part of its orientation of youth to the correctional system, and **West Palm Beach** provided a health screening routinely. **West Palm Beach** uncovered untreated asthma and hypertension among its youth while **Colorado** uncovered few health problems. **New York** did not provide health screening, but the project ensured that all youth had insurance through the Children's Defense Fund effort to have all children insured. **Colorado** also arranged health insurance for youth who lacked other coverage.

Housing was an occasional, but disruptive, need for project youth. Youth without a stable, adequate, nighttime sleeping arrangement were incapable of achieving any of the other project goals: attending consistently, being on time, and making progress with studies or employment. Until this need was resolved, the other goals of the youth were unreachable. **Des Moines** had no provider for housing; other projects had referral sources. In general however, communities did not have many available places suitable for youth, so most did not have secure arrangements they could count on.

Coordinating Mechanisms

A major demonstration goal was identifying effective mechanisms for serving high-need youth. The experience of both Rounds One and Two was that no one organization or agency could meet all these needs effectively. Partnerships of varying intensities were necessary to assure access to all needed services. From the foregoing, one can see that the projects have been resourceful in identifying the services youth need. The very collaborations themselves raised a task for the projects: How would they coordinate and oversee the service delivery to assure that all the youth were served, regardless of who provided the service? The chief coordinating mechanisms were:

- Individual service plans,

- Route counseling,

- Standard forms, definitions, and record-keeping,

- Automated or web-based management information systems (MIS),

- Referral agreements

- Co-location of services or integrating/co-locating staff, and

- Cross-agency training.

Individual Service Plans

The individual service plan is a major tool for coordinating services. The plan acts as a framework for monitoring the youth's pathway through services and progress in completing them. All Round Two projects included the youth in the development of the individual service plan, and they used the individualized service plan to coordinate the services to youth.

Route Counseling

All the projects used some variation of the same approach to monitoring services and assessing progress: route counseling, sometimes called case management. Route counseling is a term preferred by many practitioners for several reasons:

- Persons resist the idea of someone managing them;

- The term emphasizes that responsibility for change and progress belongs with the client;

- The term focuses attention on the "route" or pathway that coordinates and sequences the services; and

- The term also implies an endpoint, that is, the services lead a client to a place where he/she can manage on his/her own.

Persons serving as route counselors were accountable for seeing that the youth received services or sought assistance, from family and/or project managers, if the youth failed to attend or resisted in other ways. Consider the route counseling characteristics reported in Table 10. About half of the projects assigned a substantial number of youth to each counselor. This reflected a philosophical approach to the route counseling task, that is, that the counselor would ensure that a youth received services, but would not be a personal mentor.

Chicago, Pittsburgh, Des Moines, and **West Palm Beach,** on the other hand, kept the caseload small enough that each route counselor had time to follow up with each youth personally. Some projects structured contacts around activities the youth were supposed to attend every day (**Des Moines, New York,** and **West Palm Beach**), while others needed to find the youth in the community to contact them (**Chicago, Cincinnati, Colorado,** and **Pittsburgh**). **Erie** connected with the youth weekly during the youth's

Table 10. Route Counseling Services Offered by Round Two Projects

Project	Number of Counselors	Ratio to Youth (Average)	Frequency of Contacts
Chicago	5	1:6	At least every other week.
Cincinnati	10	1:80*	Every 90 days; caseload includes WIA-only youth.
Colorado	4	1:50	At least monthly; case load includes youth at LMYSC.
Des Moines	2	1:25	Daily (start of GED class).
Erie	4	1:60	Weekly during active phase; then monthly.
Hartford	2	1:64	At enrollment, then to partners.
New York City	4	1:50	Daily for those in classes.
Pittsburgh	5	1:15	8-12 times a month; telephone or in-person.
West Palm Beach	5	1:20	Daily at class.

- The caseload also included WIA clients who were not part of the demonstration.

time at the Bayfront Maritime Academy. **Hartford** expected that each partner would become responsible for ensuring that youth referred received services. The two project counselors served as individual service strategy planners, and they had little contact with the youth once the plan was complete.

Management Information Systems

Hartford's project, however, planned another useful strategy for monitoring whether the youth received services. The project used grant funds to develop Hartford Connects, a management information system (MIS) that unified the reporting for all youth service providers. Service providers were expected to enter the data on services delivered, and all those providers with a youth in common could read the individual service plan and the record of services received. **Cincinnati** planned to build a common database, like Hartford's, but the work bogged down over the issue of confidentiality.

The **Chicago** grantee, the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development, developed a web-based data collection system to record all the services the youth received, regardless of the partner providing the service. **Des Moines** planned to report data similarly across partners by integrating subcontractor databases into the local One-Stop database. (In this project, all services a youth received were through one or the other sub-contractor.) Negotiations proved difficult, however, so the subcontractors developed their own databases.

In **Colorado**, each workforce development agency maintained its own MIS, but the project developed a program that brought key data from the four agencies into alignment for a combined report to the project staff. **West Palm Beach** developed an extensive project MIS. Leadership reviewed data monthly with a local evaluator to monitor progress. **Pittsburgh** did not use a unified MIS during the project; route counselors prepared a monthly report for supervisors on each youth as an accountability mechanism. Counselors maintained extensive case notes as a basis for these reports. **New York** was

in the process of developing a project level database; one staff member maintained counts of youth in each program until the MIS was ready to use. Weekly meetings of each program unit (education, leadership, employment, etc.) coordinated the delivery of services. **Erie** collected "Case Action Forms" for each activity in which a youth participated. Data from these forms were aggregated for regular reports to supervisors or for DOL.

Co-location of Services

Several projects coordinated services by providing most of them in a common location. **Des Moines'** two sub-contractors provided most of the services to youth directly at their offices, referring youth to other agencies for mental health, substance abuse, and other support services. The **New York** project delivered almost all its services in one location as well; youth with serious mental health and substance abuse issues were referred out for services. **Pittsburgh** also delivered most services under one roof, and mental health and substance abuse intervention specialists came to the project location to meet with the youth. Clients of the **West Palm Beach** project were in two groups: high school students and academy students. The high school program was the last period of the day at the four targeted high schools. The academy youth came to the academy building every day for about two-thirds of the day. Most of the contact time, for both groups, therefore, was in one place. For support services, however, the youth were referred to providers in the community.

Latino Youth and Scholarship and Guidance provided some services to **Chicago** youth beyond route counseling, but the project developed a consortium of providers in the community to offer services as well. As mentioned earlier, **Cincinnati** used six providers in the community, and youth went to them for services. Similarly, **Hartford** referred all its youth out to community partners for services. The Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies portion of the **Erie** project was conducted in one place, but all the other services in the youth's individual case plan were referred to other partners within the Erie community. The post- release portion of the **Colorado** project operated in the counties to which the youth were released. Although the original expectation in Colorado was that youth would come to the One-Stop centers to meet the workforce specialists and to get further work readiness and job placement support, experience showed that youth were reluctant to come to the One-Stops, at least initially. Workforce specialists met the youth wherever they were: at work, in a library or other neutral setting near home or work. Other services were all in the county of residence, and youth were expected to go to them.

Cross-Agency Training

Most projects provided explicit training to project staff, and some explicitly used cross training as a way to develop a common approach to serving youth. Fourteen front-line youth services workers in **Hartford** completed the first round of cross-agency training through Hartford's Youth Development Practitioners' Academy. Four **West Palm Beach** staff members completed "Offender Workforce Development Special Team Training,"

and, in addition, four staff members completed the accredited Occupational Associate degree in youth development offered by the State of Florida. Faculty also earned national certification to teach employability skills and attended the offender workforce development specialist training offered by the National Institute of Corrections. **Cincinnati** offered project staff monthly training in subjects like crisis intervention, working with special populations and eligibility determination. **New York** offered its staff three sessions on employment retention training and received a PEPNet consultation on employment retention as well. One staff member attended the National Youth Employment Coalition training, and monthly staff meetings included some in-service education or training elements. **Colorado** assured that all the workforce specialists received specialized training; each had to complete the baseline training for anyone who works inside the fence of LMYSC. In addition, each had to complete the workforce specialist training at the workforce center that hired him or her. Three of the four workers also attended the National Youth Development Practitioners Institute. **Pittsburgh** provided all staff members with training in mental health and substance abuse interventions.

All projects used at least two forms of services coordination: individual service plans and route counseling. Others used management information services, team training, integrating multi-agency staff, or co-location as well. Many of these efforts developed a team approach to service delivery. Although **Chicago** and **Hartford** developed memorandums of understanding with a broad swath of community based organizations, evaluators observed that the partners engaged in delivering services tended to be few. Evaluators raised the possibility that coordinating services for individual youth required so much project energy that it became difficult to coordinate a large number of service delivery providers as well.

Summary

Over the duration of the demonstration, projects incorporated a rich array of service resources into their projects to meet the needs of project youth. While all projects had access to a wide range of services for youth, the program design and target audiences narrowed their focus. Projects enrolling primarily younger youth, for example, supported them in educational pursuits more than employment preparation; those with older youth emphasized employment over education.

Workforce preparation received more emphasis than job placement and retention in most projects. The projects seemed, however, to each design its own work readiness curriculum and experiences. Several projects reported that they had redesigned their work readiness components after some experience with their original designs.

The intensity and duration of employment preparation activities varied widely from an occasional workshop to a 90-hour curriculum. For some projects work readiness activities were embedded in other experiences, such as **Erie's** boat building or **West Palm Beach's** clinical training. Other projects focused on specific work readiness activities. These

variations are likely to affect the extent to which youth are work-ready, and they bear study to distinguish their effects.

While all projects provided access to support services, some of them were meeting resistance from youth to attending the services recommended in their individual service plans. All projects experienced a degree of non-persistence moreover, that is, a certain portion of the youth dropped out of the project before completing their plans. The data elements DOL required projects to maintain did not include a count of active and inactive clients, but evaluators heard the concerns of the project staff anecdotally. Through the coordinating mechanisms of the individual plan supported by route counseling, however, projects did know which youth were not attending or receiving services as intended. They had policies about continued follow-up, and the press of client caseload usually determined how strong the follow-up proved to be.

Other projects, notably **Cincinnati** and **Hartford,** were early in their service delivery implementation phase, having devoted the major portion of the demonstration period to building their service delivery infrastructures. Notice the lack of detail in their reports of work readiness services (Table 8). In time, the issues of intensity and duration are likely to become a focus of concern for **Cincinnati**, and **Hartford** will know more about the services youth receive when they are referred to partners for educational, employment, and support services.

All projects used the coordinating mechanisms of an individual service plan supported by route counseling. Some projects created a sense of place and peer support by offering services to groups of youth and by establishing stable meeting places. While all projects had at least a rudimentary MIS, few used the data to identify patterns of progress or difficulty in tracking the pathways of youth through the project. Evaluators viewed the projects' failure to use data as a missed opportunity to make better use of their investment in designing and maintaining records in the management information systems. Evaluators observed different philosophies of route counseling: large caseloads and small. Further study of the differences for youth tied to these philosophical differences would be of practical value to projects' staff and administrators. Further research would also be useful on the differences for youth of different coordinating mechanisms. For example, are persistence patterns stronger with more coordinating mechanisms in place compared to using fewer? Evaluators observed that projects with many partners used only a few of them to deliver services. Using only a few partners could stem from the newness of the partnerships, and projects will incorporate more service providers over time. It could also stem from the additional project staff time needed to coordinate multiple partners, oversee service delivery and develop common reporting processes. More may not be better in service delivery partner coordination.

In the next section, evaluators report on the organizational attributes and the data collection and analysis component.

Section V

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT MODEL: ORGANIZATIONAL ATTRIBUTES AND DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Overview

In the previous section, the report reviewed the progress projects in Round Two made in implementing the expected array of services and in providing coordinating mechanisms for delivering those services to the youth in customized ways. The description noted that not all projects had rationalized the service delivery effort to the same degree: some projects managed to assemble the range of services but had not developed a comprehensive approach to duration, intensity and reporting processes among service providers while others had devised ways to assure that youth received the needed services consistently.

Similarly, all the projects demonstrated attributes of successfully implemented projects, but some of them struggled with one or more of the attributes. This section reviews the attributes observed in successfully implemented projects and identifies the ways the projects in Round Two exemplified these attributes.

All the projects also made progress with developing data collection processes and varied in the extent to which they used the data for accountability, decision-making, and sustainability. This section also reviews the progress Round Two projects made in developing and using data to manage their projects.

All these dimensions of the PMM were incorporated by projects differently and to different degrees. Recall that Nathan's observation was that attending to systems-level change, over time, would improve the services to individuals. In other words, the nine projects were evolving at different rates and in different ways, but they were making progress toward the common goal of serving the target population.

Organizational Attributes

A key component of the PMM is the set of seven organizational attributes. The indicators for successful implementation of each attribute and the criteria used by the evaluation team to gauge progress toward them appear in summary form in Table 11. Each attribute is described in the following paragraphs.

Organizational Attributes
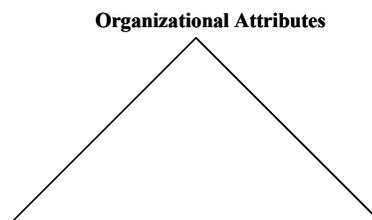
Table 11. Public Management Model: Organizational Attributes

Organizational Attribute	Criteria for Gauging Presence of an Attribute
1. Developed a Well-conceived Plan	▪ Program has a clear and focused vision and mission. ▪ Program goals and objectives are realistic and measurable. ▪ Stakeholders, including community partners, family member representatives, and front-line staff are involved during program development and implementation.
2. Established Partnerships Between the Workforce Development and Juvenile Justice Systems	▪ Grantee has prior experience working with the Workforce Development and/or Juvenile Justice systems.
3. Built Community Support/ Network	▪ Youth and family serving agencies, including CBOs, faith-based organizations, and public service agencies, support the program.
4. Ensured Grantee Involvement	▪ Grantee is the lead agency, actively providing direction and coordination for the project. ▪ Grantee involvement and support is continuous.
5. Connected the Workforce Development, Justice, and Health Care Systems	▪ Grantee coordinates with and utilizes resources available through the Workforce Development, Justice, and Health Care Systems.
6. Leveraged Resources Through Collaboration and Partnerships	▪ Project effectively identifies and utilizes other resources and funding streams to support project goals.
7. Shared Leadership and Information	▪ Decision-making and information are shared among stakeholders.

1. Developed a Well-conceived Plan

The evaluation of Round Two projects confirmed that projects that had well-conceived plans implemented their plans with greater ease than those that did not. Seven of the nine Round Two projects began with what appeared to be well-conceived and well-developed implementation plans.

Plans for projects in **Colorado, Des Moines, Erie, Hartford, New York City, Pittsburgh,** and **West Palm Beach** were solid from the beginning. To a large extent, the implementation plans served as useful guides throughout the demonstration. In general, the plans met standards outlined for this organizational attribute, including measurable objectives and provision for periodic review to ensure that they were being reached. Each

project brought together a diversity of stakeholders to develop consensus about the vision for the projects.

After the October 2001 post-award conference, which introduced the organizational attributes to the projects, staffs in **West Palm Beach, Colorado,** and **New York City** revised their plans so they were more closely aligned with the organizational attributes. Evaluators noted, however, that initially **New York City's** project lacked adequate involvement of most stakeholders.

The BroadReach project in **Erie** resulted from a vision of two organizations that focused on future growth and sustainability of the project. Both agencies had experience serving youth and the project benefited from the strong planning mechanism that the grantee, Perseus House, already had in place before it received demonstration funds.

By late 2001 it became apparent that **Chicago's** project design did not offer a way to bring an adequate number of partners together to provide services to target youth. To correct the situation, the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development (MOWD), the grantee, rethought the project's plan and subcontracted with Goodwill Industries of Metropolitan Chicago, Inc., to organize the effort. By the second evaluation site visit, the project had recovered much of the footing it lost early on. The project continued to modify its plan through implementation as it confronted unexpected barriers and challenges, such as when a subcontractor had to be replaced because it could not perform its route counseling responsibilities.

YouthWorks, Inc., the grantee, and its partners in **Pittsburgh** shared a vision to create a model community-based route counseling system for youth offenders, based on the concept of balanced and restorative justice to reduce recidivism and youth violence. That vision did not change throughout the grant period. Planning was generally informed by first-hand, qualitative, anecdotal knowledge rather than by analysis of quantitative data.

Cincinnati's project plan was commendable in its detail: the 50-page plan outlined specific tasks, responsibilities, outcome measures, and milestones. It served the project less well than it might have, however, because of the absence of the "big picture:" how specific tasks would fit together to achieve the project's vision and mission. While the plan was monitored periodically, and missed milestones were repeatedly revised, the monitoring process was not used as an opportunity to reconsider whether the initial plan was too ambitious for the resources available or whether priorities assigned to tasks needed revision. Community capacity building activities, for example, continued to receive the highest priority even when no youth were being served a year after the grant award.

The vision of the **West Palm Beach** project was to involve a broad coalition of partners in planning activities. Partners were included not just in periodic formal meetings but also in work groups to focus on specific areas, such as administrative, programmatic, and system development. The strategy was that such interaction among the partners would lead to more awareness of the unique needs of targeted youth, more awareness of the

range of services available to meet their needs, and more willingness to collaborate to serve them.

Planning for Sustainability. From the beginning of the grant period, projects were expected to include planning, not just for the grant period, but also for on going operation after the grant funds were gone. As the projects progressed into their implementation phases, planning for sustainability became a more-pressing issue. This part of the section considers each project's efforts.

At the time of the third evaluation site visit in fall 2003, **Chicago's** project was grappling with how to sustain the project after grant funding ended. The grantee, MOWD, and its primary partner, Goodwill Industries, were working together to secure WIA youth funds. In addition, the partners hoped to receive additional funds through the juvenile justice system to continue route counseling. The partners also worked together to advocate for development of two youth One-Stop centers in the project's target area. The partners also were confident that the consortium of 40 partners created for the project would continue to meet after grant funding ended, although only about five partners provided services through subcontracts.

Cincinnati's project developed a sustainability strategy from the beginning of the grant by enrolling all youth through the WIA eligibility process. Youth who did not meet the eligibility criteria, but met the demonstration criteria, were eligible for services through the demonstration. The plan, however, was that the majority of demonstration project youth would continue receiving services after the grant through the WIA system. Frequent turnovers in both grantee and subcontractor staff delayed the development and implementation of the plan. The WIA-related youth council and the Re-Entry Task Force will likely continue the project's community-based activities. The focus on sustaining service delivery relied on full integration with existing WIA-funded youth services.

The project in **Des Moines** planned to use grant funds to address the findings of a community report that recommended development of partnerships to build capacity and a collaborative approach to service delivery that would be sustained beyond the grant. As of the third site visit in September 2003, the grantee had formed a community coalition with a group of inner-city non-profit providers. The partnership was to "serve as the driving force in the development of a comprehensive service network" and intended to show that collaborations, such as the demonstration, produce results. The partnership also planned to bring in more organizations to broaden the community commitment to changing the system and make presentations to potential funders as a group.

In **Erie,** the project's Workforce Essential Skills program was to be incorporated into the curriculum of all Perseus House programs, including residential, community-based, alternative education, and the charter school. Partnerships created with the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies and the local WIB were to continue.

The **Hartford** Youth Access Program, with its grantee Capital Region Workforce Development Board, saw the capacity-building initiatives under DOL funding as vital components to gaining long-term buy-in from both service providers and funders. The

expectation was that because Hartford Connects results in a highly interconnected system of comprehensive service delivery, all participating agencies would have an increasing commitment to its continuation. In addition, the grantee and several partners created the Youth Development Practitioners Academy to provide a no-cost permanent mechanism for improving the professional skills of participating agencies' staff. At the time of the third evaluation site visit, and looking beyond the period of the DOL grant, the grantee planned to continue providing leadership to develop a community-wide system, broadening the target population over time to essentially all at-risk and offender youth between 14 and 24 years of age. Eventually, responsibility for route counseling would be spread throughout the system, such that an agency that enrolls a youth through Hartford Connects becomes the agency responsible for route counseling and for monitoring the client's progress on his or her Personal Learning and Career Plan over time.

The lack of partnerships with organizations that shared responsibility for delivering services to Friends of Island Academy (FOIA) youth made sustainability a worrisome issue for the project in **New York City**. FOIA hired a part-time grants writer to seek out additional funds. Although FOIA attracted more grant funds after the grant writer joined the project, the staff size, which at one point numbered 40, could not be sustained. One grant offered guidance on streamlining staff structure and processes, making it possible to sustain most services with fewer staff. Since the time of the second site visit, the project has made major strides in bringing together new partners, including the New York City Department of Corrections; and several new health grants also supported new partnerships. The project received additional funds as part of DOL's Academic Skills grant, which will support on-going and new project activities for another year. Staff, however, reported that they wished they had started sustainability efforts sooner, as suggested by the technical assistance team.

The collaboration formed in **Pittsburgh** was expected to continue working with BluePrint during its 1-year no-cost extension and later, if sufficient funds can be found. Even after then, the project coordinator and grantee executive director believed that BluePrint would continue basically unchanged. They expected the county to pick up a substantial portion of the funding, supplemented by foundation support. Although the grant application envisioned BluePrint achieving a higher level of inclusion of youth offenders in the local CareerLink system, BluePrint has served as a substitute for CareerLink, rather than facilitating greater inclusion in the system. As a result, sustaining services for youth is expected to depend, not on the One-Stop system, but on the continued role of YouthWorks to obtain funding from sources such as Allegheny County, foundations, and perhaps other federal funding streams.

The grantee in **West Palm Beach,** the Academy for Practical Nursing and Health Occupations (APNHO) and its principal partners (Probationers Educational Growth (PEG) and the Palm Beach County WIB), jointly planned for continuation of the program. The project became a model for planning among Round Two projects and was featured in a fact sheet on sustainability prepared by the TA team for DOL (See Appendix G.)

From the beginning of the grant process, APNHO pursued a collaborative approach to service delivery through partnerships and alliances. DOL grant funds were used for capacity building that was intended to develop a strong community infrastructure capable of being self-sustained after grant termination. As of the third site visit in September 2003, 17 separate projects had been funded, often because one project was able to build on the success of another. As for continuation of services to target youth, PEG will become the central point for serving target youth.

2. Established Partnerships between the Workforce Development and Juvenile Justice Systems

Successfully implemented projects were or became knowledgeable about the culture and operating procedures of the workforce development and justice systems. Those that had established good working relationships on youth-oriented programs before the grant period gained valuable experience that made the implementation of the demonstration easier and quicker.

In the case of workforce development organizations running the projects, it helped when the organizations already had established strong communications systems with judges, district attorneys, and probation officers in their communities. In the case of juvenile justice organizations running projects, it helped when they already had established strong communications systems with the One-Stop delivery system in their communities.

In short, projects with other system relationships firmly in place before receiving grant funds were able to move more quickly toward integrating workforce development services for youth under court supervision or who were involved in gangs.

At the start of the second round of the demonstration, the majority of the nine projects lacked strong prior experience with both the juvenile justice and the workforce development systems. YouthWorks, the grantee and parent organization in **Pittsburgh**, however, had developed strong ties with both the juvenile justice and workforce development systems before it received DOL funds. It served as the primary focus for the city's and county's effort to provide workforce preparation for youth offenders and other vulnerable youth. Through other programs it was involved with, the grantee also had developed strong relationships with probation officers who were assigned to schools to ensure that offenders attending the schools complied with court orders. These included attendance at work readiness classes offered by YouthWorks and other services provided by its partners.

Erie's project also had established a strong relationship with the juvenile justice system. Perseus House, the grantee, runs residential pre-trial and mental health programs for youth and an alternative school for offenders. The associate executive director of Perseus House also is a retired top official of **Erie's** juvenile justice system. During the project, Perseus House established a working relationship with CareerLink, registering every participant youth in the CareerLink system.

The grantee in **West Palm Beach,** a training school for practical nursing and other health occupations, had previous experience with the workforce development system as a result of eight years of conducting in-school and out-of-school programs for youth through funding from JTPA and WIA. It had an especially strong relationship with the local youth council of the WIB from which the project had received other grants for operating its programs. Through its partner, Probationer's Educational Growth (PEG), the project also had working relationships with the court system.

New York's project also had connections to the juvenile justice system as a result of its outreach programs to youth incarcerated in four youth facilities on Rikers Island. Through its experience with the youth leaving Rikers Island facilities, Friends of Island Academy (FOIA) had experience working with the courts. From this relationship with the courts, FOIA developed its Alternatives to Incarceration, a pilot effort funded by the DOL grant to provide services to youth receiving alternative sentences. What FOIA lacked was a relationship with the workforce development system. The One-Stop center system in New York City was not well developed during the demonstration period, so FOIA provided all the workforce development services itself. Toward the end of the grant period, a few WIA services were available to FOIA youth.

Colorado, the only justice agency grantee in Round Two, had only the experience of developing the grant proposal with workforce development agencies prior to the award. It overcame that lack of experience in two ways: turning over most of the grant funds to the workforce development agencies to develop services for Division of Corrections' youth and by allotting a portion of funds for partnership development processes and activities.

Grantees in **Hartford, Cincinnati** and **Des Moines**, all workforce development agencies, had only limited prior experience working with the justice systems. Goodwill Industries, which operated **Chicago's** project, had extensive experience with the workforce development system. It operates a One-Stop center and has contracts with the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development, the project's grantee, to provide other workforce services. Its links to the juvenile justice system, however, did not appear to be extensively developed, although members of its consortium represented the juvenile justice system.

Although not as critical to implementation success, it is worth noting that several projects had previous experience with the health care system. The executive director of YouthWorks in **Pittsburgh** had worked for several years as a social worker at Western Psychiatric Institute and Center, a subcontractor that provides assessments and treatment for youth with mental health issues. **West Palm Beach**, as a health occupations training institution, had extensive health system connections. Other projects that had prior experience working with the health care system were **Colorado** and **New York City.** LMYSC receives the incarcerated youth diagnosed with mental health and substance abuse issues, and New York provides both mental health and substance abuse treatment services, referring youth to other agencies only for serious mental illness, substance abuse, and health care services.

Attribute No. 2 recognizes that demonstration projects had different starting points in partnership development. The partnership between workforce and justice systems is essential for addressing the needs of target youth. Projects that lacked a strong connection took months or even years to establish good working relationships between the two systems. A community intending to serve target youth needs to make the development of this cross-system partnership an early and high priority.

3. Built Community Support/Network

The experiences of Round Two projects reinforced the importance for projects to have broad-based community support. Such support was essential, if they were to succeed at implementation and to develop the partnerships that increase the likelihood of a sustainable effort. Juvenile crime prevention depended on a commitment and sense of ownership by major agencies and interests that played a role in these efforts. Especially important was the need for projects to nurture support from youth and family-serving agencies, such as community-based organizations (CBOs) and other public service organizations. Sustainability often depended on a community knowing and supporting the project's mission.

Evaluators found this attribute present to some degree in most projects, many of which had substantial histories of working with other CBOs. This was the case with **Chicago's** project, which operated under a subcontract to Goodwill Industries, a large CBO that had established a consortium of 40 other community-based organizations. The project in **West Palm Beach** also proved effective building community-wide support. It partnered with many CBOs and raised more than $2 million in funds from foundations, and public and private organizations to fill in gaps in service delivery.

The grantee running **Pittsburgh's** project also had strong experience with creating community-wide support. Pittsburgh's grantee serves as a conduit for foundation and governmental grants that target youth who are at risk of gang and court involvement. It manages millions of dollars each year, parceling funds to other CBOs seeking financial help to run programs for youth

The grantee in **Erie,** a large non-profit agency, also had widespread community support, which was shown by the large number of partners who provided services to the youth it targeted. The **New York City** grantee had multiple funders and advocates, and its youth had been featured on the television program, " 20/20," and on National Public Radio. It had not, however, fully developed a broad network of community support. The grantee in **Cincinnati**, the city's Workforce Development Division, worked hard from the start of the project to build community support. During the past two years it convened meetings of stakeholders in the community, including juvenile justice agencies, to bring them more strongly into the project and to create a unified vision for the demonstration. This community support, however, is in a nascent stage since the network of providers was still developing at the end of the project period.

Colorado's project received support from a group of community and political supporters. The project built upon a strong aftercare project that was in place when the Division of Youth Corrections of the Department of Human Services received DOL grant funds. The funds were used to add a workforce development dimension to an already rich array of services and supports provided by the grantee. The project in **Des Moines** had a narrow group of community supporters. In **Hartford** the grantee, a local workforce development agency, collected 23 signed memorandums of agreement from other CBOs. This appeared to indicate that the grantee was able to gain wide community support; yet it was only in the early stage of developing these agencies into operating partners.

4. Grantee Involvement

Evaluation of the Round Two projects appeared to confirm that well-managed and operated projects were those in which grantees remained constructively involved in all phases of the projects. It appeared essential that the grantees served as the lead agency and provided direction and coordination for the projects, even when they subcontracted project responsibilities to other organizations.

With a few exceptions, evaluators found the active involvement of the grantee in all projects from the start of the demonstration grants. The grantee in **Cincinnati** subcontracted responsibility for providing youth services to an agency affiliated with the local One-Stop center and, instead, devoted most of its effort toward building capacity for youth services within the community. After problems with service delivery emerged, however, the grantee changed subcontractors and began to provide closer supervision and oversight of the new subcontractor to ensure adequate delivery of services. At the time of the second evaluation visit, the project had only begun to recruit project participants. Yet by the time of the third evaluation site visit in October 2003, the project had recruited more than 75 youth. The grantee was plagued, however, with staff turnover and administrator reassignments. The lack of grantee stability slowed project implementation and partnership development.

During the project's first nine months, the grantee in **Des Moines** did not closely supervise its two main subcontractors and did not appear to provide adequate direction. By the time of the second visit, the grantee was taking a more active role and worked more closely with its two primary partners and service providers to share information about the project's status. By the time of the third site visit, however, the grantee once more appeared overwhelmed with other responsibilities and was experiencing difficulty making the project a priority.

To a large extent, grantees of the other projects demonstrated strong positive involvement and provided oversight to other agencies with which they subcontracted or had partnerships to provide services. This was the case in **Colorado** where the Division of Youth Corrections of the state's Department of Human Services contracted out the entire project to workforce development agencies and in **Pittsburgh,** which also subcontracted responsibilities, including route counseling and mental health assessments and treatment, to three main agencies. **Chicago's** grantee closely monitored, supervised, and

participated on the project advisory board of Goodwill Industries, the subcontractor for the project.

In the past, **Pittsburgh's** grantee, whose mission is to develop, pilot and implement initiatives involving workforce issues for youth, leveraged its resources to get other organizations and systems to fill gaps in services provided youth. Some services, for example, included part-time and year-round employment and career exploration opportunities. The grantee agency and its staff are actively involved in guiding the project and its activities. The agency is well positioned to take the lead in providing services for the target population after DOL funds end.

Several grantees provided direct services to project participants. This was the case in **West Palm Beach** where the grantee provided occupational training services to youth enrolled in the project. From the project's inception, the grantee worked with the local WIB for coordination of workforce development services and with Probationers' Educational Growth in the areas of alternative sentencing and aftercare. The grantee made a conscious effort to approach the project as a "team effort," where the grantee was as much a partner as it was the lead agency. For this project, "grantee involvement" may only begin to describe the nature of the approach to managing the project. Though "leadership" is a difficult concept to measure, it was evident, starting with the project director and other senior managers at both APNHO and among primary partners. There seemed to be a strong sense of a common vision and a commitment to working with youth who faced challenges in the workplace.

In **Erie**, the grantee was a large service provider that provided route counseling, and the grantee also coordinated service delivery to youth through a number of other CBOs. The grantee worked with the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies, which provided workforce preparation through boat building, and CareerLink, which provided workforce development services and incentives.

In **Hartford** the grantee directly managed a comprehensive system for improving the integration of service delivery to youth offenders and other youth at risk of gang and court involvement. It managed an Internet-based database of route counseling information on youth who received services. When fully operational, more than 23 agencies will have access to the agency's database.

The grantee of the project in **New York City**, Friends of Island Academy, provided direct services to youth leaving four correctional facilities on Riker's Island. The grantee provided mentoring and employment assistance and prevention outreach. Virtually all services were delivered under one roof by the agency's staff.

5. Connected the Workforce Development, Justice, and Health Care Systems

Staff of well-managed and operated projects not only had experience and knowledge about the workings of the workforce development and justice systems (organizational attribute No. 2), but they also expanded their network of partners to include other service

systems, especially health and education to take advantage of resources available through those systems. To more fully integrate services, project staff also worked to enhance coordination among the three systems. (See Table 12, on p. 83-85, which shows partnership arrangements.)

The discussion of attribute No. 5 presents two perspectives on development of connections among the key systems. First, it discusses the types of new partnerships and collaborations created by projects during the grant period. Second, it looks at the types of challenges that several projects faced in developing these crucial relationships.

Establishing Effective Connections. Several projects began building partnerships from the beginning of the demonstration. In **West Palm Beach,** the Academy for Practical Nursing and Health Occupations, worked with its primary partners, Probationer's Educational Growth and Palm Beach County Workforce Development Board, to identify youth for the program and then to coordinate service delivery. The grantee of **Colorado's** project, a state juvenile justice agency, convened workforce development center partners during the proposal preparation and subcontracted out the entire project to those workforce development centers after funding. As the project evolved, the parole officers and the workforce specialists collaborated in working with youth, and the state Department of Vocational Rehabilitation assigned a staff member to work with the young men with disabilities to help them find employment at a wage that would make them self-sustaining.

The BluePrint project in **Pittsburgh** faced a different situation. Although Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board was technically a project partner, youth received few services from the One-Stop center, which is called CareerLink. Youth, and to some extent the BluePrint staff, perceived the CareerLink sites to be unwelcoming, with a focus on retraining middle-aged adults rather than training young adults or youth in this population. As a response, the project partnered with other organizations to deliver workforce services to selected youth, such as its collaboration with University of Pittsburgh and the supplemental grant from DOL for a project with AmeriCorps. The Knowledge to Empower Youths to Success (KEYS) Service Corps – an AmeriCorps program operated by the Allegheny County Department of Human Services/Office of Community Services – planned to partner with BluePrint to train about 40 BluePrint participants, 17-22 years old. At the end of a 17-week program, youth were expected to either get a job, further their education, or enter AmeriCorps or Job Corps.

From initial planning, the **Des Moines** project intended to recruit a relatively small number of youth each quarter. As a result, the project did not initially see a need to establish a strong working relationship with the juvenile justice system. As the project matured, however, staff began working with the juvenile court for referrals and alternative sentencing. At the time of the third evaluation site visit, it had not been able to gain a steady flow of referrals from various community organizations to meet goals.

In terms of building new partnerships for the purposes of financial stability and service delivery, most projects made important progress. For instance, in **Chicago** a consortium

of 40 community-based organizations provided the core structure of the demonstration. The project linked 13 service providers, subcontractors to Goodwill, and their referral networks to deliver what the project called a "holistic" response to project participants.

In **New York,** the grantee's prior experience with offering reentry services, gang prevention and other youth services also gave the project an advantage of being efficient about meeting youth needs through partners in other systems. The Pinkerton Foundation awarded Friends of Island Academy a grant for adult literacy. FOIA won a competitive solicitation for mental health services from the state Department of Mental Health, and received a state Human Resources Administration grant to assist youth with mental illness find employment. All three of these grants became operational about the same time as the DOL grant. Because FOIA staff delivered all the services supported by these grants, the project appeared to be self-sufficient in fulfilling youth's needs. Concerns about sustainability and identifying additional financial resources made project staff more welcoming to new partners and their involvement with the project. Since the second and the third site visits, Friends of Island Academy has strengthened its support from various sources.

Several projects connected effectively with the workforce, juvenile justice, and health care systems, perhaps because of their prior experience with the systems. In **Erie**, for example, the project grantee provided health services to project youth, and youth received work readiness training from funds provided through the local One-Stop center. The associate executive director was a retired top official with the Erie's juvenile justice system, and he helped the CBO develop a solid relationship with probation officers.

The grantee, a major organization that provides services for youth who have been or are at risk of being involved in the juvenile justice system, could well serve as a model for interagency collaboration and cooperation. The director of Perseus House forged working collaborations and partnerships with all of the community agencies serving youth involved in the juvenile justice or other court-related systems. In less than a decade, he saw his organization's annual budget increase from $800,000 to $9 million.

In February 2003, **Hartford's** grantee, the Capital Region Workforce Development Board, and the Department of Probation began a pilot referral process. Since then, the department has referred an increasing number of youth to the project. Project case managers go to the probation office two mornings a week to meet with youth offenders to enroll them in the program. The project also collaborated with Community Partners in Action that operates 17 programs for offenders, including the Coalition Employment Services (CES), which assists with transportation, documents needed for employment, job preparation skills and other work readiness services. CES also develops relationships with employers to overcome concerns about hiring offenders. In spring 2003, the grantee funded a position of retention specialist at CES to work out of the local One-Stop.

Challenges in Developing Partnerships. Several second round projects had trouble connecting the service systems together effectively. While the projects, whether run by an organization that specialized in workforce development or juvenile justice services, were

able to bring together various partners, they had difficulty developing true working relationships. It appeared that a primary reason for this involved different cultural and organizational traditions, policies, and features of the different systems, which often worked at odds with those of the other systems.

Projects in **New York City** and **Colorado** had prior relationships with parole officers by virtue of their focus on targeting offenders coming out of the correctional facilities. By the end of the DOL grant, New York staff reported that probation and parole officers were more likely to come to FOIA offices to meet youth, but FOIA was just initiating a relationship with the city Department of Corrections. **Colorado** struggled to keep the workforce development partners it had gathered as the state and counties pared their service delivery budgets. Many of the senior agency staff members that attended the Consortium meetings lost their jobs, and the workforce development centers were unable to guarantee that the workforce specialists they had hired with grant funds would be hired permanently.

Projects run by workforce development agencies sometimes had difficulty accessing information on clients transferring from confinement facilities into the project. This was the case in **Chicago**, for example, where the juvenile justice system, apparently because of privacy concerns, would not give project route counselors access to project participants until after they had left the facility. As a result, route counselors were not able to access case notes and other information compiled by the juvenile justice system that they needed to provide proper and effective services to youth. At the time of the second evaluation site visit, counselors relied upon self-reported information from participants, which was of uncertain validity. By the third evaluation site visit, however, project staff and the grantee were trying to establish a better working relationship with probation officers and the courts and were working to make the project an alternative sentencing program.

Chicago project staff also reported that it had not established a strong working relationship with the One-Stop delivery system, which they said did not understand the needs of the youth. The grantee, the city's workforce development agency, and Goodwill planned to advocate for creation of two youth One-Stops in the target area to rectify the situation as part of their sustainability efforts.

The project in **Cincinnati**, also run by the city's workforce development agency, did not develop a strong relationship with the juvenile justice system that would have allowed it to maximize use of juvenile justice resources. This was the case, even though a county-operated correctional facility for youth had agreed in principle, early in the project, to participate and refer youth to the project.

By the time of the third evaluation site visit, **Hartford's** project had experienced some reduced levels of commitment among several smaller community-based agencies. Project staff had to work with agencies that signed memorandums of understanding (MOUs) to encourage them to attend training in the Hartford Connects route counseling system and then to get them to use the system. Meanwhile, Hartford Public Schools needed

encouragement from the mayor to persevere in the broad community initiative, despite budget cuts that eliminated counselors and staff in the critical Student and Family Assistance Centers. The recent receipt of a $9 million, 3-year grant may help the schools become a full partner so that all school-age youth will be in some form of educational program through age 18.

6. Leveraged Resources Through Collaboration and Partnerships

An important part of any project is its ability to deliver something of value to its clients. The evaluation of Round Two confirmed that well-managed and operated projects identified and used other resources and funding streams to support their goals. Strong linkages and collaborative partnerships, which allowed organizations to participate in joint activities, also encouraged development of innovative approaches for problem solving and delivery of services within the projects. Without strong partnerships, organizations often found themselves alone and without broad political and financial support for their efforts. (See Table 12, on p 83-85 which shows partnership arrangements.)

Evaluators found that about half of the Round Two projects displayed some degree of this organizational attribute. In **West Palm Beach** the grantee leveraged more than $2 million in grants from a variety of funding sources, both private and public, to provide services to target youth. To do this, the grantee identified gaps in services it provided and then partnered with other organizations to apply for grants that targeted the gaps. The project provided a full range of workforce development services through its close partnership with the local WIB. A full array of services was made available to youth through other service providers that supported the project's efforts. By focusing on the DOL goal of capacity building from receipt of the grant, the project had great success in leveraging resources, being especially effective in identifying potential funders for a range of initiatives. (See Appendix H for details of how the project built partnerships.)

As a key component of its mission, **Pittsburgh's** grantee raises millions of dollars for various projects that serve target youth. The grantee also appeared to have a strong working relationship with probation officers stationed in county schools. The project had contracts with two other organizations for assessments and mental health services. The project was not able, however, to develop a strong relationship with the local One-Stop delivery system. The case manager supervisor said that the One-Stop was reluctant to serve project youth because the system did not understand how to meet their developmental needs before they were capable of finding and holding jobs.

Hartford's project developed a close working relationship with the local Youth Opportunity Grant staff to create an impressive database system that approximately 23 community-based organizations were to start using to access and track youth through various agencies while receiving services. In the future, these efforts may result in increased collaboration and leveraging of resources, including funds.

New York's grantee received funds from multiple sources for its various programs, and it was in the process of establishing working partnerships that would leverage additional funds. **Cincinnati's** project succeeded in getting community partners to collaborate on problem solving about the needs of this population and ways to better serve them. For example, a multi-partner work group explored ways to streamline information sharing among the justice, health, and workforce systems. The project used WIA funds to pay for some services; all but route counseling services were paid for through the DOL grant. The project partnerships had not evolved to the point of contributing funds and resources to the project during the grant period, but grantee staff planned to keep the partners engaged.

The **Colorado** project had some success leveraging resources through collaborations and partnerships. The grantee provided aftercare services, and leveraged a vocational rehabilitation staff position for employment services. At the time of the third evaluation site visit, the four workforce development centers had not yet committed to hiring the workforce specialists supported by the grant. **Chicago's** project did not extensively leverage resources in support of the project. The project received some in-kind services from members of its consortium.

The grantee of **Erie's** project was able to leverage resources through its many relationships with other CBOs. Several of these provided in-kind services to youth, including recreational services. In **Des Moines**, collaborations and partnerships were mostly among the project's three official partners. It appeared the project needed to broaden its political and financial support to become sustainable. While staff with the project's two subcontractors gradually developed a network of staff and other service providers, the grantee recognized the importance of gaining the support of directors of CBOs and other senior administrators at key agencies only at the end of the grant period.

One partnership arrangement that proved important to Round Two projects was with the education system. Eight of the nine projects formed relationships with the local schools, and through those relationships leveraged resources. The projects that worked with younger youth worked to keep the youth in the public schools (**Chicago, Cincinnati, Erie, and Hartford**); in **Pittsburgh**, the older youth were in alternative high schools. **West Palm Beach** offered health occupations training to youth in four high schools, and **New York** received the services of a certified special education teacher from the New York City Schools Alternative, Adult and Continuing Education Schools and Programs office. While most youth did not return to school after leaving **Colorado**'s LMYSC, Jefferson County Schools worked with the project to certify the diplomas earned by youth while they were incarcerated.

7. Shared Leadership and Information Sharing

The evaluation of Round Two projects appeared to confirm the need for lead agencies to share both the leadership and the credit for the results of their programs with other stakeholders. Successful programs shared information with other stakeholders so that

fully integrated – and effective – services were provided to clients. This approach also helped the projects improve operations over time.

In general, Round Two projects shared project leadership with partners they had assembled. This was the case in **Chicago**, for example, where a consortium of 40 community-based organizations came together to provide advice and services for the project.

Other projects followed similar approaches to providing feedback to partners, sharing ideas, and confronting problems in unison. **Hartford's** project received feedback on its database system and training curriculum and, as a result of the feedback, requested technical assistance to help improve how both operated. The project in **West Palm Beach** worked hard to keep its partners and stakeholders involved and well informed. **Colorado's** project worked from the start to build strong partnerships, and the fact that the project was facing difficult sustainability issues forced it to share an even greater level of project ownership with other agencies and organizations.

The three main partners in **Des Moines** shared decision-making and information about what was going on. At the time of the third evaluation site visit, the project was trying to build a broader coalition of partners. In **Erie**, although active partners shared decision-making responsibilities, the grantee provided most of the project's leadership since its project advisory board did not meet often. **Pittsburgh's** project had an active advisory board where information about participant and project issues was exchanged freely and informally.

The project in **Cincinnati** also worked hard at sharing leadership and information with its partners. Its partners formed working groups as well as ad hoc committees to help confront pressing issues and address concerns. **New York's** project was self-contained initially, but developed an advisory board that met regularly and became active in seeking joint funding for future activities.

Using project data is a key support for developing the attributes of successfully implemented projects. The relationship is mutual; most of these attributes were required to develop a project-based data collection and analysis system (planning, partnership development, grantee involvement, shared leadership and information). We turn now to this component of the PMM.

Table 12. Partnership Arrangements of the Round Two Demonstration Projects

Projects	Operating Partners	Funders	Subcontractors	Advisors	In-Kind
Chicago	Mayor's Office of Workforce Development	DOL	Goodwill, Latino Youth, Scholarship and Guidance, YMCA, Roseborough and Assoc., Youth Employment Services, Free Spirit Media, Institute for Latino Progress, Lawndale Restorative Justice Collaboration, Le Pensuer Youth and Family Services, Leonard and Young Communications	Chicago Public Schools, Probation Department	Scholarship and Guidance counseling services

Latino Youth parenting classes |
| **Cincinnati** | Department of Community Development and Planning (formerly the Workforce Development Division within the Department of Community Development) | DOL | Work Resource Center | Hamilton Co. Job and Family Services, City Public Schools, River City Correctional Center, Lighthouse Youth Services, City Recreation, Real Truth, Inc., Citizen's Committee on Youth, Hillcrest Training School, Cincinnati Police, Children's Defense Fund Greater Cincinnati Project, Ekklesia Dev., Talbert House, Society for the Advancement of Performing Felons, Children's Hospital | Affiliated Computer Systems (the WIA One-Stop for adults), Institute for Career Alternatives, YMCA, and YWCA (providers with contracts to serve youth with WIA funds) |

Projects	Operating Partners	Funders	Subcontractors	Advisors	In-Kind
Colorado	Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Youth Corrections/ LMYSC, Colorado Department of Vocational Rehabilitation	DOL Colorado DYC Colorado Department of Vocational Rehabilitation	Tri-County, Adams, and Arapahoe-Douglas County Workforce Development Centers, Denver Mayor's Office of Workforce Development/ DAYS, Metro. State College Academy School, Center for Network Development	Jefferson County Justice Services, Jefferson County Public Schools, Youth Track, Lost and Found	
Des Moines	Central Iowa Employment and Training Consortium (One-Stop center operator)	DOL	Iowa Comprehensive Human Services Spectrum Resource Program	WIB Youth Advisory Council, Juvenile Court	Youthbuild, Polk County Decategorization, Des Moines Area Community College, Human Service Planning Alliance (United Way), and Grubb YMCA, Polk County Primary Health Care
Erie	Perseus House and Career Link (WIB)	DOL Career Link	The Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies		Erie City School District, Erie County Office of Children and Youth Services, Erie County Juvenile Probation Department, Erie Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation, Family First, Erie Catholic Diocese, C.I.R.C.L.E., and Boy Scouts
Hartford	Capital Region Workforce Development Board	DOL, United Way of the Capital Area Hartford		Mayor's Taskforce on Hartford's Future Workforce	Department of Probation, Community Partners in Action (Coalition Employment Services), Hartford Public Schools, City of Hartford's Department of Health and Human Services, Hartford Metro Alliance, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, College for Women/University of Hartford, Goodwin College, Hartford Youth Network, Boys and Girls Clubs of Hartford, Capitol Region Education Council, and the Village for Children and Families

Projects	Operating Partners	Funders	Subcontractors	Advisors	In-Kind
New York	Friends of Island Academy, New York City Alternative, Adult and Continuing Education Schools and Programs, NY Department of Mental Health, NY Human Resources Administration	DOL; Robin Hood Foundation, Pinkerton Foundation, NY Community Trust, New York Women's Foundation, Van Ameringen Foundation, Mott Foundation, United Way		Andrew Glover Youth Services, City University of New York (CUNY), Times Square Business Improvement District, New York City Housing Authority, Manhattan Supreme Court	Queens and Brooklyn WIA One-Stops, Philliber Research Associates, Austin MacCormick Island Academy, Rikers Island Educational Facility, Rose M. Singer Rosewood High School
Pittsburgh	YouthWorks, Inc., Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board (CareerLink)	DOL	Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic Addison Behavioral Care, Inc., Life's Work of Western Pennsylvania		Allegheny County Juvenile Court, Allegheny County Department of Human Services, Pittsburgh Public Schools, Community Builders Catalyst for Change, University of Pittsburgh
West Palm Beach	Academy for Practical Nursing and Health Occupations, Palm Beach County Workforce Development Board, Probationer's Educational Growth (formerly a sub-contractor), and Morse Geriatric Center	DOL, Research and Training Institute, FL Dept. of Ed., Palm Beach Comm. College Foundation, School District of Palm Beach County, and Migrant Farm Worker Program			Palm Beach County School District, Palm Beach County Employers (Health Care), Boys and Girls Club, Planned Parenthood, American Heart Association, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, and Linking People with Careers.

Data Collection and Analysis

The Data Collection and Analysis component of the PMM is depicted in the lower right-hand corner of Figure 10. Data are collected and reported within project accountability structures; data can also be used to guide project activities and to build a case for sustainability. DOL established 16 data elements that every project

Data Collection and Analysis

needed to collect and report to DOL quarterly; in addition every organization associated with the demonstration required some level of internal data collection and reporting. A few projects expanded both the range of data they collected and the ways that they used data for other than accountability purposes.
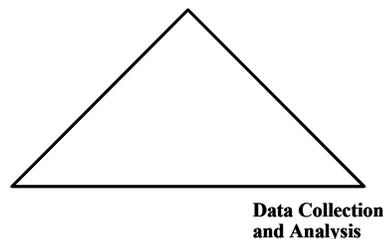
During Round One of the demonstration, the data challenge was designing systematic ways of collecting project data. With the DOL requirement of quarterly reports, every project developed an electronic or web-based data collection system to gather at least the minimum required data and prepare the quarterly reports. (See Appendix H, which includes the data elements). While the barrier in Round One was learning the technical aspects of developing a database, the barriers in Round Two were more cultural: changing habits of administration, agreeing on common data definitions and coding mechanisms, and satisfying confidentiality issues. Few projects developed the individual-level database needed to allow them to identify patterns in attendance, attrition, progress and employment and to help staff close gaps in services and support requests for on-going funding.

In general, all projects collected some individual data on project youth, usually in individual files used by route counselors. But in several projects the information was not collected in a way that allowed route counselors to identify patterns and help determine whether youth received individualized and targeted services in the proper arrangement, intensity, and duration to meet their needs. Because many projects either lacked or were weak using this approach, evaluators concluded that only a few of the nine projects adequately developed this component by the end of the demonstration period.

By the time of the second evaluation site visit, for example, **Chicago's** project had developed a data collection system that included basic information on youth that was shared through a controlled access system among partners. The project, however, found it difficult to acquire some information on youth enrolling in the project from the school and juvenile justice systems, apparently because of confidentiality issues. As a result, much of the information in the system was self-reported by project participants and, therefore, was unconfirmed.

The grantee and project subcontractor set as a major project objective better incorporation of a process for collecting case notes, in a standardized format, so route counselors could use the information more effectively. By the time of the third evaluation site visit, it appeared that case notes were being submitted in a more uniform and useful format.

While this method of collecting data on youth was adequate for tracking and route counseling, it did not have great utility as an analytical tool.

Colorado's project, which focused on youth offenders and was operated by four One-Stop Centers, had a strong information collection system in place. Data were maintained by the four workforce systems. A consultant prepared a bridge program to align the data from the four systems into one report. The level of aggregation made it difficult to track the separate components of the project.

The project in **Pittsburgh** collected data on most project youth, but did not use quantitative data analysis to monitor project implementation or document achievements. Administrators relied on their involvement with and knowledge of the youth to assess project progress. In making the case for the project's sustainability, the approach was to rely on anecdotes about individual youth rather than analysis of employment outcomes such as the quality of jobs youth received.

At the time of the third evaluation site visits in fall 2003, other projects were in the process of developing electronic data collection systems to provide better participant data so the projects could track individualized services to youth and improve decision-making. **Hartford's** project, for example, designed a strong Internet-based data tracking system to collect information on youth. The great potential of the system is that it eventually will link service providers to provide a seamless flow of clients through a citywide system of services. Until all agencies are entering data, however, data collection will remain incomplete and limit data analysis. In addition, while the database has the capability to report outcomes, this will not be fully usable until all participating agencies are recording the accomplishments of youth participating in their programs.

By the time of the third evaluation site visit, the project staff in **Des Moines** were beginning to assess data on youth to make a case for sustainability. Staff had not performed internal evaluations and, because of problems gaining agreement on a common database with the One-Stop, the project was slow in putting together a single database system to facilitate tracking of youth and their outcomes.

The project in **Erie** had not progressed to the point it was using data for effective decision-making. Route counselors documented specific services provided to youth. A route counselor then summarized the information needed for required reports and provided the data to the management at Perseus House as needed. The project did not have an electronic system for data collection and analysis, except as required by DOL. In **New York** Philliber Associates provided an in-kind gift of an annual report to the grantee. FOIA used the Philliber Associates' report, but the narrow range of data collected initially limited the report. The grantee designed and was collecting data for a much-expanded database, but it was not fully functional at the end of the grant. The project in **Cincinnati** had not developed an adequate system that captured either the data elements required by DOL or data on project participants. The frequent turnover of project staff and administrators delayed the development of the project.

West Palm Beach developed a sophisticated system for collecting individual-level program information that it used to monitor youths' progress and document their success. The on-site evaluation coordinator began with a plan for using data to strengthen the program through careful analysis, and the project subsequently added more data elements as it recognized the need for other information beyond that required by DOL. The local evaluator (not funded under the DOL grant) met monthly with the project leadership to review the month's accomplishments and identify areas of concern. The project developed data to present a "case" to community agencies and funders to build support for helping targeted youth and for funding future activities. The project could demonstrate successful outcomes for both in-school and out-of-school youth across a number of dimensions, including retention in school, improvement in reading and math (based on pre- and post-tests), and job placement.

Summary

Developing the organizational attributes of successfully implemented projects and building a project-based data collection and analysis system required project staff and leaders to rethink their approach to delivering services to the target population. Several projects began the demonstration believing that the federal dollars were an opportunity to deliver services to more youth within the existing service delivery structure of their community. DOL, the evaluators and the technical assistance team worked diligently through conference presentations and other means to convince project leadership to rethink how they were delivering services to:

- Involve more partners,

- Expect partners to share responsibility for the youth,

- Expect the community at-large to assume more responsibility for the youth,

- Exercise leadership to realize system changes, and

- Plan for a permanent difference in the way target youth are perceived and served within the community.

Over the course of the demonstration period, all projects made progress in inculcating the attributes described. In this instance, it is easier to review projects by category and to start with Category III projects.

Category III projects received funds primarily to build infrastructure to serve youth offenders and youth at risk of court or gang involvement. **Hartford** and **Cincinnati** began without service delivery systems in place, but developed appropriate plans to do so. Although Hartford's design was just becoming operational by the end of the demonstration period, the local leadership reported that the project was on schedule for a system they estimated would take five to seven years to implement. Cincinnati is an

example of the importance of leadership involvement and staff stability during a major system-change; the design is still evolving, but turnover and the absence of grantee involvement delayed the effort.

West Palm Beach, which had a history of delivering services to youth in the local community, made good use of the DOL grant to build an infrastructure to develop a funding base for continued service to the target youth. Similarly, **Erie** was an experienced youth service delivery agency that used the project to develop a new understanding of what the youth would need to become work ready. While the period of services at Bayfront Maritime Academy proved too limited for this purpose, the grant developed the capacity within Perseus House and its partners to improve the work readiness aspect of its programming.

Initially, **Des Moines** viewed the grant primarily as a way to provide services to more youth in the community. Only as the demonstration evolved did the leadership of the partners recognize the value of broader partnerships to leverage funds and to bring other community services to bear on the needs of the youth. By the end of the demonstration, the project was evolving to incorporate systems change, but without demonstration funds, the change is likely to take longer.

The only Category II project is **Colorado**. From the beginning, the grantee recognized the goal of system change. The Division of Youth Corrections within the Department of Human Services had incorporated many innovations in the care and treatment of youth offenders. The agency had been a demonstration site for the development of the Intensive Aftercare Program (IAP) through which it developed a comprehensive aftercare and reentry program. The DOL grant added workforce development services to this already rich array of services. Plagued by severe budget cuts at the state and county level, the leadership still reported that the partnerships developed would continue between justice and workforce systems, even if some valued activities had to be cut until new funding was found.

The Category I projects received substantially more funds than the Category III projects, and they were expected both to develop the infrastructure and increase services to youth. **Chicago** attempted to deliver the services through a small number of subcontractors and found that the arrangement was not adequate to serve the youth. It changed direction by associating with Goodwill Industries that already had the rudiments of an operating infrastructure in place. Making that infrastructure of partnerships work proved daunting, and the project changed subcontractors several times until it found the right combination. Leadership involvement was crucial to seeing this project realize its potential.

New York's Friends of Island Academy (FOIA) was founded in 1990 to provide services to youth leaving correctional facilities on Rikers Island, so it had more than 10 years to learn the needs of youth. Even so, the project rethought its educational and workforce development service delivery mechanisms several times during the demonstration. Part of the impetus for founding FOIA was a perception that existing services were inadequate and delivered in a way that failed to touch the youth emotionally. The leadership

explored ways to provide all the services within the FOIA organization as a way to deliver the needed services while maintaining an accessible and respectful approach with the youth. As a CBO, however, it has no on-going funding stream. Despite its success in working with the youth and the growing awareness by the media of its special approach, FOIA constantly faced funding shortfalls. During the demonstration, however, FOIA discovered agency and foundation advocates that will provide both funding sources and shared services in the future. Grantee involvement and partnership development were critical for FOIA's service sustainability.

The grant to **Pittsburgh** also went to an organization with a strong history of service to the youth in the target neighborhoods. The grant allowed the project to offer critical substance abuse and mental health services, as well as work readiness services. During the demonstration, the project developed new partnerships and secured new funding. The leadership's knowledge of the youth and the neighborhood, combined with its network of advocates and funders, leave a strong project infrastructure in place at the end of the demonstration.

After Round One, evaluators reported that projects would be stronger if they developed electronic databases of individual level data. With Round Two, evaluators recognized that after the technical aspects of database design were overcome, the cultural aspects of data use needed to be challenged as well. Projects with a strong history of working with youth relied on the judgment of veteran youth workers for an assessment of progress. Without disputing the value of such judgment, this form of administrative knowledge is not useful for identifying patterns of issues with the youth, nor is it sufficient to build a case for sustainability. It has proved, nevertheless, a hard feature of experienced projects to change. Many communities have resolved the confidentiality issues appropriate to shared service files, but several projects were unable to overcome this issue within the demonstration period. The resolution will require strong leadership involvement and deeper levels of partnership commitment.

A Final Note on Partnerships

The term partnership has been used often in this report. Evaluators observed that the term is used for a range of relationships and linkages. Some "partners" met for monthly meetings of information exchange, but little else. Evaluators tended to distinguish this from other relationships as **cooperation** between agencies or organizations. The large number of youth-serving agencies within **Chicago** or **Hartford's** network that are not providing services or funding support would be part of a cooperative arrangement, for example.

Some evaluators noted service providers linked by a carefully structured subcontract or voucher systems for services, and characterized these as **transactions**. The subcontractors in the demonstration were chiefly related to the projects through such formal transactions. Many projects had at least some organizational connections that involved shared planning, shared resources (such as space or a service), and shared

service data. Evaluators termed these as **collaboration**. **Chicago's** relationship with Latino Youth would be such a collaboration.

Considering **Erie's** relationship between Perseus House and CareerLink, these organizations jointly took responsibility for the youth and shared the funding for services; evaluators would term this arrangement an **alliance**. **Colorado's** relationship with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation could also be characterized as an alliance. Evaluators also observed relationships where the parties shared a joint vision, planned for a coordinated response to the youth's needs, collected data in a cooperative and uniform way, and developed resources and stakeholder buy-in together. Evaluators termed such a relationship as a **joint venture**. The relationships among APNHO, PEG, and the local WIB in **West Palm Beach** form such a joint venture.

Every project had a range of valued relationships with other entities in the community, but the evaluators noted the stubborn barrier of moving at least some of the relationships from the level of transaction or collaboration to the levels of alliance or joint venture. This is the barrier that the relationship between the Division of Youth Corrections and the four workforce development agencies in **Colorado** faced at the end of the DOL grant. The long-term sustainability of the coordinated service delivery effort will require that at least one relationship contains a mutual capability and willingness to share responsibility for and funding services required by these high-need youth.

The next section of the report completes the discussion of the Public Management Model by describing the continuous improvement (CI) loop. The section will also describe the technical assistance activities that supported continuous improvement efforts.

Section VI

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT MODEL: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND TECHICAL ASSISTANCE

Evaluators approached the evaluation of Round Two projects as a formative evaluation. The distinctive component of a formative evaluation is sharing both evaluation and technical assistance information among key stakeholders during the demonstration period. In the case of the demonstration, the sharing involved: DOL, the projects, evaluators, and technical assistance specialists. During Round One, evaluation and technical assistance findings were not shared, and that experience seemed like a missed opportunity to pool knowledge for the good of the projects.

DOL agreed that developing a continuous improvement approach to system change efforts held merit, and the key stakeholders were able to share documents, reports, and observations. At the opening grantee conference, federal project officers urged projects to explore better ways to serve the target youth even if such improvements resulted in significant changes to the original implementation plans. Projects were encouraged repeatedly to consider technical assistance as a staff and organizational development opportunity, rather than an admission of error or limitation. These efforts intended to create a safe environment in which projects could learn, change, and improve—an environment to encourage a continuous improvement loop as a valued dimension of the demonstration.

Overview

The evaluation of Round Two projects confirmed that successfully implemented projects conducted self-assessments and actively sought and accepted available technical assistance as part of their continuous improvement process. Successful projects also identified objectives they sought to reach as they prepared implementation plans and used them as milestones to gauge their progress. They then periodically assessed their progress toward reaching the objectives and took necessary corrective action when they did not. This approach, in essence, describes the continuous improvement process, which is the fifth component of the PMM and indicated by the arrows in the graphic.
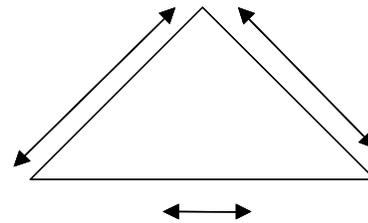
In observing second round projects, the evaluation team identified three pathways that projects could follow to change and improve service delivery mechanisms:

    1.   Projects requested and used technical assistance;

2. Projects applied evaluation findings and other learning practices to produce integrated service delivery system/approaches; and
3. Projects initiated significant changes.

1. Technical Assistance

Technical assistance was especially important to Round Two projects because it served as a valuable improvement and feedback mechanism. The task given to the technical assistance team by DOL was to design and conduct conferences for the grantees, monitor grantees technical assistance needs, and provide on-going technical assistance.

In general, specialized technical assistance plans were developed independently for each project and focused on each project's specific needs. Issues that applied to all or most of the projects became topics for conferences and conference calls involving all the project teams. The technical assistance team developed a listserv and a toll-free telephone line to encourage interaction among projects and between projects and the technical assistance team. The technical assistance team used the listserv to disseminate news of funding opportunities, research on topics related to the project, and conferences or workshops that could benefit staff. Telephone calls to projects on a regular basis kept the technical assistance team apprised of project development. Planning conference calls with consultants and DOL staff preceded any technical assistance event. Staff from Research and Evaluation Associates visited every project at least once, in addition to the consultant visits.

During initial site visits and telephone conference calls, the technical assistance team met with project stakeholders, discussed project implementation, and available technical assistance. More specifically, the team arranged special-topic consulting visits, special-topic conference calls and peer-to-peer site visits followed by technical assistance at the home site. Staff found that peer-to-peer visits were particularly useful when they were followed by technical assistance at the home site to develop the local application.

Over the course of the demonstration, the technical assistance and evaluation teams developed an interactive relationship. Specifically, information gleaned during site visits by the evaluation team that indicated a need for technical assistance was shared with the technical assistance team for follow-up action as part of the continuous improvement process. The technical assistance team participated in the evaluator debriefings described earlier that occurred after each round of evaluation site visits.

In addition, evaluators and technical assistance specialists collaborated in developing grantee conference agendas and workshops. Grantees and key partners participated in three conferences: Arlington, VA, in October 2001, New Orleans, LA, in April 2002, and Chicago, IL, from April 29 to May 1, 2003. Each conference was designed to have a final product developed by each grantee team. An implementation plan came from the first conference; projects developed a sustainability plan during the second, and worked on special topics during the third. At all three conferences, the evaluators and the technical

assistance team met with project teams individually before or after the general sessions of the day to review issues and plan for the future.

During these conferences, the evaluators described the Public Management Model and used examples from the grantees' experience to support their use. One session focused on the many uses of data: accountability, problem solving and sustainability. Sustainability was a topic at each conference. Project teams shared their experiences and received help and advice from their counterparts in other projects.

The PMM guided the technical assistance effort. In general, all but two projects reflected on their technical assistance needs, requested technical assistance, and then attempted to use the ideas and other advice offered by the technical assistance team. Technical assistance was generally requested and provided in the following areas:

- Partnership development;

- Implementation and strategic plan development;

- Job retention;

- Linkages to the workforce;

- Case management (route counseling); and

- Sustainability.

The projects used the assistance to help them devise ways to expand existing services, develop strategies to build community capacity, and strengthen relationships with other community organizations or agencies providing services for youth. Special emphasis was placed on sustaining the projects after grant funding ended.

Second round projects also could request help through the technical assistance team from the National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC) to augment assistance provided by the technical assistance team. NYEC makes awards to exemplary youth employment programs around the country, and it received grant funds to send members of these award-winning programs as expert consultants to other youth employment efforts. Two such opportunities occurred during the demonstration project: a consultant advised Hartford on stakeholder development and a consultant advised **New York** on employment retention.

All second round projects participated in multiple technical assistance sessions or events conducted by a Research and Evaluation Associates staff member or a consultant. Technical assistance visits provided staff an opportunity to review each project's progress and needs for additional technical assistance. During the visits, technical assistance staff provided projects with a summary of their observations, including feedback and recommendations to project managers. Often, the need for technical assistance in specific

areas became apparent to both the technical assistance staff and the project during site visits. In some cases, projects submitted technical assistance request forms that led to a technical assistance event arranged through the joint efforts of the technical assistance team, the project staff, DOL, and a consultant. (See Table 16 on pages 104-108 for a list of technical assistance activities directed to individual projects.)

Although most responses to technical assistance requests were addressed through the use of a consultant with expertise on a specific topic, the technical assistance team also promoted peer-to-peer direct technical assistance. In one instance, a Round Two project visited a Round One project to learn how it implemented its plan. In another instance, a cross-site program visit was coordinated involving four Round Two sites.

Three sites interested in developing plans for sustainability visited a project that had developed effective sustainability strategies that were yielding good results. Cross-site visits appeared to be an effective means to provide projects with an opportunity to actually see other sites' operations and were also opportunities for peers to engage in discussion around common issues. Specific examples of technical assistance are described in the following paragraphs.

Colorado's project made an early request for technical assistance to help coordinate aftercare and workforce development services (it went to Avon Park, a first round project that was also a Category II project). In addition, the staff had twice refined its management information system because of issues that occurred with DOL's Quarterly Data Elements Report. The project requested and received assistance in developing an employer network and in increasing employment retention.

After a baseline visit by the technical assistance team, project staffs from **Des Moines** and **Erie** attended a peer-to-peer group technical assistance event at the **West Palm Beach** project. Both projects received follow-up assistance in designing a sustainability plan for their own projects. The evaluator reported that the staffs said they appreciated the assistance. After attending the post-award conference in Arlington, the project in **New York City** organized its implementation plan around the nine attributes, based on the technical assistance provided at the conference. The staff also was open to a recommendation to go to **West Palm Beach** to attend the group peer-to-peer session on sustainability. New York, too, received follow-up assistance in applying the experience of West Palm Beach to its project. New York also asked for assistance to improve job retention among project participants through NYEC.

After implementation delays, **Chicago's** project received technical assistance to get it going. **Pittsburgh's** project staff used technical assistance and found it helpful. The project changed its route counseling approach after a technical assistance session on bi-level route counseling.

2. Use of Evaluations and Other Learning Practices

Another way that projects instigated a continuous improvement approach was to use evaluations as tools to improve operations. Evaluators reviewed the evaluation report findings with the project staffs at subsequent evaluation visits, and projects introduced assessment practices into their on-going operations. (See Table 13.)

The project in **Des Moines,** for example, revised its management structure within the first six months of operation, which occurred at least in part as a response to the evaluation report from the first site visit. **Hartford's** project used its advisory committee of partners to get input on the design of the Hartford Connects database system and on the training curriculum for front-line youth. Both components were revised and refined based on continuing feedback. For example, the training curriculum was revised several times to reflect varying needs of agencies' staff so that it would not be a one-time workshop but become a more extensive program for professional development.

The project in **West Palm Beach** included an evaluation coordinator, who provided a monthly review to focus on objectives and outcomes. The project in essence had its own evaluation plan apart from the DOL evaluation process. It included not only record keeping, but also information obtained from:

Table 13. Projects' Use of Evaluation

Chicago	▪ Grantee closely monitored compliance of subcontractors ▪ Subcontractor formed consortium that met monthly to assess progress
Cincinnati	▪ Periodic review of implementation plan to track performance
Colorado	▪ Coalition of partners provided oversight
Des Moines	▪ Responsive to findings from external evaluators
Erie	▪ Used TQM to review progress
Hartford	▪ Advisory committee of partners provided ongoing feedback
New York	▪ Project units and leaders met weekly to determine progress and needs ▪ Collected and analyzed data to correct deficiencies and improve operations
Pittsburgh	▪ Informal information sharing and reflection during quarterly meetings to identify problems and possible solutions
West Palm Beach	▪ Internal evaluation coordinator focused on objectives and outcomes ▪ Used implementation plan to monitor progress and realign objectives as needed

- ▪ Focus groups of clients and parents;

- ▪ Formal and informal reports from health occupations school's faculty;

- ▪ Instructors and guidance counselors at the high schools; and

- ▪ Route counselors, as well as employers during the clinical work experiences of youth.

The project also received regular reports and held meetings with staff from juvenile justice, the corrections department, the anti-gang unit, and probation officers.

Project managers in **Pittsburgh** used assessment for continuous improvement in an informal way, using primarily informed observations rather than quantitative data analysis to identify implementation problems and develop solutions. The information sharing and self-reflection that occurred at quarterly meetings with project partners seemed to be especially useful. The meetings were well attended and partners discussed substantive issues/problems and identified solutions.

In **Cincinnati,** the grantee staff was committed to project self-assessment, but the self-assessments led to few changes in the project. The primary tool for project assessment appeared to be the project's 50-page implementation plan. Periodic review of the plan provided an opportunity to determine where things were not "on track" and when to take corrective action. The written record of these reviews suggested, however, that the action generally was to revise the deadline for task completion. Although some of the originally planned evaluation and continuous improvement activities were not implemented, project staff expressed an interest in an internal evaluation to supplement their current project monitoring.

The grantee in **Chicago** closely monitored the performance of the subcontractor that managed the project's day-to-day operations. The staff also provided technical assistance and sometimes intervened to help the project correct deficiencies and improve operations, such as when problems surfaced with other governmental agencies. A consortium of partners met monthly to consider how the project was progressing and offered advice on how to provide services more effectively.

Each unit of **New York City's** project met weekly to review what was working and what needed improvement. Philliber Associates made an in-kind contribution of data entry and analysis, and the project staff collected the data for this. Philliber already pointed out to the staff that the agency had a participant retention problem, and the project designed outreach and education activities partially in response to that need. During the last technical assistance visit, the staff received technical assistance for job retention, as well.

Colorado's project used an outside facilitator to develop stakeholder buy-in; they had gone through their "storming-and-norming" phase and became a coalition of strong partners. The partners developed a work readiness curriculum that the staff revised twice until it began to achieve the results it wanted. The staff for **Erie's** project used the "total quality management" (TQM) approach to organizational improvement. Staff reviewed progress using continuous improvement teams. If there was a problem that needed addressing, these teams made the recommendations to the appropriate supervisor. They made a number of changes in the BroadReach project based on an informal review of the first year effort.

All nine Round Two projects improved their service delivery as a result of other learning practices within the organizations. Some changes and improvements during the first two years of the demonstration were small, but many others were major and important to help the projects provide more efficient and effective service delivery. (See Table 14.)

Colorado's project, for example, had a strong aftercare process overseen by the client manager (parole officer); the employment component was added and became part of the "client manager's discrete case plan." The workforce specialists, who were funded by DOL, worked with the youth while they were incarcerated and then maintained that support upon release. The specialists received all the training needed to attend events

Table 14. Learning Practices for Integrated Service Delivery

Chicago	▪ Developed consortium of 40 CBOs to ensure that youth receive an adequate array of services
Cincinnati	▪ Working with partners on long-range plan to create seamless system of service delivery
Colorado	▪ Aftercare process overseen by client manager ▪ Trained workforce specialists work with youth while incarcerated and continue after release
Des Moines	▪ "Wrap around" process ensure integrated services ▪ Project "supporters" work as a team with clients to identify strengths and weaknesses
Hartford	▪ Developed an Internet-based database of route counseling information ▪ Agreements with 23 agencies
New York	▪ Convened an advisory board to increase visibility and connect with other organizations
West Palm Beach	▪ Used route counseling to ensure provision of relevant services ▪ ISS continuously reviewed and updated

and sessions with the youth at the correctional facility. The project also sent them to the National Youth Development Practitioners Institute. Policies and operations were systematically reviewed by the project's consortium of stakeholders, with improvements in mind.

In **Des Moines**, once a youth became involved in the project, a "wrap around" process was scheduled, which became the central method for ensuring integrated service delivery, which also involved the youth in developing his/her own plans. The route counselor convened a session where what the project termed "supporters" (representatives of relevant service providers) worked with the youth to identify strengths and barriers he/she faced. The range of services encompassed all types of services envisioned by the demonstration and produced a fully integrated service approach. As the project developed, the staff convened project participants every morning for a check-in period. The staff found that they could respond to youth's needs better as they saw them every day and could detect troubles before they affected the youth's participation.

Development of a comprehensive system for improving the integration of delivery of services to the target population was a key component of **Hartford's** project. The central feature of this system was Hartford Connects, an Internet-based database of route counseling information on youth receiving services. The staff members of youth service delivery organizations participated in the planning and development of this system change.

Cincinnati's project identified appropriate partners and worked with them on a long-range plan that had the potential to create a seamless system of effective service delivery. Implementing the system was delayed by frequent turnovers in staff and a new agency configuration. In **New York City,** the grantee made a series of significant changes during the demonstration based on its effort to assess operations continually. It developed an advisory board of stakeholders to overcome the project's isolation. It redesigned its education and work readiness components following careful assessment of its operations. It received a grant to evaluate its organizational structure and operations. Based on this evaluation, the project reorganized, reduced staff and simplified its accounting system.

West Palm Beach used route counseling as the principal means for ensuring that clients received a full range of services. The focal point of this process was the Youth Goals and Individual Service Strategy form, which the youth completed with his/her route counselor when the youth entered the program. They updated the plan as services were received and as other needs were identified. The grantee provided services that directly related to occupational training, job placement, and job retention, and obtained other services through partners and community agencies, including: health care, housing, mental health, substance abuse treatment, alternative sentencing, and aftercare.

Chicago's project got off to a slow start, apparently because its initial implementation plan failed to include a broad-based and coordinated service delivery strategy. By assessing the situation early, the grantee made significant changes. The initial project plan called for splitting service delivery between two service providers. By late 2001, the grantee had, with guidance from the technical assistance team, rethought how the project should proceed and sought help from Goodwill Industries, which had established a consortium of community-based organizations.

3. Significant Changes

Projects closed the continuous improvement loop by making significant changes in their operations. Some of these changes have already been described in the previous paragraphs as projects changed based on evaluations or through other learning practices. The evaluation team found evidence that this was the case to some extent among the projects. (See Table 15)

The projects were encouraged to keep changing their implementation strategies until they served youth effectively. **New York** studied the patterns of enrollment and realized that it was losing youth with the deepest problems before they had even finished enrolling; it changed the enrollment process to administer an early screening to identify high-need youth. These youth then began to receive services even before completing all the steps in the enrollment process. New York changed its relationship to existing advocates and added additional supporters and funders, as well.

Colorado's staff reported that it needed to reach a newly released youth with an incentive within two days or risk losing the youth. It began offering transportation cards to them to

attend work or school as a quick way to assure them that the project could help. It changed its work readiness curriculum and altered its data collection procedures. It designed a management information system that allowed each county to maintain its data as usual, yet produce an integrated project-level information system with common data elements. Youth were not returning directly to their home counties, so the workforce specialists had to work out of other counties' satellite and main One-Stop offices. Project staff continued to reach out for ways to improve, finishing the demonstration period with workshops on employer network development and job retention strategies.

Four projects realized within their first operating year that the partnership configurations were not workable, and they reconfigured the partnerships and service delivery processes.

When the **Chicago** project found problems with the initial design, for example, it completely overhauled it and broadened the project's reach by seeking a subcontractor better suited to handle the project's day-to-day management. By the time of the third evaluation site visit, the project, faced with several pressing issues, replaced the original route counseling unit because of inadequate performance and was planning additional realignments with partners to streamline service delivery to youth.

Perseus House in **Erie** used Quality Improvement Teams that met every two weeks to discuss the project's progress. Based on the demonstration experience, **Erie** designed a charter school that would use

Table 15. Significant Changes Identified for Projects

Chicago	▪ Sought subcontractor that was better able to handle daily management; ▪ Overhauled project design to broaden project reach; and ▪ Replaced route counseling unit.
Cincinnati	▪ Changed contractor to provide route counseling; and ▪ Changed key personnel.
Colorado	▪ Developed an MIS that allowed counties to collect data as usual and contribute to integrated project-level system with common data elements and ▪ Revised STEPS until it was useful.
Des Moines	▪ Revised management structure and ▪ Developed a daily check-in procedure.
Erie	▪ Discontinued workforce prep activities at Bayfront, but developed a new charter school that uses the work readiness tools.
Hartford	▪ Revised training curriculum from one-time workshop to extensive training counting toward associate's degree; and ▪ Changed database system elements based on user recommendations.
New York	▪ Expanded education program to meet youth needs; and ▪ Worked with more partners and trained peer mentors.
Pittsburgh	▪ Changed route counseling system, substance abuse assessment and treatment plan; ▪ Expanded target area; ▪ Resolved confidentiality concerns; and ▪ Implemented incentive plan for employers to hire youth.
West Palm Beach	▪ Began project with multiple industry targets planned, and changed to limit training to health care industry; and ▪ Identified employment retention as an issue by using its comprehensive database system to better track clients.

the teaching approaches and materials from the project. The grantee, Perseus House, and a major partner, the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies, found that the short-term program at the Bayfront Center was insufficient to meet the needs of target youth. As a result, the 8-week program for workforce preparation at the center was to be discontinued at the end of the DOL grant funding. The design for workforce activities developed by the project will continue and expand at Perseus House, however, through the new charter school.

The project in **New York City** had not intended to offer many education activities but found that it had to do so to meet the needs of its youth. It has acquired three certified teachers, one with funding from the school board. The project also began collaborating with new partners, acquired new space, and began training peer mentors.

Hartford's project used its advisory committee to get input on the design of the Hartford Connects database system and on the training curriculum for the Youth Development Practitioners Academy. Both components were revised and refined, based on continuing feedback. The training curriculum, for example, was changed several times to reflect varying needs of agencies' staff, so that it would not be simply a one-time workshop but a more extensive program for professional development. The project also continually sought feedback from users of the Hartford Connects database system so that it would be responsive to the varying needs of the agencies and thus increase the likelihood of buy-in and commitment to the system over time.

There have been several significant changes in **Pittsburgh's** project during the past year. Changes were made in the route counseling system, substance abuse assessment and treatment plan, and the target area was expanded. Confidentiality concerns that limited partners' ability to share information were also addressed and resolved. As an incentive for employers to hire project youth, the project began using a YouthWorks program that paid part of a youth's salary for the first six months. There were several other important changes over the project's course. The project:

- Dropped the justice liaison role as unnecessary;

- Added group orientation sessions to make expectations clearer to youth and to start the process of their considering themselves part of a group of youth;

- Began to use more small group activities to increase a sense of connection with their peers; and

- Revised its approach to developing individual service strategies to be more efficient and put more responsibility on the youth to identify needs.

By virtue of using its implementation plan to monitor progress toward realigning objectives, the project in **West Palm Beach** made a commitment to continuous improvement from the beginning. Staff devised a comprehensive database system for

developing a thorough profile of clients and for tracking individual progress through all components of the program, from basic skills to occupational training to placement.

Probably the best example of organizational learning was reflected in the experience with employers outside the health care industry. Originally, youth offenders with whom PEG worked were expected to go through a work readiness and training process that enabled them to be placed in a range of jobs. When the project recognized that many employers were reluctant to hire youth offenders, project staff began to work with youth coming out of the justice system whom they felt could be encouraged to consider occupational training in health care. This approach proved successful as these youth made substantial progress in completing health programs provided by the grantee and then gaining jobs in the health care industry.

On-Going Struggles

Despite these advances, projects continued to struggle, even with issues that received considerable attention during the project. As the text described earlier, few projects made the best use of project data, and many projects failed to link successfully with the local One-Stop workforce development system. The demonstration did not develop a consistent approach to the design and delivery of workforce development activities. Despite repeated urging, sustainability strategies were not in place for several projects when DOL funds were depleted.

Many of these struggles can be traced to the difficulty of implementing the cross-system service delivery strategies envisioned by the demonstration. Projects had implemented the various services listed in the SGA, but the delivery mechanisms and the coordination were still being developed. While Round Two projects developed data collection systems, few had developed the management skills to incorporate data findings into their stream of administrative decision-making.

One-Stop systems (even when the grantee was a One-Stop center) were still learning how to serve youth better and were preoccupied with the press of displaced workers. The economic atmosphere within which the demonstration operated made the plight of displaced workers a higher priority, and these workers were generally easier to place than project youth. One subtle finding from the **Colorado** project was that there had been no negative incidents involving project youth at One-Stop centers, and staff admitted that they were indistinguishable from other youth they served.

Each project designed its workforce development curriculum and activities. Projects did not develop or use certified curricula, nor were the curricula a major concern. The goal was to incorporate these services into youth support activities, and the structure, quality, intensity and duration were issues that did not surface in some projects. The **Colorado** STEPS curriculum and the **West Palm Beach** workforce development activities are notable exceptions.

Sustainability was a stretch for many projects during the short duration of the demonstration. Project staffs were generally preoccupied with the struggle to implement the basic project at the time they should have been searching for ways to complete and sustain it. **Cincinnati** embedded the project within WIA as a path to sustainability; **West Palm Beach** and **New York** collaborators wrote multiple proposals for additional funding; and **Pittsburgh** continued to solicit foundation and corporate funding for its projects. **Erie** will continue to draw on community resources, but all these projects were affected by the difficult economic climate during the demonstration.

Summary

The projects in Round Two demonstrated the value of learning from technical assistance, evaluations, and structured organizational learning methods. While some projects changed more than others, all the projects demonstrated organizational learning by closing the continuous improvement loop on some aspects of their designs.

Evaluators and technical assistance specialists collaborated on the design of conferences and on presentations and workshops. Projects received technical assistance from the Research and Evaluation Associates team, but also from NYEC, or from sources local to the project. A listserv and frequent telephone calls maintained an interactive relationship between the technical assistance staff and the projects.

Projects engaged in learning practices. Some used regular meetings of staff and administrators while others used quality teams or an outside evaluator to provide guidance and feedback.

Projects changed and, in some cases, changed multiple times until they were better at meeting project goals. Nonetheless, projects struggled with elements of the demonstration and were affected by the economic downturn of the period.

The next section will summarize the strategies projects used to address the goal of better serving youth offenders and youth at risk of gang or court involvement.

Table 16. Technical Assistance Requested and Provided

Chicago, IL

1. *January 16, 2002*: Technical assistance staff met with key project staff, provided review of project's status and offered recommendations for next steps. Specifically, project has been inactive since grant was awarded and was considering modifications to the proposal. However, appropriate notifications were not submitted to DOL. Technical assistance staff offered guidance to project staff regarding what next steps to take to notify DOL. It conducted a review of proposed modifications and met with the prospective partner, Goodwill.

2. November 14-15, 2002: Technical assistance staff conducted a technical assistance status update visit. Since the last visit in January 2002, the project made significant progress towards implementation.

3. *July 10-11, 2003:* Technical assistance staff conducted a site visit to the YouthLink project. This served as the final on-site visit by the technical assistance staff before the end of the federal funding period.

4. *August 21, 2003:* A consultant co-facilitated a meeting between the YouthLink project partners and grantee agencies to assist them to develop a mission, goals, and objectives and to process challenges among the partners.

Cincinnati, OH

1. *December 11, 2001:* A consultant facilitated a planning meeting with the City of Cincinnati Employment and Training Division and key stakeholders of the local youth service delivery system. The objectives for the meeting were to assist stakeholders to gain an understanding of the goals and objectives of the demonstration project, give stakeholders an opportunity to provide input into the development of the local vision and mission, and reach consensus on the best approach for working together to implement the project.

2. *May 8-9, 2002*: A consultant provided training to address fundamentals of Bi-Level Case Management. Training was intended to provide frontline case managers with the skills to effectively provide services to their clients.

3. *June 27-28, 2002*: Technical assistance staff conducted a site visit to review the status of the project and assess its progress to enroll clients. This visit led to lengthy conversations with the technical assistance staff, the DOL Project Officer, and project staff about how to facilitate the move from planning to action.

4. *July 16-17,* 2002: Technical assistance staff and the federal Project Officer conducted a joint site visit to assess the status of the project and provide recommendations to facilitate implementation.

5. *August 14-15, 2003:* Technical assistance staff conducted a site visit that served as the final on-site visit by the technical assistance staff before the end of the federal funding period. Staff encouraged administrators to review its eligibility policies for demonstration enrollment and to strengthen relationships with the Department of Corrections to facilitate outreach to youth before release.

Denver, CO

1. *March 26-27, 2002*: The project staff made a cross-site project visit to the Round One StreetSmart project to observe, learn and adapt their strategies on transitioning youth to the community.

2. *May 30-31, 2002*: A consultant facilitated a session with the Colorado project staff and partners to assist the group with assessing the status of the project. The group reviewed organizational structure and operations using the public management model as a guide for the assessment.

3. *June 26-27, 2002*: Technical assistance staff conducted site visits to both Rounds One and Two project sites in Colorado. These were initial visits for the new Senior Technical Assistance Specialist. The visits were an opportunity for technical assistance staff to become familiar with both projects' operations and to meet with the project managers. Staff was also able to view both a Category I and Category II demonstration model.

4. *July 31-August 1, 2003:* Technical assistance staff conducted a final site visit to the Colorado project.

5. *August 25-27, 2003:* A team of consultants provided training and facilitation to Colorado project staff, consortium members, and other partners on engaging employers and helping youth adequately address questions on employment applications regarding criminal history. The consultants also assisted key stakeholders to develop a plan to establish an employer network.

Des Moines, IA

1. *September 27, 2002:* A consultant recommended career assessment instruments in response to Des Moines' request for recommendations of vocational/career assessment tools. Based upon the information included in the technical assistance request as well as additional information provided during the August 27, 2002 planning conference call, the consultant researched a variety of automated tools and identified a couple of assessments that would meet Des Moines' needs.

2. *October 30-31, 2002*: Technical assistance staff conducted a Round Two baseline site visit. During the visit, staff made several observations and recommendations to the project administrators.

3. *January 10, 2003:* Technical assistance staff coordinated a visit to the West Palm Beach demonstration project in response to Des Moines' request for assistance with sustainability challenges in light of the impending expiration of their DOL grant. This was an opportunity for Des Moines to learn how West Palm Beach had implemented a successful sustainability strategy and to identify elements that may be applicable for their project.

4. *February 19, 2003:* Technical assistance staff and a consultant conducted a follow-up session to the January 10, 2003 sustainability cross-site visit in West Palm Beach. The goal of the session was to help Des Moines develop a sustainability plan.

Erie, PA

1. *September 11-12, 2002*: Technical assistance staff conducted a Round Two baseline visit and made recommendations to project managers on areas to enhance the project.

2. *January 10, 2003:* Technical assistance staff coordinated a visit to the West Palm Beach demonstration project in response to Erie's request for assistance to address sustainability challenges in light of the impending expiration of their DOL grant. This was an opportunity for Erie to learn how West Palm Beach had implemented a successful sustainability strategy and to identify elements that may be applicable for their project.

3. *February 11, 2003:* Technical assistance staff and a consultant conducted a follow-up session to the January 10, 2003 sustainability cross-site visit in West Palm Beach. The goal of the session was to help Perseus House, Inc. develop a sustainability plan.

Hartford, CT

1. *January 29, 2002*: Technical assistance staff conducted site visit to facilitate planning, to meet partners, and to develop a training institute for frontline staff who provide services to youth. Staff from the National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC) conducted a presentation to the group via speakerphone as part of our collaborative technical assistance effort.

2. *November 12-13, 2002*: Technical assistance staff conducted a technical assistance baseline visit. The Hartford Youth Development Practitioner Academy was unveiled in October 2002 and began training youth workers in February 2003. Technical assistance staff and the project staff agreed that route counseling training would enhance the delivery of services among the Hartford Youth Access partners.

3. *February 5, 2003:* A consultant conducted Bi-Level Case Management training for front line youth workers and case managers. The training participants included the two Hartford Youth Access case managers and direct service providers from partner agencies throughout the city. The training was well received and the project indicated an interest in receiving additional case management training.

4. *June 19-20, 2003:* A consultant conducted a follow-up session to the February 5, 2003 case management training session. This technical assistance was designed as a two-day session. Day one was targeted for the individuals who attended the February 5th session and day two was targeted to new participants.

5. *July 28-29, 2003:* Technical assistance staff conducted a final site visit. Staff recommended that the project strengthen relationships with employers and identify ways to access mental health and substance abuse services for youth.

New York City, NY

1. *January 30, 2002*: Technical assistance staff conducted site visit and met with key project staff and several program participants. Staff recommended strategies for promoting the program to secure additional support to sustain services.

2. *October 10-11, 2002*: Technical assistance staff and consultant conducted a Round Two baseline visit. Technical assistance staff did not observe any significant issues, but it provided several recommendations to enhance service delivery.

3. *January 10, 2003:* Technical assistance staff coordinated a visit to the West Palm Beach demonstration project in response to Friends of Island Academy's (FOIA's) request for assistance to address sustainability challenges in light of the impending expiration of its DOL grant. This was an opportunity for FOIA to learn how West Palm Beach had implemented a successful sustainability strategy and to identify elements that may be applicable for their project.

4. *February 7, 2003:* Research and Evaluation Associates collaborated with the National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC) to respond to the Friends of Island Academy (FOIA) technical assistance request for assistance to improve employment retention among their project participants. NYEC arranged for Mr. Thomas M. Buzbee, Executive Director of Gulf Coast Trades Center, to visit FOIA and work with them on identifying job retention strategies. Gulf Coast Trades Center had realized some success in the area of employment retention and it serves a similar youth offender population.

5. *February 17, 2003:* Technical assistance staff and a consultant conducted a follow-up session to the January 10, 2003 sustainability cross-site visit in West Palm Beach. The goal of the session was to help FOIA develop a sustainability plan.

6. *August 4-6, 2003:* A consultant provided case management (route counseling) training to Friends of Island Academy staff. The training emphasized the essential need for management and staff to work together as a team and to be a high performance work organization, followed by an overview of the case management process at the service delivery level emphasizing six essential elements for both project success and service effectiveness.

Pittsburgh, PA

1. *March 7-8, 2002*: A consultant provided a one-day training to case managers on route counseling.

2. *November 25-26, 2002*: Technical assistance staff conducted a status update visit. Technical assistance staff did not observe any significant issues, but it provided several recommendations to enhance service delivery. The project staff requested technical assistance to train its case managers on route counseling principles.

3. *April 21-23, 2003:* Consultant provided route counseling training for staffs from BluePrint, YouthWorks, Inc., a mentoring project and an adult justice service worker.

West Palm Beach, FL

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1.   *September 19-20, 2002*: Technical assistance staff conducted a Round Two baseline site visit. Technical assistance staff realized that the project received on-going advice and guidance from the local evaluator. Technical assistance staff observed that the West Palm Beach project had established an effective and collaborative strategy for sustainability.

2.   *January 10, 2003:* Technical assistance staff facilitated a peer-to-peer cross-site visit. The visit was designed in response to technical assistance requests from three Youth Offender Demonstration Projects for assistance to address sustainability challenges in light of the impending expiration of their respective grants. Based on the September 2002 baseline site visit to West Palm Beach, technical assistance staff recognized the unique and effective sustainability approach the project and its partners had established. The cross-site visit provided an opportunity for the Des Moines, IA, Erie, PA, and New York, NY project staffs to learn how West Palm Beach implemented a successful sustainability strategy and identify aspects that would be replicable for their projects. A consultant attended the session and provided follow-up sessions with each of the three projects to assist them in the planning a customized sustainability plan for their projects.

3.   *August 28-29, 2003*: Technical assistance staff conducted a final site visit.

4.   *September 19, 2003:* A consultant conducted a technical assistance conference call for West Palm Beach in response to its technical assistance request for strategies and best practices to improve employment retention among project participants.

Section VII

STRATEGIES FOR SERVING YOUTH OFFENDERS AND YOUTH AT RISK OF COURT OR GANG INVOLVEMENT

The report has described the demonstration projects according to the components of the Public Management Model as a means of understanding the facets that constitute them. This section summarizes the strategies each project used to achieve the overall goal of assisting youth offenders and youth at risk of court or gang involvement become ready for work and gain employment at wages that would prevent further dependency and recidivism.

Overview

The report of strategies projects used to realize their goals of serving the target youth is divided by funding categories:

- **Category I** projects were funded at the $1,500,000 level to expand work readiness and job placement services with gang prevention and suppression activities, alternative sentencing, aftercare and route counseling to youth offenders and youth at risk of court or gang involvement.

- The **Category II** project was funded at the $2,000,000 level to provide comprehensive school-to-work education and training to incarcerated youth while they were in residential confinement and work readiness, job placement, and aftercare/reentry services after they return to their home community.

- **Category III** projects were funded at the $350,000 level to develop linkages that strengthened the coordination of prevention and aftercare services.

Projects differed as to the extent that the grantee and the community had already been delivering services to the target population. Some projects had years of experience serving the target population while others were initiating such services. Some of the partners had years of experience working with each other while others worked together for the first time during the proposal preparation or even after the grant was awarded.

Projects also differed in whom they identified as target youth. Within the age range of 14 to 24 years, some focused on 14-17 year olds while others focused on youth 18 years old and older. Some projects limited eligibility to youth offenders while others included both youth offenders and youth at risk of gang or court involvement. Generally speaking, project activities did not vary much by offender status, but they varied considerably by the age of participants. In other words, the services the youth received were not dependent on whether the youth was an offender or not, but younger youth were more

directed to education activities than to employment activities and older youth were more directed toward work readiness and employment, regardless of their offender status.

With only nine projects, nine points of observation, and these multiple differences, the report on strategies projects employed does not intend to rank the projects, only to describe the strategies the nine projects used in their particular circumstances.

In the following paragraphs, the report identifies the strategies that projects used for:

- Recruitment and service delivery, and

- Addressing the components of the Public Management Model.

Category I Projects

The Model Community projects in Round Two were located in **Chicago**, **New York** and **Pittsburgh**. These communities are all large cities, and the focus for Chicago and Pittsburgh were specific neighborhoods. The New York project enrolled youth exiting from confinement of Rikers Island, and they could be from anywhere in New York City.

Chicago

Recruitment and Services. Initially, Chicago intended to serve youth of all ages and of both offender status and at risk of court involvement in three neighborhoods: North Lawndale, South Lawndale, and Austin. The initial partnership arrangement did not work out, so the grantee, the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development (MOWD), initiated discussions with Goodwill Industries, which had organized a consortium of youth service providers. At about the same time Goodwill received a Round Three demonstration award, so Goodwill became a MOWD subcontractor and focused on younger youth with Round Two funds. As a grantee in its own right, Goodwill focused on older youth using Round Three funds. By the last year of the Round Two grant, the funds for Round Three were depleted while some Round Two funds remained. MOWD returned to the initial plan of serving both older and younger youth for the remainder of Round Two funding. Participation in the project was voluntary for all youth.

With the frequent changes in partner and subcontractor arrangements, the project did not meet its enrollment goals. Parole officers initially were reluctant to refer youth because they were not pleased by the activities and documentation of the original service providers. When Scholarship and Guidance and Latino Youth received subcontracts for direct services, parole officers increased the number of referrals, almost to the point that the project worried about receiving more youth than they could serve. Latino Youth and Scholarship and Guidance continued, however, to struggle with retention of youth in the program. Latino Youth sponsored field trips and involved youth in planning activities as retention strategies; it also created a friendly atmosphere where the youth were encouraged to spend their free time.

Case managers at Latino Youth and Scholarship and Guidance administered counseling assessments to recruited youth; they received some assessments from the courts; and they assessed and referred them to partner agencies for psychiatric, psychological, educational, and vocational needs, if they thought that they were necessary. Route counseling was divided between the two agencies by Zip code with Scholarship and Guidance serving youth in North Lawndale and Austin and Latino Youth serving youth in South Lawndale. While subcontracts were the vehicle for obtaining services through the demonstration grant period, MOWD believed that fees for services would provide more flexibility in the future.

Latino Youth operated an alternative school, so some youth attended school on site. Other school-aged youth were encouraged to stay in the Chicago Public Schools. Latino Youth provided work readiness training to younger youth, and Youth Employment Services (YES) provided work readiness services to older youth. YES provided job placement services to older youth.

The anti-gang component was delivered to project youth through the YMCA. There was no alternative sentencing or reentry component to the project. Latino Youth offered graphic arts activities that it hoped would help the youth with employment; there were no other vocational training activities provided by the project. Roseboro and Associates offered substance abuse interventions to the youth who required this service, and youth with mental health needs were referred to Scholarship and Guidance for counseling. Should there be a need for health or dental services, youth were referred to Sinai Community Institute. While some youth could be referred to Latino Youth or the YMCA for short-term housing needs, there were not adequate shelters for youth who needed them.

The Chicago project succeeded, by the end of the DOL grant, in providing the services the youth in the project needed. It did not have project-specific strategies for client retention or service duration and intensity. The effort focused on finding partners for service delivery and sustainability.

PMM. Chicago demonstrated many of the features of the Public Management Model.

While its initial **plan** proved inadequate, the project staff revised it as part of its move to subcontract with Goodwill. The second plan proved to be workable. MOWD and the other partners planned to apply for WIA and juvenile justice funds to maintain the activities begun with the grant; the active partners reported that they would remain involved with serving target youth through a combination of existing and new funds.

The demonstration did not have a working **partnership** with the courts at the beginning of the grant, and problems with the initial route counseling subcontractor limited referrals. With the new arrangement, referrals were forthcoming, and the project's staff aspired to become an alternative sentencing contractor with the city courts. The project developed a few **community** advocates, but the main consortium was constituted of other youth service providers. Of the 40 or so partners, only about five were active in delivering services.

With the number of changes the project experienced, the active involvement of the **grantee** was key to keeping the project on track. MOWD provided technical assistance, oversight and MIS support to the project. The project was resourceful in bringing representative agencies from the education, health, work force and justice systems into **partnership** to serve youth in the North and South Lawndale and Austin neighborhoods. Many of these partnerships were new, and expectations were still being negotiated at the end of the grant. If the planned partnerships do continue, a task will be developing mutual expectations. Perhaps when these linkages are strengthened, they will **leverage** more resources for serving area youth. Through the vehicle of the 40-member consortium, project **information and leadership** were shared.

Over the course of the demonstration, Chicago developed and refined an **MIS** that improved the documentation of services delivered. While it served the accountability function, it was not useful for analysis or for building support for sustainability. The Chicago project demonstrated, through a series of major reorganizations, that it was committed to **continuous improvement** in its effort to serve target youth well.

New York

Recruitment and services. While there were many strategies Friends of Island Academy (FOIA) used to serve the youth leaving Rikers Island detention and correctional facilities, the overall strategy was to create a transformative atmosphere for the youth. Participation in FOIA was voluntary, and participants were called members. Families were encouraged to participate in monthly meetings to learn more about FOIA plans and ways families could help their children. Youth were encouraged to participate in the Thursday evening meetings where members shared their achievements and their struggles.

To recruit youth to FOIA, peer counselors (members of FOIA), spent the better part of a day in each of the four Rikers Island facilities encouraging the youth to come to FOIA upon release. Once at FOIA, the resident psychologist administered a risk assessment; if the youth scored high on this assessment, services to the youth began at once. FOIA staff realized early in the demonstration that they were quickly losing the youth with the most serious problems, so the staff began services to these enrollees before completing the remainder of the assessments: education, GED predictor, and employment. Many youth arrived at FOIA with serious mental health and substance abuse issues, histories of violence and personal abuse. The psychologist took an informal approach to getting youth into counseling, suggesting, "Let's talk." If the youth needed residential care for either substance abuse or mental health issues, FOIA referred them to agencies with which it had established a referral relationship. Despite these measures, FOIA experienced a 40% drop out rate in the early weeks after enrollment. Staff members believed that they needed at least six months of working with youth to redirect them to more constructive behaviors. Housing for homeless youth was a constant struggle. There were a few agencies that took homeless youth, and their beds were often full when FOIA was looking for a place to house one of its members.

The strategy for retaining youth was essentially keeping the youth busy at the FOIA offices all day every workday and some evenings. Staff cited a major improvement from

the DOL grant in the expansion of the educational offerings: literacy, pre-GED, GED preparation, and GED test preparation. Certified teachers (one paid for by the school board) worked with the youth, and peer counselors led discussions and presentations on special topics. Staff believed that, with the educational achievements they have made, youth have more skills and more confidence when they are ready for job placement. Through referrals to the school board offerings or to nonprofits, youth received vocational training in barbering, electronics, computers and A+ certification, asbestos and lead abatement, building maintenance, and plumbing.

Initially, FOIA had no formal route counseling system; each department serving a youth (education, work readiness, etc.) took responsibility to assure that he/she received the services in her/his plan. By the end of the grant period, however, staff members instituted formal route counseling as an accountability measure.

FOIA had not had alternative sentencing clients until the DOL grant. As a trial, FOIA agreed to take 60 referrals from the court of Judge John Corriero, hoping that the court would inaugurate an alternative sentencing program based on the FOIA experience. Despite the fact that the "Alternatives to Incarceration" clients did well, the city budget cuts meant that no new programs were initiated. There was no direct gang suppression activity, but gang colors and insignia were forbidden at the FOIA office. The project offered no aftercare activities.

The work readiness component was divided after the first few months of the project. Work Readiness1 was offered to youth who needed extra help becoming work ready, and Work Readiness 2 was offered to those who needed less help or who had completed the first course. Toward the end of the demonstration, staff returned to offering one work readiness experience. They found that those who were doing well with GED preparation had little trouble finding work. Those who were not progressing through the educational component were particularly difficult to place; these received a 6-hour work skills class, followed with one-on-one assistance until he/she was placed in employment.

With the DOL grant, FOIA offered an employment retention effort. One staff member worked with employers to find work opportunities, and she worked with both employers and the youth to assist with the adjustment to the job. She identified three employers who hired employees on an on-going basis: restaurant, drug store, and clothing retail chains. Toward the end of the grant, FOIA no longer had the funds for an employment retention specialist, and the staff member returned to work readiness activity. She believed, however, that she prepared youth better for the job market from her experience with employers.

PMM. The New York project demonstrated many of the components of the Public Management Model.

The grantee had a **plan** that guided its development; it planned for sustainability by writing grant proposals. Because it delivered all the essential services to its clients, however, the anticipated expenses were beyond what it could raise by itself. Toward the end of the demonstration period, staff reached out to agencies and organizations with

whom it could partner to provide services. While the grantee had years of experience with the **justice** system, it had very little workforce development experience. Because the One-Stop system in New York City was not very well developed, FOIA provided all the work readiness services itself.

FOIA was well known in the **community** among certain foundations and drew good media attention. It strengthened these bonds over the grant in searching for operating partners, advocates and funders. The **grantee** was FOIA, and it supplied almost all the services to the members by itself. It did receive state funding to assist youth with mental illnesses find employment, and the school board paid for a GED teacher as well. Before the DOL grant, FOIA had relationships with the **health and education systems**. Over the period of the grant, probation and parole officers were more likely to see their clients at FOIA than before the grant. At the end of the grant, FOIA was seeking **funding** from the justice, health, and education systems for long-term sustainability. As the One-Stop system developed in the city, FOIA reached out to connect youth to WIA services, but few of these services were yet available. Sharing **leadership and information** was a struggle for FOIA; by the end of the grant period, it had an active advisory board that met regularly.

As described elsewhere, Philliber Associates made an in-kind gift to FOIA of data entry and analysis for an annual report. With the DOL grant, FOIA staff expanded the list of data items it was collecting and beginning to develop its own **MIS**. During the grant, however, it depended on the annual report from Philliber and Associates, which focused chiefly on client characteristics.

New York used technical assistance in employment retention, sustainability and route counseling to close the **continuous improvement** loop. It listened to the evaluation team's concern about its sustainability approach and expanded these activities substantially. Staff met regularly to assess the progress of its programs and clients, changing the enrollment process to retain those with the most serious problems. The staff changed the route counseling system and the work readiness program. It redesigned its educational offerings, as well.

Pittsburgh

Recruitment and Services. The strategy Pittsburgh's BluePrint staff used to serve the target population was the very personal involvement of the administration and staff with the youth and with the community from which the youth came. The target neighborhoods have been marked by violence, and one client was killed as a result of local violence. Staff has been active in the community trying to reduce retaliation activities. BluePrint provided all its services in the YouthWorks building, and it provided clients with clothing that identified them as BluePrint members rather than as members of a gang.

Virtually all the youth were referred to the project by probation or parole offices; some families referred siblings or other relatives based on the progress their children made while they were clients. Staff visited correctional facilities to establish rapport with youth from the neighborhood before they were released. The staff believed that younger youth

were harder to retain after their period of parole or probation. The administrators reported that it was the case managers who made the project work, staying engaged with the youth and following up if they were not attending regularly.

Partners, Addison Behavioral Care (ABC) and Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic (WPIC), came to the YouthWorks building to provide substance abuse and mental health assessments and treatment respectively. Many of the youth had substance abuse and mental health problems, and the project struggled to attract youth to the services it provided through ABC and WPIC; a greater emphasis on getting help became part of the orientation, and staff saw more youth taking advantage of these services.

BluePrint also provided assessments for education, employment and personal/social skills. BluePrint provided route counseling for all the clients, and it provided virtually all the work readiness and job placement services. The Pittsburgh Board of Education, through its traditional and alternative schools, provided educational services. Pittsburgh schools also provided some vocational training, and the project had other vocational training organizations to which it could refer clients.

The local workforce development board was not involved with the project. Youth registered with the One-Stop from the YouthWorks office. Staff reported that high local unemployment kept the focus of the One-Stop on displaced workers, and the offices were not youth-friendly.

Virtually all the jobs youth found were in retail. They were low-paying jobs with little advancement opportunity. Case managers followed-up with employed youth and their employers, assuring that youth were adjusting and that the employer was pleased.

Although the project focused on offenders, several judges made referrals to BluePrint as an alternative sentencing site. The judges asked BluePrint before assigning a youth. Aftercare services were not offered by BluePrint, but case managers monitored the youth's status as part of his plan. The entire project was considered a gang-suppression effort, keeping the youth constructively involved, changing their clothing, and giving them direction toward work.

PMM: The Pittsburgh project demonstrates many facets of the Public Management Model.

BluePrint had a solid **plan** from the beginning. After it had trouble with its subcontractor, it brought all the services within the YouthWorks building. It recruited the number of youth it planned, and they were the youth the project targeted. The foundations and agencies that provided funds to YouthWorks will sustain it. The project had strong ties to the justice **system** before the DOL grant, but it lacked a connection to the workforce development system. The project did not have a strong connection with the workforce development system at the end of the grant. YouthWorks was recognized in the Pittsburgh **community** for its work with youth in the target neighborhoods, and the organization received funding from agencies and corporations in the city.

The **grantee** was very involved in the project, and the executive director of the grantee agency met with most, if not all, the youth who were recruited. The grantee monitored the project and maintained good ties within the community for its support. The grantee had strong ties to the health system before the grant; it developed links to the **education and the justice systems**. The gap was a strong tie to the workforce development system. The grantee raised funds to bring services to the target youth, but it did not develop operating partnerships that would **leverage resources** from their own funding streams. Similarly, the project maintained the central decision-making function for the demonstration effort rather than developing **shared leadership and information.**

Because of the DOL requirement to submit data reports quarterly, the project developed an **MIS** of those data elements. Decision-making and fundraising were based, however, on anecdotes of success stories. Case manager files were maintained but were not useful for analysis. The Pittsburgh project was open to **change** on other aspects: it changed its route counseling provider, its route counseling system, and its substance abuse assessment and treatment plan. The project expanded its boundaries and implemented a plan to encourage youth employment.

The Category II Project

The Education and Training for Youth Offender Initiatives grants were awarded to states rather than local communities as in the other categories. The only Category II grant in Round Two went to the State of Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Youth Corrections. Within the Division of Corrections, the award went to the Central Region to serve the youth incarcerated at Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center (LMYSC) who would be returning to any of seven counties: Adams, Arapahoe, Clear Creek, Denver, Douglas, Gilpin, and Jefferson. The all-male population also included youth from other parts of the state that were incarcerated at LMYSC because of mental illness, trouble at another facility, or the nature of the crime they committed. There was on-going tension because the project youth and those from other counties who were not given equal access to work opportunities.

The grantee subcontracted all the funds to other organizations. A small amount went to the Center for Network Development to assist with developing an employer network and with generating stakeholder understanding and ownership. The bulk of the funds went to the Tri-county Workforce Development Board, which subcontracted further to include Adams, Arapahoe-Douglas, and Denver Counties workforce development organizations.

Colorado

Recruitment and Services. The Colorado project built on a foundation of strong programs at LMYSC and a strong aftercare component. Youth received intensive treatment for substance abuse and mental illness, and work readiness was built into their school curriculum. Youth engaged in inter-mural sports and regular arts experiences. The school at LMYSC tried to insure that every young man had a GED or high school diploma before release. Youth participated in a number of industry-specific training

programs, and the facility had a career explorations room that included a miniature weather station.

While any young man from the designated counties was eligible for the "Youth Employment and Academic Resources" (YEARS) project, youth participated voluntarily. Workforce specialists (case managers) worked with the youth before release, learning about his employment interests and seeking opportunities for the youth upon release. These specialists also noticed that it was harder to engage the youth after the period of his parole was over. They found that if they connected with families and explained their services to them, some families would help keep the youth engaged with the program after parole.

Youth received an entire battery of assessments as part of their orientation to the correctional system, and these became the basis of the service plan developed for each youth. The DOL project did not reassess the youth because the employment component the DOL grant provided became a piece of the individual service plan that guided youth from the time of incarceration. In effect, the client manager (parole officer) and the workforce specialist both carried route counseling responsibility for the youth. They collaborated and shared insights as part of their joint responsibility for the youth's case.

The initial strategy was that young men would leave LMYSC ready for work and utilize the county One-Stop centers for job leads and placement services. The youth would not, however, come to the One-Stop centers on their own—even after the workforce specialists brought them to the offices and showed them the resources they could use. The workforce specialists began to call themselves the "go-everywhere" rather than the One-Stop resource because they would meet the youth at work, in a library, or somewhere near their homes to keep them engaged with the job search or job retention activities. This strategy worked to keep the young men engaged, but it created tension within the One-Stops that reported they had all the clients they could serve among the people willing to come to the One-Stop center. By the end of the grant period, some of the youth were coming to the One-Stops on their own, and the staff appreciated that this hard-to-serve target youth had responded to the outreach by the workforce specialists. For their part, two of the centers were developing youth rooms to make the atmosphere more attractive to youth—not just youth offenders.

Incentives were a part of the YEARS project from the beginning. Youth received money incentives for good grades and for completing goals, such as the GED or diploma. Staff also found that they needed to give the youth something helpful within 48 hours of release or risk losing their involvement. Bus cards were often the first incentive youth received to keep them involved.

Early in the transition to the community process, the workforce specialists realized that the work readiness the youth received was inadequate preparation. They devised and twice revised the "Striving Toward Employment and Personal Success" (STEPS) curriculum. The workforce specialists reported that the young men were better prepared for employment after the revised STEPS, but some young men still needed one-on-one coaching.

Initially, workforce specialists used job listings and cues from colleagues to locate job openings. During the last year of the project, workforce specialists were using local market information to identify jobs that were in demand in the area. Youth were still taking entry-level positions, but the effort was to find entry-level positions in industries that were likely to offer career opportunities beyond the initial job.

The YEARS project did not offer reentry services since those were provided through the Division of Youth Corrections, but the project did pay for some mental health and substance abuse services youth needed after release.

PMM. The Colorado project demonstrated many of the features of the Public Management Model.

The project had a good **plan** from the start, and it revised it to focus on the PMM components. The YEARS project focused resources on the link between **justice and workforce development systems**; the Division of Youth Corrections had helped to pioneer the Intensive Aftercare Program innovation and the aftercare activities were mature before the DOL grant activities began. Staff knowledge about the target population and transition issues added the workforce component to this mature system of assessments, services, and coordination. The grantee helped to identify a broad coalition of state and county service partners to form a consortium of **community** leaders to support the program, and the project had the political support of the governor and the department. Severe budget cuts that eliminated the jobs of even the leaders in the consortium jeopardized the sustainability efforts that had begun early. Nevertheless, the project did **leverage** the support of the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation to assist youth with disabilities find work.

The **grantee** remained a strong support of the project and guided it through the difficult period toward the end of grant funds. Before the DOL grant, the project already had the support of the health and education **systems**. The missing piece had been the workforce development system; even with the budget restrictions, the division assured that workforce development activities would remain a part of LMYSC. The workforce development centers were not sure that they would hire the workforce specialists funded by the grant, but they reported that they had learned how to serve target youth who would come to them for services.

The project developed a good **MIS**, and it needed to develop better strategies for using the data for decision-making. The Division of Youth Corrections monitored recidivism, and it reported that recidivism rates at LMYSC had been dropping steadily. The YEARS project was only one component of the division's efforts to improve the young men's chance of returning home safely. The YEARS project supported the **continuous improvement** loop through monthly review meetings by consortium members and weekly meetings of the staff. During the staff meetings, the dissatisfaction with the original STEPS curriculum surfaced that led to the revisions. The Arapahoe-Douglas workforce development center has already adapted the YEARS reentry strategies to their adult offender population.

Category III Projects

Round Two included five Category III projects: Cincinnati, Des Moines, Erie, Hartford, and West Palm Beach. Funded primarily to develop infrastructure that improved the links among key service systems, these projects received smaller grants than projects in other communities. Of the five communities, three had an infrastructure partially in place; Cincinnati and Hartford used the grant funds to begin the process of building such an infrastructure.

Cincinnati

The DOL grant to Cincinnati occurred at a difficult time in the city's history. The grant award came just as the city was emerging from civil disturbance over a police shooting, and a police work stoppage slowed arrests during the first year. The school system adopted a zero-tolerance policy for violence and drugs that led to more youth being expelled from school with nowhere to go but the streets. High unemployment within the city limited the opportunities for youth seeking work.

Recruitment and Services. The city's overall strategy in response to these conditions was to assemble a low-maintenance system with the WIA approach to serve youth offenders. In the city, all WIA services were subcontracted to the Service Navigator Unit (SNU) of the Work Resource Center, which provided all the youth services for WIA in Cincinnati and Hamilton County. SNU did not deliver services, except as a last resort, but it referred youth to the service resources in the community. For the demonstration, the city planned to assemble a broad coalition of youth-serving agencies to form a network of resources to which youth offenders could be referred. After the grant built the infrastructure for services, the system could be maintained through WIA dollars.

During the first year, service delivery organizations met regularly to prepare an audit report of community assets and gaps for serving the target population and several members became official service providers for WIA services. Youth were not enrolled until 16 months after the grant award, and the enrollment built slowly because all recruited youth had to meet WIA eligibility requirements. Eligibility determination took weeks, and some youth drifted away. Families resisted providing the income information required for eligibility. Even then, some youth did not meet the low-income criterion, but eventually all youth offenders became eligible regardless of income level. An additional eligibility criterion was that the youth could not have a substance abuse problem or a history of violence. This criterion had the effect of eliminating a substantial number of potential demonstration clients.

The Cincinnati plan was always to provide only the services authorized under WIA legislation. The project did not assess youth for health, mental health, substance abuse, or homelessness issues. Should the project staff find out that a youth had one of these problems, there were resources within the community to which the youth could be referred. Funding would be covered by the agency receiving the youth, so the narrow list of services was not determined by budget limitations. Rather, the vision of the project

was to provide WIA services to youth offenders, who typically did not receive workforce development services.

SNU referred youth to various agencies that met the WIA qualifications as service providers. SNU did not record the vendors' patterns of intensity or duration of services. In other words, two youth sent to different workforce development service providers might have very different amounts of service, different degrees of personal attention and different patterns of follow-up.

Eligible youth received assessments for basic skills; this was the main focus. Other assessments (readiness, occupational skills, living situation, mental and physical health) could be given if the case managers (called navigators) thought they were needed. The individual service plan emphasized education (tutoring, secondary education, work experience, leadership development, mentoring, guidance, route counseling, and summer employment), but some youth qualified for the limited occupational skills training available. Youth did not receive reentry services although staff believed that the services it was offering served as anti-gang measures. Follow-up continued for one year, and it was the responsibility of the service provider to whom the youth was referred.

PMM. The Cincinnati project demonstrated some features of the Public Management Model.

The project staff developed a 50-page implementation **plan**, but it failed to serve as a guide for the project. Frequent staff turnover led to revising the timeline of the plan rather than revising it to reflect the changed circumstances of the project. The **workforce and justice systems** had not collaborated before the DOL grant, and some progress was made during the grant to develop a relationship; this is a feature that staff reported will continue to develop. The main focus was to develop a broader **community support** system for the youth; again, progress was made during the grant.

Grantee involvement in the Cincinnati project was complicated. The City of Cincinnati did not have the project high on its priority list, and the administrators and staff changed positions or left the employ of the city or subcontractor frequently during the grant period. Stronger grantee involvement might have kept the project focused and addressed policy issues, such as the exclusionary character of eligibility rules, during the grant. Toward the end of the grant, city staff reported that such policies were under consideration for all of the WIA youth programs. This step was attributed to the concerns raised by technical assistance and evaluation recommendations relating to the grant.

The vision of the city for target youth did not include developing a cross-**systems** infrastructure to provide a wide array of services to youth offenders. In fact, the project identified a broad array of service delivery providers, but the focus was the delivery of workforce development services. Similarly, the project did not set out to develop partnerships that would **leverage** services, but the city had service resources if the navigators thought the youth needed more help than they were able to provide. Few referrals for such services were noted in the reports. The service delivery providers did

meet regularly to share **information**, but the vision and **leadership** remained that of the grantee.

SNU developed a comprehensive **database** on all the youth it referred for WIA services, but the project-specific data were limited to the data elements required by DOL. The data reports were used by the grantee only for accountability. SNU did use data it collected to study service gaps youth were experiencing. Administrators also pulled a number of files randomly every month to verify that navigators were consistent in documenting services.

The project documented several changes in its **continuous improvement** efforts:

- Better connection to the justice system,

- Adding new service providers to the WIA network,

- A better attitude by staff toward youth offenders, and

- Highlighting goals and policies that need review and adjustment.

Des Moines

Recruitment and Services. The Des Moines project did not focus primarily on infrastructure development. Rather, the grantee and its partners considered the DOL grant as a way to deliver services to additional needy youth. The strategy for serving more youth was to divide youth between two service providers based on the client's age. Iowa Comprehensive Human Services (ICHS) served younger youth by keeping them in school and offering them paid work experience after school and over the summer. Spectrum Resource Program served older youth by offering them GED classes, life skills, some unpaid work experience and job placement. Over the course of the project, these partners expanded the range of assessments and services they offered youth to the point that they offered the range of services listed in the SGA to which they responded.

By the end of the project, youth received assessments for health, substance abuse, and mental health from a new partner, Polk County Primary Health Care. Individual service plans included, as needed, education, training, barrier reduction, acquisition of a driver's license, and health care. All the youth received route counseling and work readiness training from one of the two partners.

As a strategy to retain older youth, participants met for an hour of life skills every day before GED classes. The youth were expected to write what they were going to do that day to meet the expectations in their individual service plans. The following morning, they reported to the group how well they succeeded with the previous day's plan and prepared a new plan for the coming day. Staff reported that they got to know the youth better from seeing and listening to them every day. Youth realized that staff cared about them and their progress, and the youth experienced peer support in their efforts to change. Retention in the program and progress with individual service plans improved dramatically with this innovation.

While the project did not offer reentry services, the requirements of probation or parole were considered part of the "barriers" in the individual service plans. Route counselors considered the court requirements in scheduling activities and accompanied youth to court to testify on their behalf if they had progressed in their service plans. Staff believed that the efforts to keep all the youth engaged all day was an anti-gang activity. Occasionally youth were asked to provide community service, not as a court requirement. Painting the GED classroom is one example of service the project youth performed.

PMM. The Des Moines project illustrated several aspects of the Public Management Model.

The two service providers developed separate **plans**, and both used the plans during the demonstration. The project used grant funds to develop partnerships and **community** support for sustainability. While the grantee (a **workforce** development agency) had not worked with the **justice** system before the grant, over the course of the grant period, ICHS and Spectrum Resources staff initiated connections with the justice system. Staff reported that most of the referrals came from parole and probation staff who appreciated the preparation for employment services which the court did not provide.

Grantee involvement was limited in Des Moines. The grantee assumed that the two sub-contractors would run their operations without much involvement. When the first evaluation report noted the lack of engagement, DOL requested that the grantee become more involved. This occurred for several months, but the press of other responsibilities pushed the project down on the priority list until the last months of the project. The lack of engagement was felt in two aspects of the project: **MIS** and sustainability. The grantee organization was expected to develop the project-based MIS, but the shared database did not develop when confidentiality issues were not adequately addressed. Eventually, the two subcontractors developed their own databases, but they were limited to the required data elements. The two subcontractors worked well in coordinating the project between them, but until the end of the project the grantee and the two subcontractors worked without reaching out to the community. At this time, the staff realized that many youth had made real progress, and they did not have the data to demonstrate how well they had done. They also realized that they were going to need the **partnership** of other service delivery providers in the community to sustain the effort. The grantee could have facilitated the development of both the MIS and the sustainability infrastructure had it been more engaged. Similarly, **information sharing and leadership** remained with the three key stakeholders until the end of the demonstration period.

The Des Moines project made several significant changes to demonstrate its interest in **continuous improvement**. The project added services and a new partner by the end of the project so that it was able to offer all the services that DOL requested in the SGA. It developed paid and unpaid work experiences based on what staff learned from youth about retention in the program and their need to earn some money. The older youth met for a life skills experience every day before GED classes in the last months of the project, and retention and progress in their individual strategy improved with this innovation. Spectrum Resources asked YouthBuild to offer some training to youth who did not qualify for the YouthBuild program because such skills made them more employable.

When the value of a deeper infrastructure became clear to the project leadership, they reached out to the community, developed a MIS, and prepared a sustainability plan.

Erie

Erie was experiencing severe problems at the time of the grant award. Unemployment was high; the available jobs required credentials beyond those of the majority of city residents (both adult and youth), and the academic achievement of the youth in the city school district was ranked among the lowest 10 in the state.

Perseus House, the Erie grantee, is a well-established nonprofit agency to serve youth who are court referred for out-of-home placements and alternative school services. Already in place before the grant was an infrastructure to serve the youth's health and educational needs. Workforce development activities were new with the grant as were the partnerships with the local workforce investment board (WIB) and Bayfront Maritime Center. The project was called BroadReach.

Recruitment and Services. Two-thirds of the enrolled youth were at risk of court involvement, and one-third were offenders. Courts, Perseus House staff from one of its other programs, area school districts, the probation department, and other community-based organizations referred youth to the program. The initial recruitment efforts yielded fewer youth than the project anticipated. In collaboration with "Career Link," the local One-Stop center, the project began to offer a stipend of $3.25/hour for participation in the Workplace Essential Skills curriculum, Bayfront Maritime Center curriculum, and subsidized work experience. The stipend increased enrollment and retention.

The strategy Perseus House employed was to develop educational materials and approaches to improve the academic and occupational skill achievement of project youth. Most of the enrolled youth were under 18 years of age, so the emphasis was on education, work readiness and work experience activities. Youth received support to remain in school, attend alternative school at Perseus House, attend the Bayfront Maritime Center for work experience, or search for employment. Perseus House purchased "Workplace Essential Skills" software for its alternative school. In groups of 20, youth attended the Bayfront Maritime Center all day for eight Saturdays. The curriculum focused on both the academic and craft skills youth needed for boat building and navigation. The French Creek Boy Scouts of America offered "Learning for Life," a monthly career exploration activity, until the council's grant funding was depleted.

Youth received assessments for medical issues, drug and alcohol problems, education, employment, criminal history, family background, workforce preparation, and mental health. Based on these assessments, the youth received individualized service plans. If the youth resided at Perseus House, in-house staff provided medical, mental health and substance abuse services; if the youth were not residing at Perseus House, they were referred to community resources to receive these services.

All the youth received route counseling through Perseus House staff, and all were registered with Career Link. Perseus House had not linked with the One-Stop before the

grant, but during the grant, the partners realized how many activities they could develop together: work experience, summer jobs programs, and career exploration. The parole office provided the reentry services needed, and Perseus House reported that youth had generally completed their aftercare before being referred to the project.

PMM. The Erie project demonstrated many of the elements of the public management model.

The project had a strong **plan**, and it reflected how well Perseus House understood the needs of the youth they were serving. While Perseus House had an existing relationship with the **justice** system before the DOL grant, the partnership with the **workforce** system was new. Over the course of the grant, Career Link and Perseus House became strong collaborators and developed "Learn and Earn" as a follow-on to the grant. Before the DOL grant, Perseus House had a well-developed reputation within the Erie **community** for serving troubled youth.

Perseus House staff and administration, as the **grantee**, were clearly involved with the DOL grant, monitoring its progress and forging new partnerships as needed. By the end of the grant, justice, workforce, education, and health **systems** were all sharing in delivering the services to project youth. Most of these relationships pre-dated the DOL grant; the workforce system was the new partner. The partnerships Perseus House established **leveraged services** for the youth from these systems. Staff from both Perseus House and Bayfront Maritime Center reported that the DOL grant raised their credibility with the state, as well. Perseus House moved on to establish a charter school whose curriculum included the Workplace Essential Skills software. The state funded the Bayfront Maritime Center to build a new facility to continue offering its program to disadvantaged youth**. Leadership** remained with Perseus House. The advisory group met rarely, although partner staff met regularly.

Perseus House had an established reporting system that did not change over the time of the grant. Written reports rather than electronically generated reports were the norm for accountability, decision-making, and proposal preparation. The **MIS** was designed to report the required data elements to DOL.

A number of changes indicate the Erie project's commitment to **continuous improvement**. Perseus House trained its staff in the Total Quality Management (TQM) approach to continuous improvement. Staff formed quality improvement teams that reviewed every aspect of program functioning. The project asked for and received several technical assistance interventions, as well. Both Perseus House and the Bayfront Maritime Center realized that the 8-day experience was not enough for the youth, but the staff developed an 8-week Learn and Earn project with Career Link, the city schools, the county office of children and youth, and the county probation department. Over the course of the project, Perseus House hired staff with vocational education or work readiness skills background to meet the workforce development needs of the youth.

Hartford

Like several other communities that received demonstration grants in Round Two, Hartford experienced serious economic difficulties; unemployment was high, and the public agency budgets were cut. The city anticipated 9,000 youth and adult offenders returning to Hartford after release from incarceration during the three years after receiving the DOL grant.

Recruitment and Services. The grantee, the Capitol Region Workforce Development Board, is part of a leadership group, the Mayor's Taskforce on Hartford's Future Workforce Investment System, that conceived of a time when all youth would be served by a community-wide network for service providers linked together through "Hartford Connects," a common database, and common cross-agency training through the Hartford Youth Development Practitioners Academy. The Capitol Region Workforce Development Board envisioned the DOL grant, "Hartford Access," as the seed money to begin building the infrastructure for Hartford Connects and the Hartford Youth Development Practitioners Academy. The city leadership assumed that the entire effort would take five years or more to build the network and train the youth service providers. This grand vision caused some tension with DOL, which expected the project to be serving youth while it was still building infrastructure.

During the project, Hartford Youth Access completed Hartford Connects and graduated its first class from the training academy. As of the final evaluation visit, the project had negotiated memorandums of understanding with 30 youth service providers, and a few of them had begun serving youth and entering data into the Hartford Connects database.

The project encountered resistance on the part of smaller community-based organizations that were reluctant to put in the staff time to learn the database and use its comprehensive data fields. Several key partners, the school district for example, were also reluctant to participate given the lean staff they had after the budget cuts. The mayor and other leaders on the task force for Hartford's Future Workforce Investment kept all the stakeholders engaged. The long-term program began to address the stakeholder ownership issues that demanded the human resources to attend the academy, learn Hartford Connects, and maintain a more comprehensive database than many agencies had supported heretofore.

About 28 months into the project, Hartford Youth Access began enrolling youth. By the final evaluation visit, the project had enrolled 138 youth; only 35 were offenders. Ninety-six of the 138 were less than 18 years old.

The youth received what services were available from agencies that had signed the memorandums of agreement. All youth received assessments of their education, life, and employability skills from the two route counselors hired by Hartford Youth Access. These assessments were reported in a "plan" that included information but not many services; service plans would develop as the appropriate range of service providers joins the project. Once the youth were referred to a community organization, that organization became responsible for route counseling.

Most of the effort was to encourage the youth to remain in or return to the Hartford public schools. The only workforce development component developed as of the final evaluation visit was a summer jobs program that included work readiness skill development. Community Partners in Action, a community-based organization that focused on the needs of offenders returning to the community, operated the Coalition Employment Service. The Capitol Region Workforce Development Board funded a position at Coalition Employment Service for a work retention specialist, and this person will provide 12 months of post-employment follow-up. Few youth had progressed to the point of employment, but they would have access to this service when they were ready. Coalition Employment Service would also be a resource for transportation or other work readiness services to assist youth in their employment search. Should youth need health, mental health, or substance abuse assistance, he/she would be referred to the Health and Human Services Department of the City of Hartford.

PMM. While the Hartford Youth Access project is clearly a work-in-progress, it demonstrates a number of the Public Management Model components.

Hartford Youth Access was driven by a vision for serving all of Hartford's youth, and the **plan** for the grant was tailored to what could be accomplished with the grant dollars. The project will have the effect of linking the **workforce and the justice systems** more effectively, but the linkage was still not strong. The mayor requested that the One-Stop center use Hartford Connects as its MIS, and Hartford Youth Access is working with the probation department to have some of its staff attend the next Youth Development Practitioners Academy. Another link to the workforce development system was the collaboration between Hartford Youth Access and the DOL-funded Youth Opportunity Grant (YO Hartford) project.

The long-term goal was to have the entire **community** of service providers linked in support of vulnerable and offender youth. The Mayor's Taskforce on Hartford's Future Workforce Investment System Leadership Committee includes the senior administrators of the city, Hartford Public Schools, Capitol Region Workforce Investment Board, Hartford Metro Alliance, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, and the United Way of the Capitol area. One goal of the long-term effort was to have local funders support the youth services effort in collaboration with the city, rather than funding separate projects independently. The mayor used his office to keep the stakeholders engaged as they resist the level of effort each were required to make to participate. The **grantee** remained involved at every step of the process, and it funded an employment retention specialist position.

When the system is in place, justice, workforce, education, and health and human service **systems** will be linked. The health and human service agency began to use Hartford Connects, had staff attend the academy and was providing services. The school district was also providing services. The partnerships have begun to **leverage resources** across systems, and program leadership was negotiating with the partners to invest in their participation. The initial experience of Hartford Youth Access was that it was open in sharing **leadership and information**. Agency staff made a point of affirming how their feedback was used during the development of Hartford Connects, and the Hartford's

Future Workforce Investment System Leadership Committee met regularly to monitor progress and shape the evolving system.

Although the work is not completed, the vision of Hartford Connects was a shared **MIS** of service records of youth. Confidentiality issues have been resolved, and the hurdle the project must clear is getting agencies to learn and use the system. Hartford Youth Access, itself, had a backlog of data that needed to be entered into the system. The **continuous improvement** loop in an evolving system is different from reshaping an existing one. Staff was trying to affect every service delivery system in the city in one overall strategy. Substantial progress was made, and the head of the Capitol Region Workforce Development Board was committed to the long-term system change that was at the heart of the Hartford Youth Access vision.

West Palm Beach

With the size of the retired population in southern Florida, the need for health care workers remains high. The general employment market is tight, with most positions going to experienced workers with no troubled history. The West Palm Beach project served youth living in the Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Communities of Palm Beach County. A high proportion of the residents is impoverished and many are recent immigrants. The crime rate is high, and gang activity is prevalent.

Recruitment and Services. The Academy for Practical Nursing and Health Occupations (APNHO) was the grantee in West Palm Beach. APNHO was a well-established nonprofit educational organization with an extensive history of preparing low-income and first-time workers for careers in the health industry. The vision for the DOL grant was to establish the infrastructure with the justice, workforce, and health systems to serve youth offenders and other vulnerable youth by preparing them for health care professions.

Youth received a range of assessments at entry into the project: learning styles, reading, math, mental and physical health, family health history, and aptitude. Each youth received an individual service strategy. Work readiness, reading and math were also evaluated as the youth completed the program.

With its focus on infrastructure development, the grantee limited enrollment to 103 students. The project achieved that level of enrollment before the end of the grant period; it continued to enroll youth after reaching the cap, but all the reports are limited to the services and characteristics of the 103 youth. The youth enrolled from two sources, the local high schools and from the justice system. APNHO faculty went to the four target high schools (two traditional and two alternative high schools) to teach health occupations during a 2-hour class every day. The out-of-school youth attend classes every day at the APNHO facility from morning to mid-afternoon.

The faculty and staff of the project focused on the youths' desire to get a job, and they emphasized that they were preparing youth to be professionals. Youth wore health worker clothing to class and formed a health professions club to increase their ownership of a professional identity.

The project did not require the youth to earn a GED before beginning training. A careful assessment at entry included an assessment for reading and math, and tutoring in reading and math were offered. The major strategy for improving skills was to tie reading and math improvement to the health careers training. The project measured substantial gains in the students skills scores during the project, supporting its contention that the youth would learn the skills if they were tied to the practical preparation for work.

The project did not attempt to offer the range of services the youth needed. All the youth registered with the local One-Stop center, and students were referred to community agencies for health, substance abuse, mental health, housing, and other services they needed to remain engaged in the program. Faculty served as route counselors; as experienced health professionals they were alert to changes in health and behavior among their students. The caseload was kept low, as well, to assist them in knowing and guiding their students.

Probationers Educational Growth, the third partner with APNHO and the One-Stop center, recruited youth from the justice system, including visiting youth before release. Probationers Educational Growth also monitored the youths' reentry requirements to assure that they complied, but the project did not offer reentry services directly.

A 90-hour work readiness curriculum was embedded in the health careers training. Staff earned national certification to teach employability skills. The One-Stop center awarded a work readiness certificate to any youth completing the full work readiness curriculum, and youth could take this certificate to potential employers to demonstrate their preparation for employment. The project developed "Linking People With Careers," with non-DOL funds as a job retention strategy. Students began Linking People With Careers before they completed health care worker training, and the project provided some degree of follow-up after placement.

APNHO developed a network of health care employers before receiving the DOL grant, and it used this network to place graduates. It favored putting students into settings that have hired APNHO graduates before because the staffs knew each other. If the employer had been satisfied with previous APNHO graduates, he/she was likely to hire youth despite a troubled history. Because these relationships were ongoing, APNHO had an incentive to match the employer and youth well.

Part of the infrastructure development involved the partners in a sustainability strategy. The partners agreed to work jointly for continued funding, and they received 17 grants among them over the period of the project to maintain the project activities to serve the target population. Probationers Educational Growth began the project as a subcontractor, but by the end of the grant it had received funding of its own to participate as an operating partner.

PMM. The West Palm Beach project demonstrated many of the characteristics of the Public Management Model.

Not only did it have a solid **plan** from the beginning, it reviewed the plan with an outside evaluator every month of the project. APNHO had a partnership with the workforce development agency for many years, and Probationers Educational Growth had a partnership with justice. Among the three partners, therefore, the project knew the **justice and workforce systems** well. APNHO was an active member of the health care **community** in West Palm Beach, including potential employers and the state health care workers standards committees. It used this entree to gain employment exceptions for youth who had proved themselves. APNHO was also a respected agency with the local schools. The project reached out to the youths' families to gain their support in keeping youth on track.

The **grantee** was involved in both leadership and service provision, developing partnerships and insisting on credentialed work readiness training. The grantee provided peer-to-peer technical assistance both directly and at conferences to Round Two projects. As mentioned earlier, the combination of partners brought workforce, justice, health and education **systems** into partnership. The partnership was particularly resourceful in **leveraging resources** among its members, and had the sustainability funding it needed before the end of the DOL grant. In fact, it recruited and served another cohort of youth with non-DOL funds before the DOL grant activity was completed. The agreement to fund activities jointly allowed different members of the partnership to develop **leadership** in its area of expertise.

West Palm Beach developed and used a comprehensive **MIS** during the project. The data elements went far beyond those required by DOL. A monthly meeting with the outside evaluator provided the opportunity to monitor student progress and make adjustments as needed. Data were also used to support sustainability. The project had the documentation to show that more than 90% of the youth completed the health careers project training; 74% had found at least one unsubsidized job, and 65% remained employed at the time of the last evaluation visit. Among the older youth offenders, 78% remained employed.

Developing a system to educate, train, and place youth offenders and other vulnerable youth was an ongoing **continuous improvement** loop of assessing need, responding, and assessing the response. Already mentioned was the monthly meeting with an external evaluator to review project progress. One significant change came early in the project when Probationers Educational Growth realized how tight the job market was in fields outside of healthcare. From that point on Probationers Educational Growth focused on recruiting youth only for health careers.

Summary

Round Two projects demonstrated a range of circumstances and models of service delivery. Developing broad partnerships and attracting and retaining youth were on-going struggles for every project. At the beginning of Round Two, there was some optimism that learning from Round One projects which systems needed to collaborate to provide the needed services to the youth would make the second round easier. To some extent it

did, but overcoming the entropy of a fixed way of doing things provided a challenge to projects. The **coordination of systems** will likely always be hard work.

Project youth have generally not felt successful within public or private systems: family, school, etc. Projects were always challenged by the need to attract youth, develop trust, and serve them; many youth did not persevere through this process. Meeting the youth while they were still incarcerated jump-started the trust building process, and many more Round Two projects than Round One incorporated some level of pre-project outreach.

Projects that knew the youth well seemed to fare better. These projects saw the youth often, encouraged them to be in the office, had activities for them every day, etc. **Des Moines** staff members found that when they began to meet the youth daily, youth and staff got to know each other better and retention improved. Projects that paid the youth for participation or paid for reaching milestones, believed that the incentives kept at least some youth from dropping out of the program.

Almost all the projects' staff remarked at some point during the evaluation visits that keeping the youth busy was an important feature in itself. The youth needed the work readiness experience of structured time and accomplishing tasks within a specified time. Youth needed an alternative to "hanging out;" busy and engaging projects served both as work readiness and as anti-gang activities.

Projects typically kept an open door policy to drop outs, encouraging them to pick up again where they left off. Staff with experience in substance abuse treatment went so far as to tell other project staff to expect dropouts and backsliding. It was part of the recovery process.

Several projects made an effort to change the youths' loyalties and developed peer support to reinforce these changes. By having the youth in one place to receive services, projects developed a sense of belonging as an alternative to the gang or rough crowd the youth had bonded with before the project. Projects went so far as to establish different clothing or professional identity to reinforce the new path on which the youth had set foot.

Based on December 31, 2003 quarterly data reports, four projects moved the majority of clients to employment: **Pittsburgh** (56%), **Colorado** (51%), **Des Moines** (67%), and **West Palm Beach** (96%). Some projects served youth too young for full time employment. The older youth, too, lacked the credentials that would position them for employment at wages that would break the cycle of dependency and recidivism. An exception is West Palm Beach, which reports almost all its clients found employment and were not required to earn a credential before beginning industry training. It will be important for future projects to learn which factors made the most difference for West Palm Beach. Was it because the demand for health occupations was high? Was it because the demonstration focused on preparing youth for an industry it knew well and had contacts in? Was it because the agency was well-established and had a sound reputation for its training? Was it because it focused youth on industry preparation rather than earning a general credential, like the GED or a diploma?

Although several projects boasted of the number of service delivery partners they had attracted through the demonstration, none used more than a handful of partners to deliver services. It may take more coordination resources than communities can manage to keep a large group of organizations working together. **Hartford** will be interesting to watch because it has such high level support for a community-wide service network.

With the exception of **Cincinnati** and **Hartford**, all the projects eventually assembled the range of services DOL thought necessary to serve the target youth effectively. Negotiating service availability is only a first step, as each service provider needs to develop shared expectations, training, and standards of quality for its part of the program. With all the progress made, only **West Palm Beach** implemented a nationally certified work readiness program.

All the projects in Round Two developed an MIS to report the required data elements to DOL. All the projects and their partners collected reams of data, but few had developed effective ways of collecting data in a way to provide more than accountability. Part of this missed opportunity seemed more an organizational cultural issue than a technical skill issue.

In the next section, the report will turn to accomplishments observed at both the individual and organizational levels.

Section VIII

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In the earlier sections of the report, projects have been analyzed from various perspectives. In the previous section, some of the strategies for serving youth were synthesized by project level. This section synthesizes findings by accomplishments to date. With the exception of New York, the tables and graphs report the final project data collected by DOL as of December 31, 2003. Because the New York project depleted DOL grant funds by June 30,2003, its data are as of June 30. Whether grant funds were depleted or not, all the projects will continue to evolve, and the findings presented reflect that they are still developing.

Overview

Section VIII consists of three parts that consider accomplishments from the second round of Youth Offender Demonstration Project:

- Individual accomplishments,

- Systems-level accomplishments, and

- Project accomplishments, as reported by the nine Round Two projects.

The part on individual-level accomplishments provides an overview of youth-specific outcomes at an aggregate level. Tables and graphs present outcomes such as employment, job training and education services received by youth enrolled across the nine Round Two projects.

The second part on systems-level accomplishments discusses four major types of outcomes where the projects seem to have made significant strides achieving the demonstration's objectives: building partnerships, garnering new resources, achieving sustainability, and involving the community and employers in the program.

The final part of the section records the on-going challenges the projects are addressing, but it also presents the projects' perspective on what they believed they accomplished over the grant period since 2001.

Individual -Level Outcomes

Table 17 shows data reported to DOL in the final quarterly report of the demonstration. In looking at the data presented in **Table** 17, one needs to examine several issues regarding definitions of the data elements.

First, the "total employed" data element refers to the number of youth who had worked for a wage or a stipend during the demonstration. This number includes the number of participants who could submit proof of wages earned for the period for either full-time or part-time work. Wages could be provided entirely by an employer, or partially or entirely by grant or WIA funds. If an employer paid all the wages, the work was classified as unsubsidized. If a youth received both subsidized and unsubsidized work during the demonstration, he/she is counted <u>once</u> in the total employed category. (Evaluators know that this way of calculating the total proved confusing for some project staff, but Research and Evaluation Associates staff reviewed the definition with the person responsible for data if the total seemed out of proportion.) (Definitions of DOL data elements are found in Appendix I). To calculate percentages of unsubsidized and subsidized for total employment the analysis used the total number of youth enrolled as a denominator instead of the total number of youth employed.

Table 17. Individual Results at Aggregate Level

Category	Value	Total	Percentage within group
	Enrolled	1852	
Employment	Subsidized	218	12%*
	Unsubsidized	445	24%*
	Total Employment*	591*	
Employment Age 14-17	Subsidized	126	48%
	Unsubsidized	139	52%
Employment Age 18-24	Subsidized	92	23%
	Unsubsidized	305	77%
Workforce Development Services	Federally Funded Job Training	639	62%
	Other Job Training	384	38%
Educational Services	High School	650	50%
	College	116	9%
	GED Preparation	238	18%
	Other	300	23%
Juvenile Justice	Convicted of a crime	71	
	Incarcerated	83	
	Community Service	92	

*Percentages based on total enrollment. Total employed includes youth who may have received both subsidized and unsubsidized employment opportunities through the demonstration.

DOL data definitions indicated that if a participant was arrested *and* convicted of a crime while enrolled in the project then the participant was to be counted under the "convicted

of crime" column. Similarly, if a participant was arrested, convicted and incarcerated for a crime during the program he/she was counted under the "incarcerated" column. The reliability of these data elements across the nine projects is, however, arguable. If a youth entered the program without a conviction, it would be possible to know whether he/she was convicted of a crime in that part of the data report (convicted of a crime); if a youth entered the program after a conviction, it was possible to know that the youth was convicted of a new crime by a notation in the same data field. Evaluators' concern with data reliability surfaced during visits when staff reported that some youth they reported as convicted of a crime were returned to custody because of a parole violation – not because of a new crime. (Notice in Table 17 that the number of incarcerations is higher than the number convicted of a crime.)

The percentage of enrolled youth who were convicted of a crime or convicted and incarcerated cannot be determined with the data from the projects' quarterly report. Enrolled youth did not always complete the project, and after they dropped out, case managers could not always locate them. Youth could have been convicted of a crime and incarcerated without project staff realizing it. That would understate the percentage of enrolled youth who were convicted of a crime or incarcerated.

The number of youth reported participating in community service may not accurately reflect the actual number of youth doing community service as part of a court-mandated action. Community service was defined as the number of participants who were in court-defined, program-defined assignment or who made a voluntary choice of employment for a stipend rather than for a market wage.

The evaluation team realized that many youth were required to do community service as part of their court-required restitution to the community, but few projects were responsible for reentry and aftercare services. Hence the number reported by the projects is certainly an undercount of the actual number of assignments.
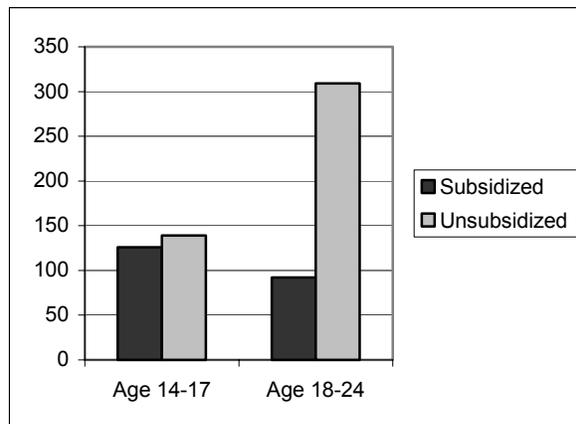
Figure 11. Employment by Age Group

Employment

Using the data in **Table** 17 to calculate across the nine projects, the analysis shows that 24% of Round Two youth at one point were in unsubsidized employment. In addition, 12% of Round Two youth were in subsidized employment at one point.

Figure 11 shows the numbers for subsidized and unsubsidized employment by the two age categories. Note that for younger youth, almost equal proportions were in each type (48% and 52%), whereas three times as many older youth have been able to obtain

unsubsidized employment (77%) than subsidized employment, a major step toward realizing a demonstration goal.

Job Training

Of the total youth enrolled in the Round Two projects, 34.5% of youth received federally funded job training. Moreover, 21% of the youth enrolled in some form of other job-training category. Of those receiving work readiness services (1,023 youth), 62% received federally funded job training. Since some projects used both federal and non-federal dollars for work readiness, the total number of youth receiving these services cannot be calculated precisely.

Educational Services

 Frequently, project youth progressed from one educational service to another, so Figure 12 reports the number of services youth received rather than the total number of youth receiving educational services. (In other words, if a youth progressed from basic literacy to high school or GED preparation, he/she would be counted twice, once in each

Figure 12. Educational Services Youth Received

educational category.) Figure 12 shows that 1,304 educational services were received by project youth. Fifty percent of the services were high school classes; 23% of the services were in other programs, primarily these were literacy, basic education, and pre-GED classes. Almost all the youth enrolled in a high school setting were in alternative schools, rather than traditional high schools. In all, 18% of the educational services were GED preparation classes while 7% were college experiences.

System-level Outcomes

As discussed in Section II, Round Two projects planned to establish a series of program objectives consistent with the requirements for the demonstration as stated in the SGA. In effect, the program objectives developed at the beginning of the grant became the expected outcomes for the end of the grant period. Consequently, this part of the section discusses four major types of outcomes where projects seem to have made significant strides in achieving the demonstration's objectives:

- Building partnerships,

- Garnering new resources,

- Achieving sustainability, and

- Involving the community and employers in the program.

In reading this section, it becomes evident that these four types of outcomes are actually closely interconnected, so it is not easy to establish the outcomes as independent of one another. In fact, it appears that the act of developing partnerships and collaborative arrangements has a direct impact on the ability of a project to leverage resources, to sustain the project (whether through new funding sources or through a collaborative approach to service delivery), and to facilitate community and employer involvement.

If an outcome is viewed as the result of changes brought about through an intervention, in the case of the demonstration the intervention is the receipt of a grant with expectations that the grantee would be able to do more things or do things differently as a consequence of the grant funding. Thus, this part of the section looks at the changes at the system-level that resulted from each project implementing the plan it developed for its program. A major system-level outcome – development of a coordinated service delivery system – will not be repeated here since that was discussed in detail in earlier sections.

Project Partnerships

A basic principle underlying the demonstration is that the "whole" is greater than the sum of its parts. In the SGA, DOL clearly outlined the critical importance of partnerships and linkages for all three categories of grantees. To accomplish the objective of enhancing and expanding services and programs for youth, DOL stated that:

> **"…applicants should use partnerships both (1) to enhance the youth offender programs funded under this grant and (2) to provide complementary programs so as to link services within the target community and provide a diversity of options for all youth offenders within the target area."**

Further, it was through partnerships that DOL expected to develop the services necessary to meet the youths' needs adequately, including:

- Implementation of an education and employment program, including provision of work-related or work-oriented activities such as exposure to the workplace, on-the-job training, work experience, job shadowing, etc.;

- Establishment of alternative sentencing and community service options;

- Expansion of gang suppression activities; and

- Development of connections to local workforce systems.

Based on prior experience, including that of the demonstration's first round, DOL expected that projects would be better able to provide a more coordinated system for delivering services to youth if the project could bring together partners who may not have worked together to much, if any, extent in the past. There was substantial evidence in Round Two that demonstration grants produced new partnerships that did not exist prior to the grant, and that were also likely to be sustained.

In addition, the collaborations produced through the partnerships seemed to have actually changed the way in which partnering organizations operated and served youth. Evaluators found evidence in all nine projects that people within the partnering organizations came together and talked about the needs of target youth and how to better meet those needs, to an extent that had never happened before. There also was evidence in most, if not all, projects that partners were continuing to meet regularly, thus alleviating a concern that the partners might only be involved in the initial application and planning stages.

New Ways of Operating

Evaluators for all nine projects reported that service providers and other organizations that worked with youth had changed the way in which they operated as a result of the demonstration in their community. The degree of change, of course, varied across the nine projects, but it seemed clear that one outcome of the demonstration was that organizations – and their managers and front-line staffs – were working together more closely than they had prior to receipt of the grant. Consistently, evaluators found that project partners reported that they would not revert to the "old ways" of working, which were often independent of one another, and instead would naturally continue to work together to expand and improve service delivery, plan for sustainability, etc.

Cincinnati provided an example of the multiple effects of new partnerships at the system-level, including:

- The workforce development system is now better connected with the justice system;

- More use of non-WIA providers has built relationships and partnerships and opened opportunities for staff development, which will benefit all youth;

- Attitudes in the community about working with youth offenders have changed;

- Experience with the demonstration raised issues about appropriate goals for workforce development programs (e.g., whether contracts with the city and county should specify a required minimum of six months for achieving improvement in basic skills and whether basic skills improvement should be the primary focus with older youth);

- Future workforce development services for youth offenders will be improved by the strategies developed to recruit and serve demonstration clients; and

- Administrators are considering that several local policy decisions for the project and WIA may have been too restrictive and in need of change. If they can be changed, the benefit will be to all WIA youth, not just youth offenders.

In **Erie,** the grantee, Perseus House, developed a new emphasis on workforce preparation, placement and retention, and it developed new partnerships with the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies and the local WIB. Since the grant, Perseus House has been involved in the creation of the new "Earn-N-Learn" program with the Erie City School District, the Erie County Office of Children and Youth, the Erie County Juvenile Probation Department, and the WIB. The evaluator especially noted the establishment of a strong relationship with the WIB as a project outcome. The WIB became a partner in the project in its second year when it paid stipends for students who completed the 8-week program at the Bayfront Center. The project introduced Perseus House and The Bayfront Center staff to the resources of the WIB and also introduced the WIB to the resources and programs at the project sites.

In **Colorado,** staff members at the four workforce development centers are no longer anxious about working with offenders from LMYSC. They see them as similar to other youth they serve. Two workforce centers are creating youth offices, and the division of youth corrections is committed to making work readiness a part of each youth's individual service plan.

From conception of the project in **Hartford**, the Capital Region Workforce Development Board envisioned a comprehensive system for improving the integration of service delivery to target youth. In fact, the grantee used DOL funds to change the way that service providers met the needs of all community youth, not just project youth. With a goal of this magnitude, an assessment of "outcomes" at the system level would be premature after only two years. Probably the best evidence of the potential for system-level change was the creation of the Future Workforce Investment System Leadership Committee, featuring a group of "champions" in major stakeholder organizations, led by the city's mayor. A review of a working document prepared by the committee found numerous references to the central efforts of the grantee: the Hartford Connects database system and the Youth Development Practitioners Academy. In the view of the evaluator, the demonstration grant provided a significant impetus and foundation for changing the workforce development system for target youth in the Hartford community.

Types of New Partnerships

The variety of new partnerships was evident throughout the nine projects, covering a range of types of organizations. In **Des Moines**, project staff believed a major accomplishment of the demonstration was creation of new partnerships among the grantee, Juvenile Court, Polk County Decategorization, Polk County Primary Health Care, YouthBuild, Des Moines Area Community College, and the local YMCA. All of

these relationships were expected to continue after the end of the grant period. In the view of the evaluator, the grant also enabled staff at the two main partners, Iowa Comprehensive Human Services and Spectrum Resource Program, to have time to identify service providers and other key organizations and work with their counterparts in those organizations to ensure that youths' needs can be met.

Hartford also provided a somewhat different example of partnerships from that seen in most projects in Round Two, through the creation of the Hartford Youth Development Practitioner Academy. While the project could have concentrated its grant resources on training for just demonstration staff, it instead used its resources to develop a training program for youth workers throughout the community. Partners included the grantee, Hartford Youth Network, United Way, City of Hartford, Goodwin College, and Hartford College for Women. By involving a broad range of agencies' staff members in professional development, there would seem to be an increased likelihood that the agencies would work together in the future on this and other activities that would improve services to the target population that went beyond demonstration youth.

The collaboration formed for the **Pittsburgh** project was expected to continue beyond the original grant period. Partners included representatives from Allegheny County Department of Human Services, Allegheny County Juvenile Court, Pittsburgh Public Schools, Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board, Youth Places, Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, Addison Behavioral Care, and other organizations involved in youth workforce development issues. Quarterly meetings with these partners became important forums for discussing changes to project plans.

New Resources

An important part of any project or program is its ability to deliver something of value to its clients. Well-managed and operated programs identify and use other resources and funding streams to support their goals. Strong linkages and collaborative partnerships, which allow organizations to participate in joint activities, also encourage development of innovative approaches for problem solving and delivery of services within the projects.

Without strong partnerships, projects often found themselves without political and financial support for their efforts. When reviewing the accomplishments for the nine Round Two projects, the evidence was rather mixed as to whether the effects of developing partnerships extended to leveraging of resources. Though it might be argued that simply forming partnerships brought more services to targeted youth, the net increase in resources may have been modest. This was especially true if the partnering organizations had already been providing services to these youth, but not necessarily in a coordinated fashion.

In some projects, where the development of partnerships occurred later in the grant period, the "payoff" in terms of leveraged resources was just starting or was anticipated for the near future. In other words, even though evaluators found evidence of new

partnerships in all nine projects, they did not necessarily find that these partnerships had yet produced net new resources for serving youth.

Among those projects with a clear record of attracting new resources, **Pittsburgh's** grantee has been especially effective at raising millions of dollars for various projects that target youth, though much of this success pre-dated the receipt of the demonstration grant.

Hartford's project developed a close working relationship with the local Youth Opportunity grantee to create an impressive group of more than 20 community-based organizations that agreed to provide services to youth. There was evidence that more resources in the form of services delivered were being directed toward youth offenders and youth at risk of court involvement than had been the case prior to receipt of the demonstration grant. One project goal was to have community funders such as United Way and Hartford Foundation focus their resources on building and supporting the Future Workforce Investment System, which may actually mean shifting away from traditional approaches to funding local nonprofit social service organizations.

The grantee of **New York's** project received funds from other sources, but it was just beginning to leverage funds and resources through partnerships and collaborations at the end of the grant period. Partners that had been recruited over the past year, however, were beginning to focus on bringing in more resources to serve youth than the grantee had been able to do on its own. The **Cincinnati** project was especially successful in getting community partners to collaborate on problem solving about the needs of target youth and ways to better serve them. For example, a multi-partner work group was exploring ways to streamline information sharing among the justice, health, and workforce systems. The project brought together a large number of partners who, once the project is fully operational, may contribute funds and resources to the project and help it become sustainable.

Colorado's project, which is operated by a state agency, tied the Division of Youth Corrections and the four workforce centers into collaboration. The model is now being replicated elsewhere in Colorado. The project also attracted the involvement of the Colorado Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, which provided work readiness, placement and follow-up to youth with developmental or mental health disability barriers to employment.

Efforts of projects to attract new funding were mixed. **Chicago's** project, whose grantee is the city's workforce development agency, had not extensively leveraged resources in support of the project at the time of the third site visit in fall 2003. **Erie's** project, however, leveraged resources through its many relationships with other CBOs. Several provided in-kind services to project youth, including recreational services. In **Des Moines** the project planned to use its experience with the demonstration to broaden its political and financial support, thus enabling it to draw on increased resources in the future.

The project in **West Palm Beach** attracted new resources. The Academy for Practical Nursing and Health Occupations enlisted two partners that were fully committed to a collaborative approach where the stakeholders recognized they could accomplish more together than separately. After being awarded the grant, the grantee kept intact the consortium that was organized to apply for the DOL grant. The consortium sought to identify funding opportunities that assisted new or existing initiatives in the target area and assisted in writing grant proposals to procure those funds. As of the final evaluation visit, 17 separate projects had been funded, often because one project was able to build on the success of another.

The consortium's approach to pooling resources among partners benefited both the projects and the community as a whole. From a financial perspective, this team approach to collaboration avoided competition among local agencies for the same funds. Further, a single consortium seeking grant funds for a jurisdiction may be more attractive to granting agencies. This approach shows a community's true commitment to resolving its problems through cooperation, compromise and flexibility among all providers. Pooling of other resources such as staff and available services helped to build a truly integrated system of delivery that ensured that the multi-faceted needs of the youth were being met. Sharing these resources avoided duplication and fragmentation of services.

Sustainability

This discussion focuses on the likelihood that the *project* will be able to become an on-going *program* of service delivery to target youth in some form. According to the Institute For Educational Leadership (**Blank et al, 2000**), a project is sustained if: all or part of the project is "institutionalized" into the larger service system; it is the catalyst that leads to reform across the larger service system; or, it leads to the development of new policy and practices that become an accepted way of "doing business" in that field.

There were indications that the demonstration had an effect in several communities on the accepted ways of "doing business," as discussed in the outcomes concerning project partnerships. As grant funding came to a close for Round Two projects, there was substantial evidence that most, if not all, projects would continue to exist in some form. To some extent, the form the projects will take seems to relate to the form they adopted at the beginning of the process. Projects, such as **Pittsburgh** that were relatively self-contained, appeared likely to continue in that form. Projects such as **West Palm Beach** that brought together partnering organizations in new ways seemed ready to evolve into yet newer forms.

Projects, such as **Des Moines** and **Hartford,** were not clear what form they were likely to take in the next phase. **Des Moines**, at the time of the third site visit, was just beginning an effort to develop a broad base to sustain the initiative to serve more youth in a more coordinated manner. **Hartford**, on the other hand, envisioned from the beginning that the project would evolve through development of a comprehensive route counseling system –

with broad buy-in from numerous community agencies – intended to serve all youth in Hartford, not just the youth enrolled in the project.

During the third site visit, which occurred in about Month 26 of the demonstration, evaluators specifically addressed the question, "Which components of your project are likely to continue after DOL funding and which are not?" Table 18 presents a summary of the findings.

Table 18. Program Components Likely to be Sustained

Projects	Program Components
Chicago	▪ Route counseling provided by Latino Youth and Scholarship and Guidance ▪ Education ▪ Substance abuse treatment ▪ Mental health services ▪ Health care ▪ Job readiness ▪ Gang intervention
Cincinnati	▪ All service delivery components will continue through WIA
Colorado	▪ Relationships: workforce, parole, LMSYC ▪ STEPS – work readiness ▪ Workforce specialists: trying to get on permanent staff. Recognized for their expertise ▪ Vocational rehabilitation services ▪ Aftercare ▪ Horse trailer renovation, if it can pay its way ▪ On-grounds: work experience without stipends ▪ Other services might continue if Department of Justice grant funds are allocated to project
Des Moines	▪ Partnerships with YouthBuild, the justice system, Polk County Decategorization, Des Moines Area Community College, Human Service Planning Alliance (United Way), and Grubb YMCA ▪ Some route counseling, mostly for currently-enrolled youth ▪ Daily life skills class for out-of-school youth ▪ Some subsidized work experience programs
Erie	▪ Workforce services and activities, including the new Workforce Essential Skills program, for youth in residential treatment, community treatment, and alternative education ▪ Software will continue to be available ▪ New 8-week summer work experience program "Earn and Learn" ▪ New partnerships with the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies and the local WIB
Hartford	▪ Hartford Connects route counseling system ▪ Youth Development Practitioners Academy ▪ Some route counseling; potentially full route counseling depending on training and agreements with participating agencies
New York	▪ Education ▪ Substance abuse treatment ▪ Mental health services ▪ Work readiness ▪ Job placement ▪ Route counseling ▪ Gang/crime/substance abuse outreach to high school students
Pittsburgh	▪ All program components expected to continue
West Palm Beach	▪ Current partner Probationers Educational Growth becomes the central focus, with support from the WIB, for continuation of all existing services for new youth being recruited by PEG

In several projects, there were program components that may not be sustained without new sources of funding. If these projects are able to obtain additional resources as a result of ongoing efforts, this may enable them to provide a level of service comparable to that achieved during the demonstration.

Education and employment components in **Chicago** were expected to continue through other funding sources. The project, however, said it needed to limit enrollment, primarily because the population it serves, which is generally legally involved, has greater needs and requires more attention. Partners will try to absorb youth being served after DOL funds end. The project should have enough funds to carry it through June 2004. Part of the larger vision was to create such a solid linkage with the Juvenile Justice system that the project becomes institutionalized as another alternative sentencing option. A second goal was to create youth One-Stops in an area where there are few service providers.

Cincinnati's project was designed to continue with WIA funds, and it limited the range of services offered to those eligible under the WIA regulations. **Colorado** is committed to maintaining its strong aftercare program and to include in it the employment component. Workforce centers, funded by the grant, were still working to hire the workforce specialists that were paid for with the grant. If LMYSC can receive some funds through the CARES project, awarded under the Department of Justice Serious and Violent Offender program, full project activities will continue. If this does not happen, the Division of Youth Corrections will use these experienced workforce specialists to train staff at other facilities in the approach to work readiness and placement.

In **Des Moines**, project staff believed it would be difficult to provide support services that the demonstration grant paid for, such as bus passes, books, cost of drivers education classes (required in the state of Iowa to get a license), emergency needs such as rent, and the stipends for the three hours of daily participation in the life skills and GED classes.

Two components of **Erie's** project will not continue. Budget cuts resulted in the loss of the coordinator for employment awareness activities provided by the French Creek Council of the Boy Scouts of America. Staff did not anticipate that funding would be available to restore this position and these services. Also, 8-week boat-building experience at the Bayfront Center was discontinued in favor of longer-term efforts within the existing Perseus House programs and its new charter school.

The form that the **Hartford** project will take depends heavily on the success of the efforts of the Future Workforce Investment System Leadership Committee. If successful, the Hartford Connects route counseling system will become a central feature of an "institutionalized" approach to delivering services to youth throughout the community. At the time of the third visit, however, the strength of the Leadership Committee's initiative was not clear, and consequently the level of service that will be maintained was difficult to envision.

In **New York**, staff at FOIA continued to write proposals to support its efforts, and it had trimmed its staff to a sustainable level. Even before the DOL grant ended, **West Palm Beach** had moved beyond grant funding to continue and expand its activities.

Finally, a separate issue beyond the scope of this evaluation was the extent to which projects may be able to not only sustain the basic level of service to youth currently enrolled in their programs, but also extend services to other youth. At this point it appears that most projects will be able to sustain services comparable to those available under the demonstration. It was difficult for both evaluators and project staff, however, to assess the extent to which resources would be available into the future for other youth beyond those it was serving at the time that the grant funding was ending.

Community and Employer Involvement

According to the demonstration SGA, grantees were expected to work with local WIBs and WIA youth councils "to ensure coordination of workforce development services." Entities other than a WIB or a political subdivision of the state had to submit an application for demonstration grant funds "in conjunction with the WIB(s) and its Youth Council for the area in which the project is to operate." These requirements set the foundation for a working relationship between the grantee and the workforce system in the community.

WIBs typically include business representatives as well as representatives of educational entities, labor, economic development agencies, and each of the One-Stop centers. Youth councils, which are subgroups of the local WIBs, are required to develop parts of the local plan relating to youth, recommend providers of youth services, and coordinate local youth programs and initiatives. Membership in youth councils is expected to include representation from: the local WIB with special interest or expertise in youth policy, youth service agencies (e.g. juvenile justice and local law enforcement agencies), local public housing authorities, parents of eligible youth seeking assistance, individuals (e.g. former participants and representatives of organizations having experience relating to youth activities), Job Corps, and others the chairperson of the local board determines appropriate. Thus, there was an existing entity with established relationships in the community that projects could use during the planning and implementation phases.

While each project had an advisory board that would naturally have connections within the community, this did not necessarily ensure that the connections extended beyond participation in board meetings. Consequently, a positive outcome for the demonstration would be better relationships among community organizations, employers and the target youth. The catalyst for change would be the projects themselves, since they had an opportunity through the grant to use staff to connect to local entities.

One challenge in reviewing evidence concerning the nine projects in Round Two, was to differentiate between connections to the community and employers that existed prior to receipt of the DOL grant funds and connections that evolved as a result of actions taken

by each grantee. Projects in **Chicago, Colorado, Erie,** and **Pittsburgh** already had established relationships, some going back a number of years, with the community in which the project was based. Thus, it was more difficult to assess the extent to which the demonstration grant fostered a higher level of involvement, and thus greater commitment to the actual delivery of services and hiring of target youth. Consequently, it may be useful to concentrate on projects that achieved greater community and employer support over the grant period. In addition, since the outcome of new partnerships discussed earlier in this section inevitably implies greater community involvement, the following discussion emphasizes employer involvement.

In **Erie**, the BroadReach project gave a new focus to collaborative efforts for youth associated with juvenile justice or those at risk of becoming involved with the court system. While Perseus House and many community partners worked collaboratively on programs before the grant, the demonstration brought them together, with the WIB as a new partner. Through this connection, project youth obtained subsidized employment and the promise of summer jobs through the new Earn and Learn project.

Hartford's project intended to get all key stakeholders – especially Hartford Public Schools and the city's Department of Health and Human Services – to work with a range of community-based service providers to develop a fully integrated, comprehensive system to help every youth in the community who needs help. At this stage in the process, Hartford emphasized increased community involvement in terms of service providers and entities such as the justice system that regularly interact with target youth. Community leaders, however, have a larger vision in mind that encompasses workforce development, and consequently employer involvement over the longer term. The grantee sees the capacity-building initiatives under DOL funding as vital components to gaining long-term buy-in from both service providers and funders. The expectation is that since the Hartford Connects route counseling database system results in a highly interconnected system of comprehensive service delivery, all participating agencies will have an increasing commitment to its continuation.

The project in **West Palm Beach** envisioned employer involvement as a crucial component of success from the project's inception. The focus on jobs and careers in the health care industry seemed to produce multiple advantages to the project. The grantee already had an extensive network of employers who accepted graduates of their programs. This meant that once employers started hiring demonstration youth who were successful on the job, they continued to contact APNHO for more hires. Also, in this type of occupational program, the students have clinical experiences with employers in the field they are entering; and employers are prone to subsequently hire the same persons who had a successful clinical experience in their organization. In addition, these employers now know they can get more employees from the same source because APNHO produces a steady stream of graduates in the health care field. This was an important distinction from other projects, where an employer may have had a successful experience with a project youth, but the project may not have other youth available for placement in that particular type of business when the employer needed to hire.

In summary, evaluators found substantial evidence that the demonstration resulted in outcomes that reflected real change in communities. There was every indication that the extent of this change would not have been possible without the demonstration funding and the project initiative acting as a catalyst. Over the course of the grant, and into the indefinite future, the way in which community agencies and other entities work together to meet the needs of youth offenders and youth at risk of court involvement will be markedly more integrated and coordinated. Attitudes toward target youth also have changed in many organizations recruited as partners. While long-term changes in attitudes and behaviors are always difficult to predict, there is cause for being optimistic that the outcomes detected at the end of the grant period are likely to have a lasting effect in most, if not all, of the communities where the projects operated.

The demonstration projects continue to address challenges to the implementation of coordinated services to target youth, and the last section reports on these challenges and the summary of accomplishments as the project staff saw them.

Project Challenges

Table 19 compares the internal challenges faced by projects at midpoint in the Demonstration and at the time of the third site visit. At midpoint, evaluators were asked to identify challenges specifically related to the organizational attributes of the PMM. Evaluators were not so constrained for the third and final visit, thus the challenges reported at the endpoint portray a wider range of internal issues. Nevertheless, challenges faced by projects at the end of the demonstration were fairly consistent with challenges reported at midpoint, namely having to do with partnerships, growth and sustainability. Late-stage challenges can be classified as follows:

- Fragile linkages with partners, employers, and stakeholders from other systems, including juvenile justice and mental health, that threatened to some extent the integration and coordination of services;

- Collecting, using, and sharing outcome data in a continuous improvement loop within a project and among partners;

- Uncertainty about sustaining the project and ramping it up to the next level, both meeting the myriad needs of more enrolled and troubled youth and its related concern, broadening the base of project support in terms of services and funding.

Table 19. Challenges of Round Two Projects

	At the Time of the 2nd Visit	At the Time of the 3rd Visit
Chicago	- Difficulty connecting with One-Stop delivery system; - Slow start of project because design caused enrollment delays; - Data system not fully developed for sharing information on youth.	- Cautious partnership development with the courts for fear of too many referrals; - Support from community agencies to maintain project; - Implementation delays due to early planning difficulties and missteps.
Cincinnati	Weak link between capacity building and service delivery.	- Late to focus on youth outcomes rather than enrollment goals; - Lack of attention on use of data for continuous improvement.
Colorado	- No employer network; - Workforce development centers not committed to hire staff; - Plans for sustaining project after grant.	- Difficult relationships among partners due to budget cuts; - Enrollment will stop without new funding.
Des Moines	- Plans for sustaining project after grant; - Too few partners; - Data collection system to track youth.	- Engaging stakeholders from other systems; - Bringing in a network of employers; - Lack of buy-in from employers in One-Stop system; - Slow to develop an integrated, comprehensive data management system to foster sustainability.
Erie	- Plans for sustaining route counseling; - Weak route counseling support in Juvenile Justice and workforce development systems; - Project staff and Bayfront not working together in congruence.	Unclear how an increasing number of youth will receive an adequate level of individualized assistance and support.
Hartford	- Very ambitious project design slowed start of project; - Lack of information on results; - Turnover in key staff position.	- Ongoing need to hold training sessions for front-line staff from agencies expected to participate; - Slow buy-in by community agencies; - Lack of results due to long development period; - Too few case managers.
New York	- Lack of partnerships; - Lack of shared leadership; - Plans for sustaining project.	- Sustainability efforts started late; - Funding to maintain core staff.
Pittsburgh	- Data collection and use; - Connections with mental health and substance abuse; - Employer involvement.	- Lack of commitment to using data to monitor project implementation; - Effectively addressing youths' substance abuse and mental health needs; - Finding employers and decent jobs.
W. Palm Beach	Low enrollment of males.	- Low enrollment of males; - Lack of non-health care occupations reduces replicability of project.

Projects' Report of Accomplishments

Despite these challenges, project staff reported its observations of what the projects had succeeded in accomplishing. Evaluators asked project administrators and staff what they believe they have accomplished. For the third site visit, evaluators posed the following question to the projects:

> **What do you want to be able to say your project has accomplished when the DOL funds are depleted?**

Table 20 presents what the staff of the nine projects had to say.

Table 20. Project Accomplishments from the Grantees' Perspective

Projects	Accomplishments
Chicago	- Change in route counseling structure and discontinuation of contract with Project C.I.T.Y. Two agencies assumed route counseling: Latino Youth and Scholarship and Guidance; - Working on getting project as an alternative sentencing program; - Positive impact on youth who have been touched by the project; - Have helped empower communities targeted; - Strengthening partnership with probation officers; - Would like to expand and make project citywide, especially expand it to the Southside.
Cincinnati	- Improved relationships and partnerships in the community; - Increased knowledge of how to serve this population; - Improved focus on employer needs; - Policy changes to improve workforce development for all youth; - A better model for way of serving offenders; - Reduction in the stigma of being an offender; - Community knowledge of success stories; - Better understanding of how demonstration grants work.
Colorado	- Common vision of project among stakeholders, problem solving without blame; - Stipend trust fund started for work experience for youth before release; other work experience without stipends developed; - Work readiness services at 90 days before release; STEPS curriculum; - Learned what works for transition and engagement; - Value of incentive program for accomplishments; - Workforce centers will bring career and job exploration computers to LMYSC.
Des Moines	- Provided needed services to 94 youth to date; - Created new partnerships with Juvenile Court, Polk County Decategorization (probation and parole), Polk County Primary Health Care, and the YMCA; - Many positive outcomes for youth – much higher percentage stayed in school than projected. Similarly, a higher percentage: received a high school diploma, received a GED, gained life skills for better personal problem solving, and have taken responsibility for their own actions.
Erie	- More youth were served; - The staff had the opportunity to network with other professionals across the country; this provided fresh new looks at what was being done locally and modifications for improvement in existing services and activities; - The project provided funds for a new collaboration between the Perseus House and the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies; future collaborations are envisioned as a result; - The BroadReach project gave credibility in the community and state to the Perseus House and the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies;

Projects	Accomplishments
	▪ The project gave the participating organizations a large access to WIA resources; it also opened the eyes of the local workforce investment board and staff as to what the Perseus House and Bayfront Center were doing; ▪ This new partnership with the One-Stop system and the BroadReach activities have led both the Perseus House and the Bayfront Center into new directions in workforce preparation for needy youth;
Hartford	▪ Development of new Hartford Connects internet-based route counseling system; ▪ Creation of Youth Development Practitioners Academy, providing intensive training to front-line staff in youth-serving agencies throughout the community; ▪ Getting all key stakeholders – especially Hartford Public Schools and the city's Department of Health and Human Services – to work with a range of community-based service providers to develop a fully integrated, comprehensive system that would assist every youth in the community that needs help; ▪ Formation of the Future Workforce Investment System (FWIS) Leadership Committee, with mayor of Hartford, and strong involvement from the grantee as well as other community "champions," to produce a true system with commitment from the stakeholders and a coordinated strategy for collaboration and leveraging of resources.
New York	▪ DOL grant legitimized project; it opened the door to other government funding; ▪ Robin Hood Foundation helped project get new space and helped to refurbish it. It was impressed with the validation of the DOL grant; ▪ Project was a small player, and now staff is asked to be at the table for policy and planning; ▪ The grant gave the leadership the opportunity for perspective and a chance to rethink the organization; ▪ The grant allowed FOIA to build the education department; it can now meet the youth's needs where he/she is and move from there; ▪ Staff has seen youth who arrive at a 4th grade reading level, out of school for years, reengaged and move to read at the 7th grade level; ▪ The project is serving more youth; it is attacking deficits in education and backgrounds; youth get more individual attention; ▪ Staff has the time to evaluate, support, assess the youth; ▪ Employers are willing to hire FOIA (project) youth; ▪ Boosted from just an employment project to one where there are relationships with employers.
Pittsburgh	▪ Added partnerships with University of Pittsburgh and AmeriCorps for special projects; ▪ Added mandatory monthly orientation sessions for all youth entering project in that month; ▪ Project service delivery put under the grantee instead of being subcontracted—this has meant more contact with grantee's Executive Director, easier access to co-located other projects of the grantee, greater administrative support for BluePrint, ability to increase compensation for case managers, but less and different space for project activities; ▪ Philosophical shift to put more responsibility on youth to do things for themselves, less "hand holding"; ▪ ISS developed in a different way: input from multiple partners but no single face-to-face meeting to discuss the youth's needs and develop a plan. Also, as recommended by expert, start the process with information provided by youth, and then build on it. More time efficient but possibly some loss of connection with Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic and Addison Behavioral Care partners.
West Palm Beach	▪ Development of an infrastructure that builds new and enhances the existing community services and capacity of the Workforce Investment Board, youth council, and One-Stop centers so as to prepare youth for high quality employment with career ladder opportunities; ▪ Prevention of recidivism and promotion of recovery by building strong partnerships that

Projects	Accomplishments
	promote and enhance year-round youth training for employment, school-to-work programs and academic enrichment;
	▪ Development of strong linkages with employers, criminal justice and law enforcement agencies, Workforce Investment Board services, and grass roots community-based services;
	▪ Maximization of cost sharing, leveraging of funds and investments of public and private educational agencies, employment organizations, businesses, Workforce Investment Board, and other community partners committed to community improvement and investment in youth beyond the period of the demonstration grant;
	▪ Continuation of services to demonstration youth and new youth as a means for measuring the ongoing effectiveness of the infrastructure, and making adjustments as needed over time.

Summary

The demonstration projects provided educational, support and workforce development services to more than 1,800 youth. A majority of older youth obtained work experience and a majority of all were in school for at least a part of their time in the project. During their active period in the project, very few youth came under court supervision through a new conviction.

The projects varied in the degree to which they achieved systems-level outcomes, but all progressed in establishing partnerships, uncovering local youth service resources, achieving some degree of sustainability, and involving community and employers in activities, boards, funding, and/or changing attitudes to the youth.

The work of implementing the demonstration was not finished in any of the Round Two projects. Challenges that projects identified during the second evaluation visits continued to be challenges at the third visit.

The accomplishments cited by grantees surface several themes:

- First, there was a great diversity of types of accomplishments across the nine projects. This diversity may be a function of the nature of a demonstration – that grantees are encouraged – indeed, expected – to develop objectives that they believe to be important to their communities. While there are certainly common elements required of all grantees, they also took the opportunity to develop approaches that fit the local context and local needs, as they saw them;

- Second, the projects found that development of new partnerships was an important step in building collaborations and support for working with youth;

- Third, there seemed to be evidence that people in the community representing service providers, employers, and other organizations were becoming more

receptive to working with youth offenders and youth at risk of court involvement; and

- Fourth, the projects were simply able to provide more and/or new services to youth than would have been possible without grant funding – and project staff have seen considerable evidence of positive outcomes for youth.

Finally, it might be useful to quote from a report summary the **West Palm Beach** project prepared to share with other projects. The project has in many ways been a model that has provided valuable lessons not only in the area of sustainability and gaining new resources, but in terms of how it viewed its role as a catalyst for change within its community. The project explained:

> **The local Workforce Investment Board included youth offenders, gang members, and at-risk youth in its priority plan for provision of services, however, reports showed that service providers and educators were fearful and ill-equipped to offer services to this population; local employers had not supported hiring these youth; and existing case managers had to reject referrals for services because they reported being unable to effectively serve their existing case load. In response to this problem, the Probationers Educational Growth program formed and developed partnerships with the educational, business and employment community. Such services have been identified as being so successful and the need so great that a dramatic expansion took place.**

The next and final narrative section of the report will draw together the major themes and identify lessons learned for the future of serving the target youth.

Section IX

SUMMARY

The previous eight sections have examined the nine projects in Round Two of the demonstration in several ways:

- Section I provided an overview of the demonstration and its foundation in theoretical literature and previous experience.

- Section II introduced the projects and the characteristics of the youth they served;

- Section III introduced the Public Management Model (PMM) and described how it applied to the projects;

- Section IV described the services and the service delivery mechanisms implemented by each project;

- Section V described the organizational attributes and the data collection and analytic components of the PMM.

- Section VI documented the projects' approaches to continuous improvement and their use of technical assistance as a part of continuous improvement;

- Section VII summarized the projects' overall strategies for improving services to youth offenders and youth at risk of court and gang involvement; and

- Section VIII summarized the accomplishments of the projects during the demonstration period.

Overview

This section will summarize what we have learned, and what lessons for the future are observable at this point in the projects' evolution.

The second round of the Youth Offender Demonstration Project was still evolving when this report was written. The project's nine grantees were completing month 27 of the 30-month-long demonstration. Several of the projects had requested and received no-cost extensions from DOL: Chicago, Colorado, Erie, Hartford, Pittsburgh, and West Palm Beach. In addition, six projects received supplemental funding for one of three programs that would carry them for an additional one to two years:

- **Academic Skills Program:** Colorado, Erie, Hartford and New York;

- **Employment Bonus Program:** West Palm Beach; and

- **AmeriCorps/Job Corps Program:** Pittsburgh.

Only when all rounds of the demonstration projects have ended and enough time has passed to examine their long-term outcomes will it be possible to state more explicitly and confidently the findings from the demonstration. It is possible at this time, nonetheless, to identify and discuss several factors that *appeared* to contribute to implementation progress experienced by many of the projects.

Findings

Context and Environment

The projects in Round Two operated in a difficult economic climate that affected agency budgets and the ability of projects to find employment for clients when displaced workers' needs and abilities ranked them higher in priority.

Grantees were workforce development, justice, or community-based organizations. Projects developed partnerships to provide the range of services youth needed to become ready for employment. The task of building sustainable partnerships demanded considerable negotiation to establish and maintain.

Youth Characteristics

The demonstration enrolled youth who were generally offenders, almost evenly divided between younger and older age categories. The youth were overwhelmingly male and somewhat over half were black. Most were in school at some point in the demonstration. Projects reported that the clients being referred to them over the course of the demonstration were presenting deeper developmental needs and problem behaviors.

Recruitment and Retention

Youth were recruited generally by referral from another agency within the community. Several projects focused on youth offenders and began recruitment by meeting youth before their release from incarceration.

Retention proved to be a challenge for all the projects. Projects retained youth primarily by getting to know youth personally and following up if they began to miss activities. Several projects reported that using financial incentives improved attendance; others used in-kind incentives, like bus cards and gift vouchers, to show youth that participation would help them meet their needs. Intangible incentives were introduced in several projects: positive peer pressure, new clothing in place of gang colors, a professional identity, and/or an atmosphere combining challenge and support.

Public Management Model

The Public Management Model focused attention on the larger system changes that needed to occur if the youth were going to experience the range of services they needed in a coordinated way. Projects learned about the PMM during conferences and they were encouraged to monitor the implementation of the project according to the components of the model. The technical assistance team used the PMM to assess the progress projects were making toward implementation, and the evaluation team used it to "unpack" and understand the dynamics of implementation during the analysis.

Driving the implementation and earning the central focus of the PMM was the implementation of the range of services outlined by DOL in the SGA. All the projects provided a range of workforce development services. Projects did not offer reentry services; rather the projects cooperated with the justice system staff to support the youth's probation or parole requirements. All the projects offered educational services to improve the skills youth needed for employment. Youthful clients required an extensive array of support services to meet their developmental, therapeutic and financial needs.

Seven organizational attributes characterized projects that were making steady improvements in implementing their youth offender employment projects. Projects varied on the range of the attributes that they exhibited, but all made progress over the course of the demonstration.

The PMM emphasized that projects attempting to implement a cross-agency project needed data that reflected the cross-agency activities in order to make decisions that kept the project on track. While all the projects developed a project-specific database, many relied on their habit of using anecdotal information to make decisions.

The approach to implementation embodied in the PMM leads systems to progress incrementally toward greater coordination through a continuous improvement loop: offer services through sound management tactics, collect information about performance success and gaps, and close the gaps in performance. The continuous improvement loop completes the PMM.

Service Delivery Mechanisms

Projects differed in whether the grantee delivered services directly or through partners. In all cases, youth received an individual service plan based on assessments of the youth's needs. Depending in large part on the youths' age, clients were assigned primarily to educational activities or primarily to workforce preparation activities. Projects coordinated services through the oversight of route counselors, housing services in one facility, maintaining service information in an accessible management information system, and/or regular team meetings.

Incentives were used by most projects with transportation aids being the most common. Some offered financial incentives for participation or for achieving milestones in the

individual service plans. Staff reported that using incentives was an important retention device.

System-level Accomplishments

Partnerships played a crucial role throughout all aspects of a project – from planning through service delivery to sustainability. The experiences of Round Two confirmed that partnerships are critical for sustaining an initiative as complex as the youth offender projects. Planning for sustainability at the beginning of the demonstration gave grantees the time needed to develop partnerships that offered the promise of sustainability.

Bringing workforce and justice systems into partnership remained a crucial relationship. Projects that did not have this partnership in place made progress over the demonstration period, but entering the demonstration with this relationship in place eased the implementation efforts. Projects made good use of their relationships with health and education agencies, and both health and education agencies tended to provide some resources from their budgets for serving the youth. Relationships with One-Stop centers remained challenging. These agencies operated under tight budget constraints, and they focused on finding work for the more experienced dislocated workers. Several admitted that they did not think that their agencies had the capacity to work with troubled youth, but those that worked with project youth gained confidence that they could serve the target population.

For Round Two projects, building successful partnerships did not mean more partners were necessarily better. The evaluators were not in a position to determine why projects that had gathered dozens of youth service delivery agencies used only a few of them. In some instances, all the active partners were subcontractors, but this was not always the case. Perhaps the time required to coordinate service deliverers limits the number that can be more deeply engaged.

One of the most challenging elements of the demonstration was developing a network of employers willing to hire youth offenders and youth at risk of court involvement. Few projects actually assigned staff to develop employer networks. Few staff members were assigned employment retention duties, and these two features could be related.

Youth Accomplishments

More than 1,800 youth received services through the demonstration grants. The majority of the youth clients were male and offenders. The majority of the youth received some additional education under the auspices of the grant and a majority of the older youth received some type of employment experience. While they were active in the project, few youth were convicted of a new crime or incarcerated for a new crime. Counselors frequently reported that a value of the demonstration was keeping youth constructively engaged in activities all day as a crime prevention factor. Given all the factors that affected projects and project youth, no one can interpret these findings, but the achievements of the young people augur an optimistic assessment of the efforts to support these youth through the process of becoming work ready.

Lessons Learned

Demonstrations by their nature are essentially learning experiences for all those involved in them – stakeholders, sponsors, evaluators, technical assistance providers, and others who support the effort. Indeed, the process evaluation of the second round of demonstration projects showed this was the case.

Value of Coordinated Services

Round Two projects universally used assessments to design individual service strategies that encompassed a range of workforce development, education, health, and other support services. While not every youth needed all these services, every project needed the range of services to support some youth clients. Projects worked with youth who had not been successful in other system settings, justice and education especially, but the youth began to achieve demonstration goals through the range of services provided.

Route counselors and administrators reported consistently how difficult it was to keep the youth engaged and the services coordinated; the effort remained challenging. These same administrators and route counselors also reported that they would not return to having "service-silos" because they could see that the youth were more likely to meet their goals when they received services through a coordinated approach.

A major lesson from Round Two is that youth needs will vary, and lock-step curricula are unlikely to address their different developmental and therapeutic needs.

Another lesson learned is the value grantees placed on route counseling, the "glue" that holds the cross-agency service delivery system responsive to individual youth. Discussions of sustainability generally came down to the struggle to fund the route counseling system that kept youth on track and service providers engaged.

Economic Environment

Despite the poor economic environment, budget cuts, and high unemployment, youth in Round Two were finding employment. A lesson to be observed is that a discouraging environment is not a basis for avoiding youth offender employment efforts.

Youth Employment

Youth were attracted to the demonstration because it offered them hope of employment. Parole officers cooperated with the demonstration because it offered their clients the opportunity to work. It is hard to overestimate the importance of employment as a component of the services to youth offenders. When staff reported that they would never return to their former ways of serving target youth, they generally meant that they wanted a work readiness and job placement component in the youths' service plan.

Use of Technical Assistance

At the initial grantee conference in Arlington, VA, projects were oriented to the continuous-improvement approach that would be stressed during the evaluation and how the technical assistance and evaluation teams could be used as part of the process. To a large degree, Round Two demonstration projects actively sought and used technical assistance as an important tool to help them succeed with implementation. While a few projects feared that requesting help would reveal their inadequacies and weaknesses, the projects became more comfortable working with the technical assistance team and learned how the team could help them identify problem areas and strengthen their efforts to reach their objectives and goals. As the projects progressed, they became more willing to ask for help – and to receive it.

A lesson especially for administrators is the importance of finding coaching/training resources for staff who commit to the difficult work of serving youth who have multiple problems and to serve them through cross-agency alliances.

Delivery Is Not Enough

Round Two projects were successful at assembling a wide range of services, but the services themselves were not always developed using standards of quality and sufficiency.

Evaluators observed almost every project designing its own work readiness curriculum. It would make a timely contribution to the workforce development field to collect and examine these curricula to offer communities some guidance and promising practices, rather than having every community starting from nothing. One project leader advised that DOL would be wise to support the development of a nationally accredited work readiness curriculum for youth offenders and other hard-to-serve groups.

Some work readiness curricula lasted for a few hours while others lasted for weeks. It would be valuable to learn what duration and intensity of work readiness most youth need to be truly work ready.

While almost everyone appreciated the role of route counselors as hinges connecting the youth and the services, projects exhibited different route counseling philosophies: some route counselors had heavy case loads while others had fewer than 20 youth. It would be valuable to learn under what conditions route counselors need to be heavily engaged with a few clients and when their role is more a way to coordinate services for a larger group.

Evaluators noted that some projects controlled the numbers of enrollees and others tried to serve all eligible youth. It would be important to learn how to calculate the resources-to-client ratios for best effect.

While all projects offered some incentives for youth, others offered systematic stipends or scheduled awards for progress. It would be important to learn the value of incentives

and whether predictability of award (hourly wage/stipend or milestone achievement) makes any difference.

Projects spent most of their funds on preparing youth for employment and less effort on developing employer networks, job retention, and developing career-directed activities. Communities need some help in developing demand-side strategies to assist youth.

The lesson learned is that offering the range of services was a challenging task, but it is only part of what needs to be understood to serve these youth effectively.

Importance of the PMM

The process evaluation of the nine Round Two projects demonstrated the utility of the Public Management Model as a lens for grantees, evaluators, and technical assistance specialists. The language of the PMM became a way for grantees, evaluators, and technical assistance specialists to communicate about the projects in an analytic way. Evaluators were able to organize their observations according to the presence or absence of organizational attributes, as well as the other PMM components, to judge the strength and success of a project's implementation effort and whether continuous improvement was occurring within the project. Technical assistance specialists were able to structure their observations through this lens as well, and this helped them to identify what projects needed. The PMM helped projects focus on the system-level changes they were undertaking rather than be overwhelmed by the operational detail of serving many youth with deep and differing needs.

From the process evaluation conducted during the past two years there were practical findings, which using of the PMM as an analytical framework made clearer. The team found that:

- The strength of partnerships that were either in place before the demonstration or developed during the planning and implementation phases often appeared to affect whether the projects were able to develop strong working partnerships quickly with the workforce development, juvenile justice and health care systems.

- Successfully implemented projects developed well-conceived implementation plans by involving stakeholders and front-line staffs. Clear vision resulted from consensus reached among partners and stakeholders early in a project's life cycle, often through advisory councils.

- It took a long time for some projects to develop strong partnerships, perhaps beyond the demonstration period. Visits by the evaluation team in the fall of 2002 to four first round projects to find out how the projects were doing after grant funding ended appeared to confirm that the short demonstration period did not allow the projects enough time to develop strong partnerships. An important lesson learned was that although most projects experienced

considerable success in strengthening old partnerships and building new ones, the partnership arrangements needed on-going support and leadership to continue after DOL funding ended.

- The needs of many youth were too numerous and too deep for any one agency to meet within the grant period, especially given that projects were still recruiting youth at the time this report was written in fall 2003. Again, time appeared to be a limiting factor. Some youth had dropped out of school after ninth grade and read and calculated at the elementary school level. Others did not speak English as a first language. Such deficits were taking a longer time to address than the period of the demonstration.

- Another dimension of partnership development is including partners with special expertise. For example, youth with substance abuse problems needed staff with specific expertise to overcome this barrier to employment. Route counselors hired because they worked well with youth often did not have the workforce development expertise to use labor market information in guiding clients toward employment with a future.

- The PMM helped to identify sustainability planning as a thread that needed to weave through the entire project period. The project needed to learn what the community wanted to sustain. It needed to develop community awareness and support, a level of support that could not be gained in the last months of the demonstration. The sustainability plans projects were encouraged to develop also addressed questions, such as, "Will the youth be handed off to one or more agencies during a transition and which agency will take primary responsibility for major activities and resource seeking?"

- The organizational attributes of the PMM surfaced from the observations made by evaluators and technical assistance specialists during Round One. A question for Round Two was whether grantee staffs could be taught to develop these attributes as they implemented their projects. Presentations on the PMM were made at each grantee conference to develop a system-level awareness by grantees. At the mid-point of Round Two, the evaluation team looked at the organizational attributes displayed by the projects and compared them to those of Round One projects, which also had also been assessed at midpoint of their grant period. The analysis indicated that 36% of Round One projects showed that they had developed some level of the attributes compared to 67% for Round Two projects. Round Two projects that demonstrated the attributes were also the more successfully implemented projects at the time the comparison was made. It appears possible to teach projects' staff to focus on the key system changes needed to implement a cross-agency service delivery project.

- The PMM brought attention to the uses of data. In Round One, every partner collected and reported data within its administrative structure, but most

projects struggled to develop an integrated database that would allow an observer to "see" the project. DOL called for a project-level database for Round Two projects, but evaluators realized that solving the technical aspects of designing a database did not alter the culture of decision-making. More will have to occur for decisions to be data driven and for future fundraising to be supported by systematically analyzed data.

Design Specifications: Several of the improvements of Round Two compared to Round One stemmed from the specifications in the SGA prepared by DOL staff. One such aspect was the call for a project-specific database, just mentioned. Another has been alluded to: the SGA listed the main and support services DOL expected grantees to implement, including partnership development.

The lesson learned is that grantees will attempt difficult issues such as cross-agency partnership development and coordination if it is clear that receiving funds is tied to their compliance.

Recommendations and Closing

This Final Report assesses the implementation process undertaken by the nine Round Two projects. The process evaluation confirms many initial findings from Round One of the demonstration. Although the demonstration continues with additional projects into 2004 and the findings of formal outcomes studies have yet to be completed, some recommendations seem clear.

Recommendation # 1

The effort to prepare youth for employment through coordinated services across the spectrum of workforce, reentry, education, health, housing, and other support activities is grounded in theoretical and evidenced-based research. Despite the difficulty of implementing such complex service arrangements, communities should be encouraged to develop coordinated service delivery mechanisms for youth for the sake of the youth and for the economic and public safety well being of the community.

The alternatives are doing nothing or offering services in piecemeal fashion. Communities already had enough experience with these options to know that they had to do better.

Recommendation # 2

System-by-system accountability standards are intended to focus agencies and subcontractors on performance, but these accountability structures may impede partnership arrangements where multiple organizations could take both responsibility and credit for accomplishments. Communities should be encouraged to support cross-

agency/cross-system partnerships that share the burden of high-need clients and share the credit for their progress as well.

Recommendation # 3

While the discussion of sustainability can be very theoretical—what should be sustained, who will take responsibility, etc. The ultimate concern should be for the youth, especially youth who are suspicious of civil systems in which they have experienced failure (e.g., school and juvenile justice). Projects that have raised their hopes of a better life need to be resourceful in accommodating enrolled youth's needs for service or redirecting those they can no longer serve to other service providers.

Recommendation # 4

The risk conditions that increase the probability that youth will come under court supervision are not changing notably in our communities. Communities need to anticipate that youth will continue to be referred for a broad range of services to become work ready. Communities will be better served by more study of such factors as route counseling, duration and intensity of services, incentives use, or developing personal relationships with youth.

The evaluators considered participating in the Youth Offender Demonstration a rare privilege. Evaluators were awed by the vision, commitment and hard work of so many project administrators and staff, and they appreciated the struggle of many young people to change the direction of their lives. Despite the headlines that opened this report, day-to-day project activity matched earnest youth and dedicated staff in learning activities that moved the youth closer to constructive life paths. The evaluators are grateful to the Department of Labor for the opportunity to collaborate on this important initiative to improve the lives of both youth and their communities.

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Employment and Training Glossary

AmeriCorps— A federally funded network of national service programs that engage more than 50,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet critical needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment. Created in 1993, AmeriCorps is part of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Apprenticeship (registered)—A relationship between an employer and employee during which the worker, or apprentice, learns an occupation in a structured program jointly sponsored by employers and labor unions or employee associations. Registered apprenticeship programs meet specific federally approved standards designed to safeguard the welfare of apprentices. The programs are registered with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training (BAT) or one of 27 State apprenticeship agencies or councils approved by BAT.

Basic skills training—Instruction, normally conducted in an institutional classroom or one-on-one tutorial setting, that is designed to upgrade basic skills and prepare individuals for further training, transition to postsecondary education, future employment, or retention in present employment. It may be provided within the framework of competency in basic skills, including, but not limited to, reading, writing, mathematics, literacy training, speaking, listening, problem solving, thinking, reasoning, study skills, computer skills, and GED preparation.

Cooperative education—Situations in which students alternate or coordinate their high school or postsecondary studies with jobs in fields related to their academic or occupational objectives. Students and participating businesses develop written training and evaluation plans to guide instruction, and students receive course credit for their classroom and work experiences. Credit hours and intensity of placements vary with the course of study.

Employment and Training Administration—DOL agency responsible for administering employment and training programs for economically disadvantaged, unemployed, and displaced workers.

Federal Bonding Program (FBP)— The DOL-supported FBP makes fidelity bonds available to help ex-offenders and other high-risk individuals obtain employment. A fidelity bond is a business insurance policy that protects the employer in case of any loss of money or property due to employee dishonesty.

Intermediaries—Community-based organizations, nonprofit groups, or other job brokers who provide a consistent point of contact between employers and low-income and less-skilled workers and job seekers, including court-involved youth. Intermediaries can help youth connect with employers and community services, and they can provide the level of monitoring required during the early stages of transition and employment.

Job Corps—A DOL-funded program that began with the passage of the War on Poverty programs in 1964. The program's goal is to help severely disadvantaged youth between the ages of 16 and 24 become more responsible, employable, and productive citizens. Job Corps is distinguished from other youth programs by the intensive education, training, and support services it provides in a residential setting.

Job search training—A process that enhances the job readiness of participants by teaching them job seeking techniques and increasing their motivation and self-confidence. The training may consist of job skills assessments, résumé writing, job-finding clubs, job placement services, or other direct training or support activities.

Job shadowing—A technique to allow a student to observe an employee or several different employees at a company location to learn about a particular occupation or industry. Job shadowing can help students explore a range of career objectives and select a career major during the latter part of high school.

Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA)— The purpose of the Job Training Partnership Act was to establish programs to prepare youth and adults facing serious barriers to employment for participation in the labor force by providing job training and other services that would result in increased employment and earnings, increased educational and occupational skills, and decreased welfare dependency. It has been superceded by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

Occupational skills training—Instruction conducted in an institutional or worksite setting, but not on the job, that teaches entry-level skills or upgrades the primary/technical and secondary/ancillary skills required to perform a specific job or group of jobs in fields such as auto mechanics, health services, or clerical work. May include job-specific and customized training, internships, and pre-apprenticeship preparation.

On-the-job training (OJT)—Training in the public or private sector that is given to an individual while he or she is engaged in productive work. It is designed to provide the basic skills or upgrade the primary/technical and secondary/ancillary skills that are essential to full and adequate performance on the job. Typically, a training plan is established by the employee, the employer, and an external agency, if matching wages are being paid by that agency.

One-Stop Centers—The 1998 Workforce Investment Act required local areas to develop a one-stop delivery service system for employment and training services. Open to both adults and youth, One-Stop Centers provide access to a wide variety of services, including assessment and career counseling, vocational training, job listings and placement, unemployment compensation, vocational rehabilitation, adult education and literacy, trade adjustment assistance, the Job Corps, and other education and training services.

PEPNet—The Promising and Effective Practices Network (PEPNet) created and managed by the National Youth

Employment Coalition, highlights what works, documents successes, plans improvements, gives recognition, shares information, and contributes to a database of effective practices in workforce and youth development.

Private Industry Councils (PIC's)— Entities established by local elected officials in each service delivery area (SDA) to provide guidance and oversight for job training programs. PIC's are key mechanisms for bringing representatives from various segments of the private sector into the active management of job training programs. In some jurisdictions, PIC's operate as local workforce development boards.

School-to-Work—A collaborative initiative between DOL and the U.S. Department of Education to help young people acquire the knowledge, skills, abilities, and information about the labor market that they need to make an effective transition from high school to career-oriented work and/or further education.

Work experience—A short-term or part-time work activity in the public or not-for-profit sector that provides an individual with the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge to perform a job, including appropriate work habits and behaviors.

Work-based learning—Innovative instruction that uses real-world examples to provide authenticity and relevance. Hands-on instruction, project-based learning, service learning, school-to-careers, and other methods that relate academic learning to real life are particularly successful.

Workforce Development Boards/Workforce Investment Boards—Entities designated by States to oversee workforce development initiatives within a specified service delivery area (SDA). They may serve as the administrative entities for JTPA, Welfare-to-Work, School-to-Work, One-Stop Centers, and Food Stamp Employment and Training programs, or for a host of other authorized workforce development programs funded by Federal, State, local, and other sources. Under the new Workforce Investment Act (1998), Workforce Development Boards are the designated entities that oversee workforce development initiatives for DOL-designated service delivery areas.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA)—Passed by Congress to promote a new approach to youth employment and training, WIA replaced JTPA in 1998. The act combined the old Summer Youth Employment and Training Programs with the Job Training Partnership Act's year-round program, replaced Private Industry Councils with Workforce Investment Boards, and promoted stronger links between the workforce development and juvenile justice systems. About a third of WIA funds must go to programs for out-of-school youth, requiring a shift in resources from stand-alone summer jobs programs to year-round programming.

Youth Council— WIA requires that local Workforce Investment Boards establish Youth Councils as subgroups to assist in developing the youth portion of the local workforce development system, determining eligible youth service providers, and overseeing WIA youth services and activities. Youth Council

members are appointed by local Workforce Investment Boards in cooperation with the chairperson.

Youth Opportunity—A DOL-funded movement that was initiated with the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. Funds allocated under Youth Opportunity are intended to complement the Job Corps, School-to-Work, and formula-funded youth programs. The goal is to decrease the high unemployment rates of youth residing in impoverished communities, thereby helping these communities to reduce crime, youth gangs, illegal drug use, and welfare dependency.

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Selected Juvenile Justice Glossary

Adjudication—The process for determining a youth's involvement in an offense (guilt) and the actual finding of involvement. Adjudication can be withheld and conditions imposed which, if met, will result in dismissal of the charges.

Aftercare—A generic term for a variety of services and levels of supervision provided following a period of commitment to a residential facility. During aftercare, the youth is still considered a ward of the court or State and is supervised by a probation officer or aftercare worker.

Aggravating factors—Factors that may increase the seriousness of the offense, such as prior offenses, weapon use, heinous crimes, and threats to victims or witnesses.

Alternative sanctions—An array of sanctions, appropriate and suitable for a violation of a consent decree, stipulations of probation, and/or community corrections placement, that are recommended to the court for consideration and that a court may impose as a disposition (sentence).

Anti-gang activity—Both direct efforts to reduce violence in a neighborhood and indirect efforts to provide wholesome activities to engage youth as a substitute for gang activity.

Arrest—The act of taking an adult into custody, based on probable cause, when a law enforcement officer charges the adult with a criminal act or violation of law. A juvenile is often said to be "taken into custody" rather than arrested.

Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ)—The BARJ model seeks to balance offender accountability, public safety and competency development by helping juvenile justice systems to become more responsive to the needs of victims, offenders, and the community. Recognizing both victim and offender restoration as critical goals, BARJ utilizes alternative sanctions such as community services and victim restitution to engage youth and involve victims in the justice process.

Boot camp—A residential treatment program that includes a rigorous program of physical training and exercise in a military-type setting. Other treatment services, including educational and vocational training, substance abuse treatment, conflict resolution, communication skills, and anger management training, may also be provided. Boot camp programs often include counseling directed at replacing delinquent responses with behavior in accord with acceptable community and societal norms.

Case manager/Route counselor—A person who works with a juvenile to assess his or her needs, develops a plan of services, refers the juvenile for services, monitors those services and the youth, and counsels the youth. Delinquency case managers may combine the duties of intake and community control officers. These functions may be performed by public employees (probation or aftercare

workers) or contracted to private organizations.

Case plan (i.e., an Individual Service Plan or Individual Service Strategy)— A written document, also referred to as a treatment plan, that includes the strategy for intervention based on an in-depth risk and needs assessment. The plan specifies the services to be offered, the goals to be attained, and the responsibilities of the youth in complying with the plan.

Community arbitration—A process using neutral arbitrators or arbitration panels for speedy and informal disposition. It is used to divert youth cases from the formal juvenile justice system. Referral to community arbitration may be made by the law enforcement officer, case manager (at intake), parents, State's attorney, or the court.

Community corrections—A progressive approach to corrections that offers a full range of programming, including prerelease centers, halfway houses, residential drug and alcohol treatment facilities, restitution, and day reporting centers.

Comprehensive assessment—The act of gathering information to evaluate a juvenile offender's physical, psychological, educational, vocational, and social conditions and family environment to determine the offender's need for services and recommended disposition.

Conflict resolution—A variety of actions that use communication skills and creative thinking to develop

voluntary solutions that are acceptable to those involved in a dispute.

Continuum of care—A comprehensive array of juvenile justice programs and services ranging from the least intrusive, serving youth at risk of delinquency, to the most intrusive, serving maximum-risk youth in secure residential settings.

Curfew—A local ordinance that requires, with specific conditions and exceptions, a specific group of persons (usually juveniles under a certain age) to refrain from unsupervised activities or being in the streets after a designated hour within the confines of a selected area, city, or county.

Custody—The state of being in the care of a juvenile justice agency or official. It is similar to being arrested in the adult criminal system.

Delinquency prevention programs— Programs and services designed to serve children at risk of entering the juvenile justice system.

Delinquent act—Any act committed by a juvenile (generally a person who is subject to juvenile court jurisdiction) that would be a criminal violation of a Federal or State law or local ordinance if committed by an adult.

Delinquent juvenile—A child who has been found responsible (equivalent to an adult's being found guilty of a criminal offense) by a juvenile court judge for having committed a delinquent act and has been adjudicated delinquent.

Detention—Confinement by the State or local authorities in a secure facility. The term is also used in circumstances where

a youth is in home confinement while awaiting an adjudication hearing, disposition, or commitment placement. Also used as "time out" in domestic violence cases and for post-adjudicatory punishment.

Detention center—Any public or private residential facility that includes construction fixtures designed to physically restrict the movements and activities of juveniles or other individuals held in lawful custody in such a facility. It is used for the temporary placement of any juvenile that is accused of having committed an offense, of any non-offender, or of any individual accused of having committed a criminal offense.

Detention hearing—A judicial hearing, usually held within 24 hours of a youth's being taken into custody, at which the court determines whether there is probable cause to believe that the youth has committed a delinquent act, whether a valid court order exists that requires the continued detention of the youth, or whether there is a danger that the youth will not show up for trial or will endanger himself or herself or others, pending an adjudicatory hearing.

Dispositional hearing—A juvenile case hearing (analogous to a sentencing hearing in criminal court) at which the court receives a predisposition report containing information and recommendations to assist in determining the appropriate sanctions, hears from the defense lawyer, and makes a determination for a community-based or other sanction such as probation or commitment to the custody of the agency responsible for juvenile justice.

Diversion—A process by which a juvenile is channeled out of police custody or the judicial component of the juvenile justice system and where the youth may be required to complete a specified treatment plan designed to preclude further delinquent acts and meet his or her needs.

Electronic monitoring—The use of electronic devices such as ankle bracelets and receivers to track youth placed in the community or in home detention. This method of supervision is generally for those youth deemed to be of moderate to high risk, but whom the court believes does not require secure detention (confinement to a residential facility). Electronic monitoring also can be used for those youth awaiting placement in a very restrictive program.

Home detention/House arrest—Temporary custody of a youth who meets detention criteria but does not require secure detention. Pending hearings, the youth is returned to the custody of the parent or guardian in a physically nonrestrictive environment under the close daily supervision of juvenile justice system staff. The level of intensity varies and may include electronic monitoring, curfew, and other restrictive requirements. This type of custody may also be used during pre-placement supervision.

Intake—The initial process used for youth referred to the juvenile justice system. Intake involves screening each youth to determine the appropriateness of detention, release, or referral to a diversionary program or agency for unofficial or non-judicial handling; for medical, psychiatric, psychological, substance abuse, or educational

problems; or for other conditions that may have caused the child to come to the attention of law enforcement or intake officers. Intake also includes the initial screening of a status offender or child in need of services (CINS) to determine which actions are in the best interests of the child, the family, and the community.

Juvenile delinquency program—Any program or activity related to juvenile delinquency prevention, control, diversion, treatment, rehabilitation, planning, education and training, and research, including drug and alcohol abuse programs, or to the improvement of the juvenile justice system.

Mediation—A process by which a neutral party, called a mediator, encourages and facilitates the resolution of a dispute between two or more parties. The objective of this informal and non-adversarial process is to help the parties reach a mutually acceptable and voluntary agreement. The mediator's responsibilities include, but are not limited to, assisting the parties in identifying issues, fostering joint problem solving, and exploring settlement alternatives.

Mentoring—The act of voluntarily spending time with a child on a regular basis by sharing his or her free time in activities such as playing sports or games, shopping, taking hikes, helping with homework, and doing chores. Formal mentoring programs may require the volunteer to have a State police check prior to acting as a mentor.

Multidisciplinary assessment—Evaluation of a client, including a psychiatric review, a physical

examination, and a social circumstances report, completed by experts from different fields.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention—DOJ agency responsible for providing national leadership, coordination, and resources to prevent and respond to juvenile offending and child victimization.

Probation—A disposition or sentence under which the court conditionally releases the youth to the community in the care and custody of a parent, guardian, or custodian under prescribed rules and conditions.

Protective factors—Among the categories of factors that help reduce the impact of risk factors in a young person's life are positive personal characteristics, positive adult relationships, and healthy beliefs or clear standards of conduct.

Recidivism—Returned to juvenile corrections (for rule violations or new crimes) and/or sentenced to adult prison or probation.

Reentry services—Broad category of services and activities used to assist youth transitioning back to the community from detention to incarceration. This includes anti-gang activity, alternative sentencing, and aftercare.

Risk factors—Certain negative behaviors or circumstances in a child's life that put youth at risk for juvenile delinquency. These situations or behaviors include living where drugs and firearms are available in the

community, school failure, family conflict, and friends who engage in problem behaviors. These risk factors fall within four categories or domains: community, family, school, and individual/peer.

Status offenses—Non-criminal juvenile offenses that are applied only to children and youth because of their status as minors. Offenses include being truant, running away from home, possessing alcohol or cigarettes, or violating curfew.

Truant—A young person who is absent from school without permission or authorization.

Victimization—The result of a planned or accidental act that causes physical or psychological harm.

Violent crime—Crimes including murder, forcible rape, armed robbery, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Wraparound— Emerging out of a nationwide effort in the 1970s to reform children's mental health services which were recognized as being too restrictive, insensitive, inefficiently organized and poorly targeted to those in need, the wraparound model is based on individualized, strength based, needs-driven planning and service delivery for youth and families. It calls for collaboration on an interagency basis using an interdisciplinary approach to meet an individual's strengths and needs across home, school and community. The approach must also be culturally sensitive to the unique racial, ethnic, geographical and social makeup of youth and their families.

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Appendix A

SOLICITATION FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS

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Billing Code:
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Employment and Training Administration

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AGENCIES: Employment and Training Administration, Department of Labor

ACTION: Notice Inviting proposals for Selected Demonstration Projects for Youth Offenders.

THIS NOTICE CONTAINS ALL OF THE NECESSARY INFORMATION AND FORMS NEEDED TO APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDING.

SUMMARY: This notice contains all of the necessary information and forms to apply for grant funding. The U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration is authorized to award grants to provide services aimed at youth who are or have been under criminal justice supervision or involved in gangs. Therefore, youth employment and developmental activities funded under this grant will be used for a structured set of activities focused primarily on placing youth offenders, gang members, and at-risk youth ages 14-24 employment into long term (part-time for ages 14-15) at wage levels that will (1) prevent future dependency and/or (2) break the cycle of crime and juvenile delinquency that contributes to recidivism and non-productive activities. The Department of Labor (DOL) has worked with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) in the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) in deciding to use these funds for three categories of projects to serve youth offenders. These categories are: **I. - Model Community Projects**; **II. - Education and Training for Youth Offenders Initiative**; and **III. - Community-Wide Capacity Building Projects**.

For Categories I and III, Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), political subdivisions of the State, and private entities are eligible to receive grant funds under this announcement. Eligible private entities include community development corporations, community action agencies, community-based and faith-based organizations, disability community organizations, public and private colleges and universities, and other qualified private organizations. Private entities include non-profit organizations but do not include for-profit organizations or individuals. For Category II, State or local juvenile justice agencies or juvenile correctional agencies shall be the eligible applicant and should identify one juvenile correctional facility within their state where the project will operate. Applicants can only apply under one of these categories, which must be clearly identified on the face sheet of the application. **Local workforce investment areas that were awarded grants to administer Youth Offender Demonstration Projects in 1999 are ineligible to apply under this Solicitation.**

DATES: The closing date for receipt of applications is February 28, 2001 at 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST) at the address below.

ADDRESSES: Applications must be mailed to Denise Roach, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Division of Federal Assistance, 200

Constitution Avenue, NW, Room S-4203, Washington, D.C. 20210, Reference: SGA/DFA-01-101.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Technical questions should be faxed to Denise Roach, Division of Federal Assistance, Fax (202) 693-2879. This is not a toll-free number. All inquiries should include the SGA number SGA/DFA 01-101 and a contact name and phone number. This solicitation will also be published on the Internet on the Employment and Training Administration's web site, to access: 1. http://www.doleta.gov 2.Click Grant & Contract Applications 3. Click Competitive Grant Opportunities 4. Grant Forms. Award notifications will also be published on the web site.

LATE APPLICATIONS: Any application received after the exact date and time specified for receipt at the office designated in this notice will not be considered, unless it is received before awards are made and it: (a) was sent by registered or certified mail not later than the fifth calendar day before the date specified for receipt of applications. e.g., an application submitted in response to a solicitation requiring receipt of applications by the 20th of the month must have been mailed/post-marked by the 15th of the month); or (b) was sent by the U.S. Postal Service Express Mail Next Day Service to the specified address not later than 5:00 P.M. at the place of mailing two working days prior to the date specified for receipt of applications. The term "working days" excludes weekends and federal holidays. The term "post-marked" means a printed, stamped, or otherwise placed impression (exclusive of a postage meter machine impression) that is readily identifiable, without further action, as having been supplied or affixed on the date of mailing by an employee of the U.S. Postal Service.

HAND DELIVERED PROPOSALS: It is preferred that applications be mailed at least five days prior to the closing date. To be considered for funding, hand-delivered applications must be received by 4:00 P.M. (Eastern Standard Time), on the closing date at the specified address.

Telegraphed and/or Faxed Applications Will Not Be Honored. Failure to adhere to the above instructions will be a basis for a determination of non-responsiveness. Overnight express mail from carriers other than the U.S. Postal Service will be considered hand-delivered applications and must be received by the above specified date and time.

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS: A careful evaluation of applications will be made by a technical review panel that will evaluate the applications against the established criteria under each Category. The panel results are advisory in nature and are not binding on the Grant Officer. The Government may elect to award the grant with or without discussions with the offeror. In situations without discussion, an award will be based on the offeror's signature on the SF 424. The final decision on awards will be based on what is most advantageous to the Federal Government, taking into account factors such as geographic diversity, mix of Empowerment Zones (EZs) and Enterprise Communities (ECs), and demographic characteristics.

Cost Sharing/Leveraging Funds: Applicants also should discuss their plans to leverage and align with other funds or resources in order to build permanent partnerships for the continuation of services, and should provide some discussion of the nature of these leveraged resources, i.e., Federal, non-Federal, cash or in-kind, State and county, foundation, capital equipment, and other matching funds. For example, the Federal Bonding Program and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) should be considered as potential tools to assist with youth offender employment placements. Information about these programs may be found on ETA's website at http://www.doleta.gov.

Reporting Requirements: Applicants must clearly define their procedures for reporting progress on a monthly basis (including data elements listed in *(Supplementary Information)*) and for identifying and presenting the results of project interventions. Proposals should also describe in detail the specific reports and other deliverables to be provided to ETA as documentation of progress and results in terms of improved outcomes for the target population. An implementation plan to be submitted within 60 days of the grant execution, monthly reports, an annual report, and a final report summarizing progress are required for projects under this SGA.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Approximately $8,250,000 is available for all three categories. Funding for these awards is authorized under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Applicants must clearly identify which category they are applying for. This information must appear on the face sheet of the application. It is strongly recommended that each application be submitted using the face sheet included in appendix "A" because it will greatly enhance the review process.

As a condition for award, all applicants must agree to participate in a separately funded evaluation. Applicants should not set aside funds for evaluation activities. All applicants must provide assurances in their proposals that they will cooperate with the evaluators and provide access to the data necessary to the evaluations. Awardees of the grants further agree to make available upon request to DOL-authorized evaluation contractor(s) data for a period not to exceed 24 months beyond the demonstration period (which should not exceed 24 months) through a no-cost extension of the grants. The availability of this data beyond the demonstration period will enable, if appropriate, the contractor to perform follow-up analysis. In addition, proposals should specify the linkages between the Youth Offender project and the local WIA Youth Council through the One-Stop delivery system to ensure coordination of workforce development services. These linkages shall include both existing and proposed strategies.

All demonstration sites will be required to collect and maintain participant records through administrative data so that these projects can document results and accomplishments and provide a learning experience for the workforce development system, DOL, and DOJ. These data include:

A. Number recruited;
B. Number enrolled;
C. Number who entered training;

D. Number who entered or reentered secondary school;
E. Number who entered or reentered post-secondary school;
F. Number who entered employment;
G. Number "served by aftercare" programs;
H. Number who entered the military;
I. Number referred to other services such as dropout prevention, drug rehabilitation;
J. Number who entered other job training programs;
K. Number referred to apprenticeship programs;
L. Number of in-school youth served; and
M. Number of out-of-school youth served.

In addition, if applicable, data elements associated with the Workforce Investment Act may be required (to be specified in the grantee's statement of work).

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL: Applicants must submit four (4) copies of their proposal, with original signatures. There are three required sections of the application: Section I- Project Financial Plan; Section II- Executive Summary; and Section III- Project Narrative (including Appendices, NOT TO EXCEED thirty pages). Applications that fail to meet the requirements will not be considered. The Project Narrative must be double-spaced, and on single-sided, numbered pages with the exception of format requirements for the Executive Summary. The Executive Summary must be limited to no more than two (2) single-spaced, single-sided pages. A font size of at least twelve (12) pitch is required throughout.

Part I- Project Financial Plan. Section I of the application must include the following two required elements: (1) Standard Form (SF) 424, "Application for Federal Assistance," (Appendix B) and (2) "Budget Information Form." (Appendix C) All copies of the SF 424 MUST have original signatures of the legal entity applying for grant funds. Applicants shall indicate on the SF 424 the organization's IRS Status, if applicable.

According to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, Section 18, an organization described in Section 501 (c) 4 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 which engages in lobbying activities shall not be eligible for the receipt of federal funds constituting an award, grant, or loan. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number is 17-249. Section I will not count against the application page limits.

The Financial Plan must describe all costs associated with implementing the project that are to be covered with grant funds. In addition, Section I should include a budget narrative/justification which will detail the cost breakout of each line item on the Budget Information Form. This must provide sufficient information to support the reasonableness of the costs included in the budget in relation to the service strategy and planned outcomes. The budget must be for the full duration of the project but may not exceed 30 months. All costs should be necessary and reasonable according to the Federal guidelines set forth in the "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments" (also known as the "Common Rule"), codified at 29 CFR Part 97 (97.22) and "Grants and Agreements with Institutes of Higher

Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations" (also known as OMB Circular A-110), codified at 29 CFR Part 95, (95.27).

Part II- Executive Summary (format requirements limited to no more than two single-spaced, single-sided pages). Each application shall provide a project synopsis that identifies the following:

- The applicant;
- Identification of consortium partners and the type of organizations they represent;
- The project service area;
- Whether the service area is an entire local workforce investment area, more than one local area, and/or all local areas in a State;
- The specific areas of focus in the announcement which are addressed by the project;
- The planned period of performance;
- The comprehensive strategy (e.g., who will provide services, who will be accountable for the project, etc.) for providing seamless service delivery and for addressing the multi-faceted barriers to training and employment which affect youth who are or who have been under criminal justice supervision or involved in gangs or who are at-risk of involvement;
- How counseling and other support needs will be addressed in the One-Stop delivery system;
- The actions already taken by the State or Local Workforce Investment Board to address the needs of at-risk youth in the One-Stop delivery system;
- The level of commitment the applicant (including all consortium members, if any) and other partners have to serving at-risk youth;
- The linkages between the project and the local WIA Youth Council through the One-Stop delivery system, as well as linkages with the business and education communities and juvenile justice agencies; and
- A written confirmation that the applicant will cooperate with the evaluators.

Part III- Project Narrative (format requirements limited to no more than thirty (30) double-spaced, single-sided, numbered pages). Section III of the application, the project narrative, shall contain the technical proposal that demonstrates the applicant's plan and capabilities in accordance with the evaluation criteria contained in this notice. Applicants MUST limit the project narrative section to no more than thirty (30) double-spaced and single-sided pages, which include any attachments provided by the applicants. Letters of general support or recommendation for a proposal should NOT be submitted and will count against the page limit. However, letters of commitment are required from partner/consortia organizations and will not count against the page limit.

BACKGROUND: The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 establishes comprehensive reform of existing Federal job training programs with amendments impacting service delivery under the Wagner Peyser Act, Adult Education and Literacy Act, the Rehabilitation Act and supersedes the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). WIA provides a framework for a national workforce development system designed to

meet both the needs of the nation's businesses and the needs of job seekers who want to further their careers. A number of other Federal programs are also identified as required partners under the One-Stop delivery system with the intention of providing comprehensive services for all Americans to access the information and resources available to them in the development and implementation of their career goals. The intention of the One-Stop delivery system is to establish programs and providers in co-located, coordinated and integrated settings that are coherent and accessible for individuals and businesses alike in approximately 600 workforce investment areas that have been established throughout the nation.

The Workforce Investment Act establishes State and Local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) focused on strategic planning, policy development, and oversight of the workforce system with significant authority for the Governor and chief elected officials to build on existing reforms in order to implement innovative and comprehensive One-Stop delivery systems. In addition, Youth Councils, subgroups of the local WIBs, are required to develop parts of the local plan relating to youth, recommend providers of youth services, and coordinate local youth programs and initiatives. With its mandated requirements to form these interdisciplinary Youth Councils and to develop one comprehensive plan for youth services, WIA presents a unique opportunity to change the way workforce investment programs (and other youth development programs as well) are organized and operated to serve youth. WIA and the Youth Councils offer local areas the chance to look at how both in-school and out-of-school youth services are blended and deployed. They provide the framework that local areas can build on in order to realign, enhance, and improve youth services so that they are more closely coordinated, better utilized, and more effective.

In setting aside funds for this Solicitation, Congress noted "the severe problems facing out-of-school youth in communities with high poverty and unemployment and the inter-relatedness of poverty, juvenile crime, child abuse and neglect, school failure, and teen pregnancy." (These grants are included within the Administration's Youth Violence Prevention initiative.) This SGA provides a unique opportunity for selected workforce investment areas to address the needs of a special youth population- youth offenders, gang members, and at-risk youth ages 14-24 through a WIA consorted effort.

Category I- Model Community Projects

Demonstration projects in this category will be based in heavily impoverished communities in need of comprehensive community-wide approaches to assist youth offenders, gang members, and those at risk of becoming involved in gangs. Grantees will be required to expand services in each of 3 areas: 1) gang prevention and suppression activities; 2) alternative sentencing for first-time offenders; and 3) after-care and route counseling for incarcerated youth. In addition, grantees shall provide education and mental health services, employment training, sports and recreation, and community services projects in order to reduce recidivism and procure for the target population long-term employment at livable wage levels. The grantees must place particular emphasis on

enhancing existing route counseling and job placement services for youth on probation or for those who are reentering the community from corrections facilities. These support services should be provided throughout the entire employment search continuum, i.e., from the beginning of the employment search until well after the procurement of employment. The projects also will maintain records of the number of contacts made after placement and the type of support services provided.

The projects also will implement an intensive and comprehensive aftercare system to reduce juvenile recidivism. Aftercare systems should be implemented while youth are still incarcerated to establish community links with faith-based organizations, parents or guardians, schools, training and educational opportunities, parole systems, social contacts and activities, and mentors. The aftercare services planned for those individuals incarcerated must involve the staff and administrators of the juvenile corrections facilities where the youth are institutionalized.

Eligible Applicants

Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), political subdivisions of the State, and private entities are eligible to receive grant funds under this announcement. Eligible private entities include community development corporations, community action agencies, community-based and faith-based organizations, disability community organizations, public and private colleges and universities, and other qualified private organizations.

Private entities include non-profit organizations but do not include for-profit organizations and individuals. Organizations or areas that operate the Department of Justice's Safe Futures or Comprehensive Community-Wide Approach to Gang Prevention, Intervention, and Suppression demonstrations can also apply through their WIBs. Entities other than a WIB or a political subdivision of the State must submit an application for competitive grant funds in conjunction with the WIB(s) and its Youth Council for the area in which the project is to operate. The term "in conjunction with" shall mean that the application must include a signed certification by both the applicant and the appropriate WIB(s) indicating that:

1. The applicant has consulted with the appropriate WIB (and its Youth Council) during the development of the application; and
2. The activities proposed in the application are consistent with, and will be coordinated with, the One-Stop delivery system efforts of the WIB(s).

If the applicant is unable to obtain the certification, it will be required to include information describing the efforts which were undertaken to consult with the WIB and its Youth Council and indicating that the WIB was provided, during the proposal solicitation period, a sufficient opportunity to cooperate in the development of the project plan and to review and comment on the application prior to its submission to the Department of Labor. "Sufficient opportunity for WIB review and comment" shall mean at least 30

calendar days. Failure to provide information describing the efforts which were undertaken to consult with WIB(s) will disqualify applicants.

The certification, or evidence of efforts to consult, must be with each WIB in the service area in which the proposed project is to operate. These certifications must be included in the grant application, and will not count against the established page limitations. For the purposes of this portion of the application, evidence of efforts to consult with the WIB must be demonstrated by written documentation, such as registered mail receipt, that attempts were made to share project applications with the WIB in a timely manner. WIB applicants and applicants that provide a signed certification by the applicant and the appropriate WIB(s) will be given preference for award.

Funding Availability

The Department expects to award three (3) grants approximately $1.5 million each under this category.

Performance Period

The period of performance for all grants awarded under this competition, within this category, will be for 30 months from the date the grant is awarded. The first 24 months must be devoted to providing program services to eligible youth as defined in this notice. The final six months will be solely for organizing participant case files, providing the files to the demonstration's evaluator within two months after grant-funded services terminate, and participating in a final site visit interview with the evaluators. The budget submitted for the period of performance must cover the full 30 months.

Program Components

The grant awards must be used to enhance and augment presently existing strategies that serve youth offenders, out-of-school youth, and gang members or those at-risk of becoming gang-involved. In addition to intensifying current systems, the projects also will link with and build upon available community resources such as educational (including special education), support, workforce development (engaging local WIBs/Youth Councils), child care, and transportation services. The projects will use these community resources to accomplish the successful transition of youth to independent living within the community, a reduction in recidivism, and the accomplishment of employment, training, and education goals. In order to address specifically the distinct needs and problems of youth offenders, gang members, and those at-risk of becoming gang-involved who are living in high-poverty localities, the overarching strategy for the model community projects should encompass the following:

Purpose/Need: Applicants should describe the need in the target neighborhood as demonstrated by issues such as severity of gang problems, the number of youth offenders residing in the target community, and the inability for existing services to address the needs of youth offenders and gang members. Applicants should also relate the need to the overall purpose of the planned program components.

Alternative sentencing/education: Grantees should describe their plans for expanding alternative sentencing, including enhanced education services for youth offenders. Project case managers and other staff must prepare the target population for sustainable high-quality employment by providing assistance to remain in school, return to school, enroll in GED and high school equivalency classes, or participate in additional alternative education such as long-distance learning programs or on-line courses. Applicants should describe the educational services that will be offered by the project, with particular attention given to the utilization of existing educational system services and the involvement of the schools in the area. In addition, applicants should describe the overall use of project case managers and other staff in the planned program components that will provide educational services.

Route counseling/support services: Project case managers must prepare the target population for sustainable high-quality employment by utilizing intensive training and support services, including drug and alcohol treatment, mentoring and tutoring, child care, counseling, and other case management services. Service strategies should also focus on providing assistance to engage in job training, secure employment, fulfill legal restitution obligations, or establish successful independent living. Because this wide range of services should be provided by the proposed partnerships of community organizations, applicants must submit memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with the local WIA partnership and other critical agencies specifying the role of each party in the project. Applicants must describe the intensive training and support services as identified above that will be offered as part of the planned program components, and should detail the role of project case managers in the provision of these training and support services.

Youth Offender and Gang Prevention Advisory Board: In order to institute a holistic approach to assisting the target population, employment, education, criminal justice, and community-based youth programs must be incorporated into the projects. In developing this interrelated system, grant funds shall be used to create a youth offender and gang prevention advisory board that participates in the coordination of all activities and provides input and community support to the project's leadership. The advisory board should be comprised of public and private sector representation, parents, youth members, and graduates of other youth offender programs and will link with the local Youth Council to provide seamless delivery of services and maximize use of available resources. Applicants should describe the planned composition of the advisory board, with particular emphasis upon the process for selecting and seating the representation of the board. The applicant should describe the functions of the board and the process planned to utilize the board in designing the holistic delivery expected under the project. Grantees should also describe their plans for expanding gang prevention and suppression efforts in the target community, including expanded efforts by local law enforcement agencies.

Aftercare: Grant funds should link with existing resources to provide intensive aftercare services for youth offenders transitioning from secure confinement in a juvenile corrections facility to the community. Projects must strategically coordinate community-wide efforts and resources to address reentry issues such as surveillance, supervision, graduated sanctions and incentives, linkages to community support systems (families, peers, schools, employers), transitional housing, and job training and placement

activities. Applicants should describe clearly detailed reentry plans for youth offenders scheduled for release to their communities and their capacity to sustain their activities for 2 years after funding is no longer available. Strategies for effective route counseling services in aftercare programming include:

- Use of a reliable and validated risk assessment and classification instrument for establishing eligibility of the targeted population;
- Individual case planning that incorporates a family and community perspective;
- A mix of intensive surveillance and enhanced service delivery;
- Comprehensive, interagency transition planning that involves all critical stakeholders;
- A balance of incentives and graduated consequences coupled with the imposition of realistic, enforceable conditions;
- Work-related or work-oriented activities such as exposure to the workplace, on-the-job training, work experience, job shadowing, etc.;
- Coordination of resources of juvenile correctional agencies, juvenile courts, juvenile parole agencies, law enforcement agencies, social service providers, and local Workforce Investment Boards; and
- "Soft skills" training, i.e., job behavior and life skills training; self determination and social skills training; conflict resolution and anger management; parenting classes; exposure to post-secondary education opportunities; and community service learning projects.

Partnerships/Linkages: In addition to enhancing already existing services and programs, projects must center any newly developed and implemented activities upon the needs of youth involved, or at risk of becoming involved, with the juvenile justice system and gangs. In order to accomplish this, applicants should use partnerships both (1) to enhance the youth offender programs funded under this grant and (2) to provide complementary programs so as to link services within the target community and provide a diversity of options for all youth offenders within the target area. These partnerships must agree to:

- Implement an education and employment program for youth offenders, gang members, and at-risk youth in the target area, including coordination with the private sector to develop a specified number of career-track jobs for target area youth offenders;
- Establish alternative sentencing and community service options for youth offenders, gang members, and at-risk youth in the target area; and
- Expand gang suppression activities in the target area.

Applicants should outline how they will involve residents, youth, and others of the community in planning and involvement in the effort. Proposals should describe the efforts within the project to utilize existing services and programs, particularly those offered through the WIA One-Stop delivery system and the juvenile justice system. Applicants should describe the efforts to be undertaken to coordinate services with private sector entities, including commitments for private sector jobs. Proposals should

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describe newly developed and implemented services and how these will enhance and augment presently existing strategies in the community.

Category I Rating Criteria: Each application under this category will be evaluated against the following rating criteria:

- Need in target neighborhood, as demonstrated by severity of gang problem, the number of youth offenders residing in target community, and the barriers facing existing services to reach youth offenders and gang members (10 points);
- Plan to enhance and augment alternative sentencing, including educational and supportive services and route counseling; role of project case managers in these delivery strategies; plan for linking with schools for co-enrollment, etc. (20 points);
- Plan for enhancing gang prevention and suppression efforts, and use of a youth offender and gang prevention advisory board to achieve coordination; establishment of creative partnerships with local community grassroots organizations which provide services to the target population (20 points);
- Plan and capacity for conducting intensive comprehensive aftercare for preventing recidivism (20 points);
- Planned or committed level of investments (cost sharing and leveraging of funds) from educational agencies/schools and other public sector, WIA, and private sector partners; employment-related connections with the business community (25 points); and
- Plan to fulfill reporting requirements; and confirmation of cooperation with DOL evaluators (5 points).

Category II- Education and Training for Youth Offenders Initiative

These projects will provide a comprehensive school-to-work education and training curriculum for youth offenders in a juvenile correctional facility and aftercare/reentry services, with an emphasis on job placement and retention, upon a youth's return to his or her community. The comprehensive school-to-work education and training services developed under this initiative will serve as a model for other juvenile correctional facilities across the nation.

Eligible Applicants
State or local juvenile justice agencies or juvenile correctional agencies shall be the eligible applicant and should identify one juvenile correctional facility within their state where the project will operate. Applications must show the involvement/commitment of the following partners: the state/local Workforce Investment Board which is the administrative entity of WIA; the local Youth Councils; the state and local school-to-work partnership to which a majority of the youth offenders will return; and representatives of major employer networks connected to the school-to-work effort.

Funding Availability
The Department expects to award one (1) grant of approximately $2 million under this category.

Performance Period

The period of performance for the grant awarded under this competition, within this category, will be for 30 months from the date the grant is awarded. The first 24 months must be devoted to providing program services to eligible youth as defined in this notice. The final 6 months will be solely for organizing participant case files, providing the files to the demonstration's evaluator within two months after grant-funded services terminate, and participating in a final site visit interview with the evaluators. The budget submitted for the period of performance must cover the full 30 months.

Program Components

Grant funds shall be used to enhance an existing system currently serving youth offenders. Programs must be designed to (1) raise the quality of work and learning for incarcerated juvenile offenders through the school-to-work component and (2) strengthen aftercare/reentry services for youth transitioning to their communities following confinement by building connections to local workforce development and school-to-work systems through the aftercare component. Involvement with the local Youth Council of the local WIB is critical to ensuring that this occurs. This overall strategy needs to be responsive to the particular problems of youth offenders and gang members in juvenile correctional facilities, and must include the following:

School-to-work: This component includes the development and/or strengthening of a comprehensive school-to-work curriculum within the juvenile correctional facility, with ties to vocational development and youth employment services funded under WIA. This school-to-work system must contain the following core elements (for additional information, see Attachment I from *Evaluation of the School-to-Work- Out-of-School Youth Demonstration and Job Corps Model Centers: Final Report for the Job Corps Model Centers*, Research and Evaluation Report Series 00-E, U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration, 2000):

- School-based Learning: school-wide classroom instruction based on high academic and business-defined occupational skill standards;
- Work-based Learning: career exploration, work experience, structured training, and mentoring at job sites; and
- Connecting Activities: course integrating classroom and on-the-job instruction, matching students with participating employers, training of mentors, and the building of bridges between school and work.

The jointly developed curriculum should include input from corrections education, the state school-to-work partnership, local school districts and employer networks connected to the school-to-work effort. Projects are also encouraged to work with Job Corps centers in the development of a school-to-work based education curriculum. This curriculum should closely parallel the curriculum developed for the communities to which youth offenders will be returning and structured in such a way as to enable the youth to transition from the institution to the community and continue in a sequential manner with their educational and vocational development.

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Aftercare: Grant funds should link with existing resources to provide intensive aftercare services for youth offenders transitioning from secure confinement in a juvenile corrections facility to the community. Aftercare services must strategically coordinate community-wide efforts and resources to address reentry issues such as surveillance, supervision, graduated sanctions and incentives, linkages to community support systems (families, peers, schools, employers), transitional housing, and job training and placement activities. Applicants should describe clearly detailed reentry plans for youth offenders scheduled for release into their communities. Strategies for effective route counseling services in aftercare programming include:

- Use of a reliable and validated risk assessment and classification instrument for establishing eligibility of the targeted population;
- Comprehensive, interagency transition planning that involves all critical stakeholders;
- Individual case planning that incorporates a family and community perspective;
- A mix of intensive surveillance and enhanced service delivery;
- A balance of incentives and graduated consequences coupled with the imposition of realistic, enforceable conditions;
- Work-related or work-oriented activities such as exposure to the workplace, on-the-job training, work experience, job shadowing, etc.;
- Coordination of resources of local Workforce Investment Boards, juvenile correctional agencies, juvenile courts, juvenile parole agencies, law enforcement agencies, health and social service providers, and community organizations; and
- "Soft skills" training, i.e., job behavior and life skills training; self-determination and social skills training; conflict resolution and anger management; parenting classes; exposure to post-secondary education opportunities; and community service learning projects.

Partnerships/Linkages: Applicants should use partnerships to (1) enhance the school-to-work component funded under this grant and (2) provide complementary programs that enable communities to be better able to provide aftercare services for returning youth offenders. The state recipients of a Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant (JAIBG) are strongly encouraged to contribute, in the form of a cash match, 10% of the total program cost, except when the JAIBG funds are used for construction or renovation of permanent correction facilities. Partners under this category should agree to:

- Augment a school-to-work program in one targeted juvenile correctional facility;
- Assist the applicant with the seamless delivery of route counseling and aftercare services and supervision to youth returning to the community;
- Develop linkages to local school-to-work efforts with assistance from the State school-to-work partnership; and
- Coordinate with the private sector to develop a specified number of career-track jobs for target area youth offenders.

Proposals should specify the linkages between the Youth Offender project and the local WIA Youth Council through the One-Stop delivery system to ensure coordination of

workforce development services. These linkages shall include both existing and proposed strategies. Grant funds may be used for staff and teacher training in order to facilitate an effective system of connected classroom-based and work-based activities. Additional funding sources may include Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act formula grant monies and JAIBG funds. The Federal Bonding Program and WOTC should be considered as important tools to assist with youth offender employment placements. Information about these programs is available at ETA's website, http://www.doleta.gov.

Category II Rating Criteria: Each application for funding under this category will be reviewed and rated against the following criteria:

- The stated need in the targeted juvenile correctional facility and state or local juvenile corrections system, as demonstrated by the effectiveness of the current correctional education curriculum and the number of youth who will benefit (20 points);
- Implementation plan for conducting the project, including detailed project scope of the aftercare services to be provided in the community (30 points);
- Planned or committed level of investments of schools, other public sector partners including school-to-work partnerships, and private sector partners with commitments for jobs; employment-related connections to the business community (25 points);
- Planned or committed linkages and coordination of services within the local workforce investment systems (15 points);
- Plan to fulfill reporting requirements (5 points); and
- Confirmation of cooperation with DOL and DOJ evaluators (5 points).

Category III- Community-Wide Capacity Building Projects

This program component will provide smaller grants for impoverished communities within small to medium-sized cities with high crime rates. Grants awarded under this category will create models for use by States and local boards to increase assistance to high-risk youth. These models will build service capacity into the One-Stop delivery system to expand the range and quality of currently existing services designed to prepare high-risk youth for high-quality employment with career development ladders and livable wages. These projects will work with local Youth Councils and service providers to develop linkages that will strengthen the coordination of prevention and recovery services for youth offenders. Linkages to existing community programs such as the WIA year-round youth training and summer jobs for low-income youth, school to work programs, other federal programs, and sports and recreation programs could contribute to juvenile crime prevention.

These grants are to strengthen or build infrastructures that address the needs of this youth population. Providing services to youth is only a means of measuring the effectiveness of the infrastructure. The goal of this category is to develop strategies and integrated service models which will then be implemented. Because of the challenges associated with building strong partnerships leading to comprehensive services, special technical

assistance will be made available to successful applicants of this category to assist with their development and implementation processes.

Eligible Applicants
Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and private entities located within high-crime communities with a population of at least 100,000 and not greater than 400,000 and a significant youth gang and youth crime problem are eligible to apply. Eligible private entities include community development corporations, community action agencies, community-based and faith-based organizations, disability community organizations, public and private colleges and universities, and other qualified private organizations. Private entities include non-profit organizations but do not include for-profit organizations and individuals. Applicants should provide documentation from their local law enforcement agency showing support for the existence or emerging gang problem and other serious youth crime problems. WIBs and private entities applying under this category must demonstrate a strong commitment to developing capacity building models that States and local boards will use to serve high-risk individuals under the WIA system.

Entities other than a WIB or a political subdivision of the State must submit an application for competitive grant funds in conjunction with the WIB(s) and its Youth Council for the area in which the project is to operate. The term "in conjunction with" shall mean that the application must include a signed certification by both the applicant and the appropriate WIB(s) indicating that:

1. The applicant has consulted with the appropriate WIB (and its Youth Council) during the development of the application; and
2. The activities proposed in the application are consistent with, and will be coordinated with, the One-Stop delivery system efforts of the WIB(s).

If the applicant is unable to obtain the certification, it will be required to include information describing the efforts which were undertaken to consult with the WIB and its Youth Council and indicating that the WIB was provided, during the proposal solicitation period, a sufficient opportunity to cooperate in the development of the project plan and to review and comment on the application prior to its submission to the Department of Labor. "Sufficient opportunity for WIB review and comment" shall mean at least 30 calendar days. Failure to provide information describing the efforts, which were undertaken to consult with WIB (S), will disqualify applicants.

The certification, or evidence of efforts to consult, must be with each WIB in the service area in which the proposed project is to operate. These certifications must be included in the grant application, and will not count against the established page limitations. For the purposes of this portion of the application, evidence of efforts to consult with the WIB must be demonstrated by written documentation, such as registered mail receipt, that attempts were made to share project applications with the WIB in a timely manner. WIB applicants and applicants that provide a signed certification by the applicant and the appropriate WIB(s) will be given preference for award.

Funding Availability
The Department expects to award five (5) grants approximately $350,000 each to Community-Wide Capacity Building Projects under this competition.

Performance Period
The period of performance for all grants awarded under this competition, within this category, will be for 30 months from the date the grant is awarded. The first 24 months must be devoted to strengthening or building infrastructures that address the needs of this youth population, by developing strategies and integrated service models. The final six months will be solely for organizing partnership records for developed strategies and integrated service models, providing the final records to the demonstration's evaluator within two months after grant-funded activities terminate, and participating in a final site visit interview with the evaluators. The budget submitted for the period of performance must cover the full 30 months.

Program Components
In order to develop capacity building models, grant funds shall be used to build upon an existing system currently serving in-school and out-of-school youth, youth offenders, or youth in gangs or prone to joining gangs. Efforts should be made to integrate youth into a full range of educational and alternative programs when appropriate. In order to be responsive to the particular problems of youth offenders, gang members, and those at-risk in high-poverty, high-crime areas, the overall strategy for the capacity building projects should encompass the following:

Career preparation services: The capacity building projects should provide for employment preparation, job placement, and linkages with the workforce development system. Models should focus on programs that train individuals for employment in fields in which technology skills are critical aspects of the jobs emerging in the regional labor market. Training models may also include basic skills and pre-apprenticeship training (as appropriate). Applicants must address the various strategies that their models will employ to actively recruit the target population, and should discuss the projected length of time necessary to determine the efficacy of their models' technical assistance.

Route counseling/support services: Proposals must demonstrate how the applicants plan to enhance the capacity of the WIA system to assist high-risk youth who are transitioning from dependency to independent living by including innovative service strategies that address their barriers to employment and the flexibility of services available. The framework for the proposed capacity building model should provide for (as applicable): individual needs assessment; individual service strategies; long-term follow-up services; and linkages with human services, education, and transportation services. Other strategies may include "soft skills" training like job behavior and life skills training, social skills and self-determination, conflict resolution, parenting classes, exposure to post-secondary education opportunities, and service learning projects. Applicants should detail their capacity to sustain these activities for 2 years after funding under this solicitation is no longer available.

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Partnerships/Linkages: Applicants should use partnerships both (1) to enhance the currently existing youth offenders programs and WIA services and (2) to provide complementary programs so as to make the target community an available service area for all youth offenders. Applicants should also agree to a good faith effort to continue projects started under this grant beyond the 24-month grant period. Partners should also agree to:

- Build upon existing employment and training, recreation, conflict resolution, and other youth crime and gang prevention programs to include youth offenders and gang members;
- Establish alternative sentencing and community service options for target area youth and gang members;
- Provide work-related or work-oriented activities such as exposure to the workplace, on-the-job training, work experience, job shadowing, etc.
- Establish or continue gang suppression activities within the target area; and
- Build connections to local workforce investment systems, such as linkages with WIBs while demonstrating approaches that ensure that high-risk youth are provided with quality workforce development services.

Youth Offender and Gang Prevention Advisory Board: In order to institute a holistic approach to assisting the target population, employment, education, criminal justice, and community-based youth programs should be incorporated into the projects. In developing this interrelated system, grant funds shall be used to create a youth offender and gang prevention advisory board that participates in the coordination of all activities and provides input and community support to the project's leadership. The advisory board should be comprised of public and private sector representation, parents, youth members, and graduates of other youth offender programs and will link with the local Youth Council to provide seamless delivery of services.
In addition, proposals should specify the linkages between the Youth Offender project and the local WIA Youth Council through the One-Stop delivery system to ensure coordination of workforce development services. These linkages should include both existing and proposed strategies.

Category III Rating Criteria: Applications received for funding under this category shall be rated against the following criteria:

- Need in target neighborhood, as demonstrated by severity of gang problem and the number of youth offenders residing in the target community, and the inability for existing services to include youth offenders and gang members (10 points);
- Plan to enhance and augment presently existing youth offender programs and youth crime prevention strategies (20 points);
- Plan and capacity for developing and implementing models, including plan for preventing recidivism (30 points);
- Planned or committed level of investments (cost sharing and leveraging of funds) from educational agencies/schools and other public sector, WIA, and private sector partners, including commitments for private sector jobs (15 points);

- Planned or committed linkages and coordination of services within the local workforce investment systems; use of a youth offender and gang prevention advisory board to achieve coordination; establishment of creative partnerships with local community grassroots organizations which provide services to the target population (15 points);
- Plan to fulfill reporting requirements (5 points); and
- Confirmation of cooperation with DOL evaluators (5 points).

Signed at Washington, D.C. this date, December 11, 2000.

Laura A. Cesario
Grant Officer, Division of Federal Assistance

Appendices
Appendix A: Application Face Sheet
Appendix B: SF-424-Application for Federal Assistance
Appendix C: Budget Information Form

Appendix A

COVERSHEET
Application for funding under SGA/DFA 01-101"Youth Offender Demonstration Project"
Name of Applicant:_____
Contact Person:_____
Phone Number:_____
Category: (MUST CHECK ONE)
_____ Category I - Model Community Projects
_____ Category II - Education & Training for Youth Offenders Initiatives
_____ Category III - Community-Wide Capacity Building Projects

APPENDIX B

Data Collection Plan

Data Collection Plan

Questions/Sub-questions	Type of Data	Data Sources	Data Collection Techniques
1. What is the context of each project and how did it influence the project development and implementation?			
1.1 Describe the community's demographic characteristics (race, gender, age, family status, ethnicity, immigration trends, educational status, school status).	Qualitative, Quantitative	Official reports, Census data	Documents review, data abstraction
1.2 Describe the community's socio-cultural characteristics (crime, delinquency, youth culture, gang activity, criminal justice contacts, drug and alcohol abuse, child abuse, and family violence).	Qualitative, Quantitative	Crime reports, official reports	Documents review, interviews
1.3 Describe the community's economic characteristics (employment and unemployment rates, income levels, major employers and opportunities for youth, socio-cultural aspects).	Qualitative, Quantitative	Official reports, Bureau of Labor Statistics	Documents review, interviews
1.4 Describe the community's political characteristics (responsiveness of government; history of integrated service delivery; community consensus building efforts; role of schools, community-based organizations, churches, volunteers; recreational opportunities; youth programs, including mentoring programs).	Qualitative	Newspapers, project officials, local political and community leaders	Documents review, interviews
2. How did the community planning bodies charged with the ongoing tasks of designing the integrated network of services function and what was the level of involvement of the stakeholders, including parents and youth?			
2.1 Describe the consensus building process, including the role of the planning body in planning for the project.	Qualitative	Project officials, project partners, stakeholders	Documents review, interviews
2.2 Which stakeholders were identified as key in planning for the project?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews

Questions/Sub-questions	Type of Data	Data Sources	Data Collection Techniques
2.3 Which stakeholders were asked to join the project's planning body?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
2.4 Which stakeholders agreed to participate in planning for the project?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
2.5 What was the level of involvement of the stakeholders in planning for the project?	Qualitative	Project officials, project partners, stakeholders	Interviews
2.6 What was the level of involvement of parents and youth in planning for the project?	Qualitative	Project officials, stakeholders	Interviews
2.7 How did the planning body attempt to build consensus among stakeholders?	Qualitative	Project officials, project partners, stakeholders	Interviews
2.8 Which of these efforts succeeded? Why?	Qualitative	Project officials, project partners, stakeholders	Interviews
2.9 Which of these efforts failed? Why?	Qualitative	Project officials, project partners, stakeholders	Interviews
2.10 Describe the vision and mission developed through the planning process.	Qualitative	Project officials, project partners, stakeholders	Interviews
2.11 Describe the project's goals and objectives that were developed through the planning process.	Qualitative	Project officials, project partners, stakeholders	Interviews, implementation plan

Questions/Sub-questions	Type of Data	Data Sources	Data Collection Techniques
2.12 Describe the plan for establishing an integrated service delivery system (primary and collateral services).	Qualitative	Project officials, project partners, stakeholders	Interviews
2.13 For Category I projects: Does the project's implementation plan include the following components: • **strategies to enhance and augment existing services to youth offenders, out-of- school youth and gang members or those at-risk of becoming gang involved?** • **expanded alternative sentencing, including enhanced educational services for clients?** • **route counseling/support services?** • **strategies to link existing resources to provide intensive aftercare services for youth offenders transitioning into the community?** • **newly developed and implemented activities based on needs of clients?** • **youth offender and gang prevention advisory board?**	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews, implementation plan
2.14 For Category II projects: Does the project's implementation plan include the following components: • **School-to-Work within correctional facilities with ties to vocational development and youth employment services funded under the Workforce Investment Act?** • **aftercare to support reentry of clients into communities?** • **partnerships to include School-to-Work and provide aftercare services?**	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews, implementation plan
2.15 For Category III projects: Describe how the project plans to build service capacity into the One-Stop delivery system to expand the range and quality of currently existing services that attempt to prepare high-risk youth for high-quality employment with career development ladders and livable wages.	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews, implementation plan
2.16 For Category III projects: Does the project's implementation plan include the following components: • **career preparation services?**	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews, implementation plan

Questions/Sub-questions	Type of Data	Data Sources	Data Collection Techniques
• route counseling/support services? • partnership/linkages to enhance the currently existing youth offender programs and Workforce Investment Act services? • partnership/linkages to provide complementary programs so as to make the target community an available service area for all youth offenders? • youth offender and gang prevention advisory board?			
3. What program components were implemented and how successful were the efforts to build on existing systems, establish new programs, and create an integrated network?			
3.1 Discuss the involvement of the grantee in the direction and coordination of the grantee in the project.	Qualitative	Project officials, project partners	Documents review, interviews
3.2 Describe the partnerships and linkages that have been established since the grant was awarded (including, but not limited to juvenile justice, workforce development, and Health and Human Services).	Qualitative	Project officials, project partners	Documents review, interviews
3.3 Which partners signed a memorandum of agreement with the project?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
3.5 Which partners have not signed a memorandum of agreement?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
3.6 Describe the responsibilities of each partner.	Qualitative	Project officials, project partners	Interviews
3.7 Which primary services have been implemented?	Qualitative	Project officials, project partners	Interviews
3.8 Which primary services have not been implemented? Why not?	Qualitative	Project officials, project partners	Interviews
3.9 Which collateral services were implemented?	Qualitative	Project officials, project	Interviews

Questions/Sub-questions	Type of Data	Data Sources	Data Collection Techniques
		partners	
3.10 Which collateral services have not been implemented? Why not?	Qualitative	Project officials, project partners	Interviews
3.11 Which partners had working arrangements already in place with the grantee before the project grant was awarded?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
3.12 Describe the nature of the existing working arrangements.	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
3.13 Describe efforts by the grantee to develop new partnerships.	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
3.14 How successful have these attempts been?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
3.15 Describe barriers encountered in attempts to establish partnerships and linkages.	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
3.16 Which strategies to overcome barriers succeeded? Why?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
3.17 Which strategies to overcome barriers failed? Why?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
3.18 Discuss the project's success in creating an integrated services network?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
3.19 Discuss ways that the project has helped provide an increased level of services to the target youth?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
4. What methods of staff recruitment and training were used and how successful were they?			
4.1 Describe the staff recruitment plan and methods for filling positions.	Qualitative	Implementation plan, project officials	Documents review, interviews
4.2 Which elements of the plan have been implemented?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
4.3 Which elements of the plan have not been implemented? Why?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
4.4 Which recruitment strategies worked best? Why?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
4.5 Which recruitment strategies worked poorly? Why?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
4.6 What does the grantee plan to do to overcome recruiting problems?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews

Questions/Sub-questions	Type of Data	Data Sources	Data Collection Techniques
4.7 Describe the qualification requirements for each staff position.	Qualitative	Implementation plan, project officials	Documents review, interviews
4.8 Describe the qualifications of each key staff member.	Qualitative	Resumes, project officials	Documents review, interviews
4.9 Describe the staff training plan.	Qualitative	Implementation plan, project officials	Documents review, interviews
4.10 Which elements of the staff training plan have been implemented?	Qualitative	Implementation plan, project officials	Documents review, interviews
4.11 Which elements of the plan have not been implemented? Why?	Qualitative	Implementation plan, project officials	Documents review, interviews
4.11 What training has each staff member received since joining the project?	Qualitative	Project officials	Documents review, interviews
4.12 What training will each staff member receive in the future?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
4.13 Describe the project's performance appraisal system.	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
4.14 Discuss the process the staff uses to strengthen staff performance.	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
5. What methods were used to gain access to and recruit members of the target population as program participants and how successful were they?			
5.1 Describe the project recruitment strategy to reach the target population.	Qualitative	Grant application, implementation plan, project officials	Documents review, interviews

Questions/Sub-questions	Type of Data	Data Sources	Data Collection Techniques
5.2 Which elements of the plan have been implemented?	Qualitative	Implementation plan, project officials	Documents review, interviews
5.3 Which elements of the plan have not been implemented? Why?	Qualitative	Implementation plan, project officials	Documents review, interviews
5.4 Which elements of the plan have been successful in recruiting members of the target population? Why?	Qualitative, Quantitative	Implementation plan, project officials	Documents review, interviews
5.5 Which elements of the plan have not been successful in recruiting members of the target population? Why?	Qualitative, Quantitative	Project officials	Documents review, interviews
5.6 How does the grantee intended to change the recruitment strategy, if it has been unsuccessful?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
6. What types of training, employment, and gang suppression programs were provided to the target population? What were the intensity, duration, and quality of these programs?			
6.1 For each project component, discuss what services were provided project participants?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
6.2 What was the intensity, duration, and quality of these programs?	Qualitative, Quantitative	Client records, project officials, clients, periodic reports	Documents review, interviews
6.3 Which services succeeded? Why?	Qualitative, Quantitative	Client records, project officials, clients, periodic reports	Documents review, interviews
6.4 Which services failed? Why?	Qualitative, Quantitative	Clients records, project officials, clients, periodic	Documents review, interviews

Questions/Sub-questions	Type of Data	Data Sources	Data Collection Techniques
		reports	
7. What steps have been taken to assure the continuation of the integrated services and activities after the project funding ends and what is the likelihood of success?			
7.1 What steps has the project taken to ensure continuation of the integrated services and activities after project funding ends?	Qualitative	Implementation plans, project officials	Documents review, interviews
7.2 What is the likelihood that these efforts will succeed?	Qualitative	Project officials, project partners	Interviews
7.3 What barriers to sustainability does the project face?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
7.4 Describe and discuss the stable funding streams that support the activities of the project's partners.	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
7.5 Describe the evaluation benchmarks of the system that are designed into the program structure that justify continuation of the project.	Qualitative	Implementation plans, project officials	Documents review, interviews
7.6 Describe the local evaluation processes used to assess project effectiveness.	Qualitative	Implementation plans, project officials	Documents review, interviews
7.7 What additional resources have been made available to targeted youth as a result of the project?	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
7.8 What would target youth lose if the project were to end?	Qualitative	Project officials; project partners	Interviews
8. In what ways do employment and training projects serving youth who have been in the criminal justice system or who are at risk of such involvement differ from traditional approaches to serving youth?			
8.1 Discuss how the project has modified/altered employment and training approaches to serve youth who have been in the	Qualitative	Project officials	Documents review;

Questions/Sub-questions	Type of Data	Data Sources	Data Collection Techniques
juvenile justice system or who were at risk of criminal involvement.			interviews
8.2 How effective have these efforts been?	Qualitative, Quantitative	Project officials	Documents review, interviews
8.3 In what ways have they succeeded.	Qualitative, Quantitative	Project officials	Documents review; interviews
8.4 In what ways have they not succeeded? Why?	Qualitative	Project officials; project partners	Interviews
9. Data Collection Systems			
9.1 Describe the project's system for collecting and maintaining data on the project's clients.	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
9.2 Does the project collect and maintain administrative data on clients as required by the DOL?	Quantitative	Project reports, MIS or comparable data collection system	Documents review
10. Continuous Improvement			
10. 1 Describe the project's mechanism for continuous improvement.	Qualitative	Implementation plans, project officials	Documents review, interviews
10.2 Describe the feedback/support assistance the project receives.	Qualitative	Implementation plans, project officials	Documents review, interviews
10.3 Discuss how the feedback/support assistance has enhanced the project's performance.	Qualitative	Project officials	Interviews
10.4 Do client records data adequately document project results and accomplishments to provide a learning experience	Qualitative, Quantitative	Project reports, client records,	Documents review

Questions/Sub-questions	Type of Data	Data Sources	Data Collection Techniques
for the workforce development system, DOL, and DOJ?		MIS or comparable data collection system	

APPENDIX C

Youth Offender Demonstration Project Round Two Field Guide, Third Visit

Context	1.0 Describe any changes in community context within which your Youth Offender Demonstration operates since the last evaluation visit.
a. **Possible dimensions to explore:** b. **Race, ethnicity, gender** c. **Gangs, crime, violence** d. **Industries with entry level jobs** e. **Political, social changes (new elections; gentrification; new low-income housing)**	
	1.1 Are there changes in any of the risk or protective factors?

Possible dimensions to explore (PMM 6): a. Delivers and coordinates services. b. Coordinates services; sub-contracts delivery. c. Sub-contracts both and remains as coach, facilitator. d. Sub-contracts and intervenes when needed.	**3.1 Describe the changes in grantees' (or you organization's) role in the project since the last evaluation visit. How long will the project be supported with DOL Demonstration funds?**
a. Grantee is a One-Stop. b. The One-Stop is an active partner. c. Clients go to the One-Stop for assistance. d. The project is not connected to the One-Stop.	*3.4 What is the involvement of the project with the local One-Stop system/center? What services do the Demonstration clients receive?*
a. Grantee is part of the Justice system. b. Justice system is an active partner. c. Justice system refers youth to the project. d. Justice system provides aftercare or other direct services to project youth.	*3.6 What is the involvement of the project with the Justice system? What services do the Demonstration clients receive.*

Explore the nature of the relationship (PMM 2, 5, 6, 7):	3.2 Have there been any changes in partners or their roles since the last visit?

Explore the nature of the relationship (PMM 2, 5, 6, 7):

a. Active part of advisory committee
b. Had previous relationship with grantee
c. Receives fee for services (voucher)
d. Has a sub-contract with DOL funds
e. Combination DOL and leveraged funds

Domains:

- Justice	- Workforce
- Education	- Substance Abuse
- Mental Health	- Housing
- Route Counseling	- Recreation
- Employers	- Youth & Families

3.2 Have there been any changes in partners or their roles since the last visit?

A. PARTNERS AS OF THE SECOND VISIT	CHANGES IN DOMAINS OF SERVICE	CHANGES IN RELATIONSHIP FORM

B. NEW PARTNERS	DOMAIN	PARTNERSHIP FORM

	3.5 Which partners bring resources, funds or in-kind, to the project? Are there other funding streams supporting the project beyond DOL Demonstration funds and the contributions of these partners?
Explore (PMM 3, 5, 6): a. **All under one roof** b. **Service provider visits project officer to deliver services** c. **Route counselor accompanies youth to service** d. **Youth receives voucher and makes own contact** e. **Youth given name and contact info and goes alone**	*6.2 How are youth referred to the project? Do all the referred youth enroll? Where do they receive services?*

Explore (PMM C.I.):
 	
a. **What are your numeric goals?**
   1. **Are you meeting them?**
   2. **Explain why/why not.**
   3. **Are you serving more/fewer youth than before the grant?**
   4. **How many are you currently serving?**
b. **Are you recruiting the youth you intended to?**
   1. **Who are they?**
   2. **Explain why/why not.**
   3. **Are you reaching youth that you did not before the grant?**
   4. **Who are you still not reaching?**
c. **How are you recruiting the youth?**
d. **Are you meeting the needs of youth as you have assessed them?**
   1. **Explain why/why not.**
e. **What is the age distribution?**
	5.0/8.2 Describe the youth the project recruits into the project.

Explore (PMM C.I.): a. **Which groups are persisting and which are not?** b. **What are the barriers to youth persisting?** c. **What works in helping them progress?** d. **How many younger youth are staying in school?** e. **How many out-of-school youth are working on their GEDs?** f. **How many youth are getting jobs?** g. **Do the partners complement each other's efforts to help youth progress?** h. **What strategies are new for your project?**	*5.1/8.2 What strategies are you using to keep enrolled youth engaged with the program? What percentage of enrolled youth receives services?*

Explore (PMM C.I.):
 	
a. **What strategies seem to work?**
   1. **Are the youth given incentives for attendance?**
   2. **For progress?**
b. **What have you tried that doesn't work?**
c. **Do you have success with one group more than others, e.g., girls vs. boys, African Americans vs. Latinos or Asians?**
	5.2/8.2 What strategies have you used to improve youth's motivation to improve education, skills and behaviors?

	5.3/8.2 What strategies have you used to connect youth to drug abuse and mental health interventions when these services have been included in their case plans?
Explore (PMM C.I.): a. **What portion of your enrolled clients is active?** b. **Do you have a termination policy?** c. **Do you "hand off" the youth to a person or project (vs. just letting them go)?**	*6.4/8.4 How successful has your project been in assisting youth to realize their individual goals, e.g., GED completion, employment, etc.? What percentage of youth leave the program before completing his/her ISS?*

	6.6 In what kinds of employment are the youth finding jobs?

6.1 What services are available to participants?

a. Assessments

Which Domains	Responsible Organization	Timing	Instruments	Repeated?

b. Individualized Service Plan

Which Domains	Responsible Organization	How Does Youth Participate?	Does Family Participate?	Which Other Partners Participate?

c. Route counseling

Responsible Organization	Ratio	Frequency of Contact	Service Team Contact	Location	Family Involvement

d. Work Readiness

Responsible Organization	Curriculum	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Subsidized Experience

e. Job Placement

Responsible Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Job Types	Youth Employer Network

f. Job Retention

Responsible Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Frequency of Follow-up	Employer Contact?

g. Alternative Sentencing

Responsible Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Court Partners Contact?

h. Aftercare

Responsible Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Follow-up	Partners Contact?	Graduated Sanctions?

i. Community Service

Responsible Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	Paid/Restitution?

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j. Anti-gang Support

Responsible Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	Police Contact?

k. Education Academic

Responsible Organization(s)	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Levels	Partners Contact?	Schools Contact?

l.   Education Vocational/Occupational

Responsible Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	OJT	Partners Contact?	Schools Contact?

m. Substance Abuse

Responsible Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	S.A. Agency Contact?

n. Mental health

Responsible Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	M.H. Agency Contact?

o. Health

Responsible Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	Health Agency Contact?

p. Housing

Responsible Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	Public Housing Contact?

Explore (PMM C.I.): a. **Are justice and workforce needs being met?** b. **Are mental health, substance abuse needs being met (not just services offered)?** c. **Are health and housing issues being resolved?** d. **Are educational needs being met?** e. **Are sports and recreational needs being met?** f. **Which of these services are well-integrated and which are piecemeal?** g. **What of all these strategies is new for your project?** h. **Do services vary by age?** i. **What remain the challenges in meeting client needs?**	**6.3/8.3 How successful is your project in providing an array of services to meet the needs of your clients?**

	6.5 What are the ways you coordinate services among partners, that is, how do you deliver services to youth in a seamless way?

Explore (PMM DATA):	9. How does the project document the services the youth receives (not just recommended but receives)? (Please bring back disks of data, including rosters of youth, services received, persistence, outcomes, etc.)
a. How are service delivery data collected? b. Are persistence/absence data kept? c. How are data maintained and verified? d. Who prepares reports? e. Who receives reports? f. How are data used?	

Explore (PMM 2, 5, 6):	4.1 What changes have there been in staffing since the last visit?					
a. **Diversity of skills:** education, mental health, etc. b. **Professionally prepared:** MSW, BA, drug counseling certificate, etc. c. **Cultural match:** race, gender, etc. d. **Experience match:** former gang member, grew up in neighborhood, etc. e. **Which positions remain unfilled and how will they be recruited?** f. **What is your experience with turnover?** g. **How is the staff evaluated?** h. **To whom does the staff report?** i. **What is the caseload for each route counselor (case manager)?** j. **What changes in staffing are being made/will be made as DOL funds are depleted?**	**Number of DOL-funded staff involved: _____.**					
	Name	**Role**	**Agency**	**FT/PT**	**Paid with demonstration funds**	**Skill/Background**
	1.					
	2.					
	3.					
	4.					
	5.					
	6.					
	7.					
	8.					
	9.					
	10.					

Explore (PMM C.I.):
 	
a. **Content of project training**
b. **Are training sessions formally scheduled?**
   1. **How often?**
c. **Who is included in training?**
   1. **Cross-agency?**
   2. **Bi-level?**
   3. **Cross-domain?**
d. **Who does the training?**
e. **Are staff trained to use Federal Bonding or the Work Opportunity Tax Credit in helping youth get jobs?**
	4.2 What additional project (not agency) staff training has occurred since the last visit?

Explore (PMM 3, 5, 6): a. **What is the stakeholders' common vision?** b. **What are the stakeholders' common objectives?** c. **Have members developed common application and other forms?** d. **Do they use common terminology for program components, clients, etc.?** e. **Have they used common data points and data collection and reporting processes?** f. **Are workforce and justice involved in a significant way?** g. **Have employers been involved?** h. **Do you continue to include all the service components required by DOL:** i. **Assessments (which?)** _____ j. **Route counseling (ratio?)** _____ k. **Work readiness** _____ l. **Job placement** _____ m. **Job retention** _____ n. **Alternative sentencing** _____ o. **Aftercare** _____ p. **Community service** _____ q. **Anti-gang support** _____ r. **Education - academic** _____ s. **Education – vocational/ occupational** _____ t. **Substance abuse** _____ u. **Mental health** _____ v. **Health** _____ w. **Housing** _____ x. **Recreation** _____ y. **Mentoring** _____	**2.1 What changes have you made in the project plan since the last visit? What do you want to be able to say your project has accomplished when the DOL funds are depleted?**

Explore (PMM 1, 3, 6, DATA, C.I.):	2.2 Describe how your project is planning for the time after DOL funding.
a. Who does the planning? b. Are youth or parents involved at all? c. Are employers involved at all? d. Is the leadership using data to refine the plan? e. Is the project planning for sustainability? f. Are front-line workers involved in planning? g. Who should be part of planning and is not? h. Are community leaders engaged with the planning for sustainability?	

Explore (PMM C.I.):	3.3/7.1 How successful has your project been in building lasting coalitions/partnerships whose members will continue to work together to serve target youth?
a. **Which partners are likely to stay together and which are not?** b. **Which partners still need to be recruited?** c. **What benefits do the partners see for long-term** alliances? d. What resources can your partners bring to clients? e. What resources are you still looking for? f. Is one partner the hub or connector? How does such a partner hold the coalition together?	
	3.5 Do the partners meet regularly? Are they involved in the sustainability efforts?

Explore (PMM 6, 7, C.I.):
 	
a. **Is there a vision for the post-DOL services to the target population?**
b. **Is there a plan for sustainability?**
c. **Who needs to support the plan for it to happen?**
  1. **Are they engaged with the project?**
  2. **Is there a strategy for getting and keeping them engaging?**
d. **What is your "case" for sustainability?**
e. **What are the barriers to sustainability?**
f. **Where would on-going project activities best be lodged?**
  1. **Are the key stakeholders open to this arrangement?**
	7.2 Which components of your project are likely to continue after DOL funding and which are not?

Explore (PMM 5, 6, DATA): a. **Are all the outcomes positive?** b. **How do the outcomes compare to the situation before the grant?** c. **How do you explain the outcomes you observe?** d. **What distinguishes the strategies you are using from traditional ones?** e. **What challenges do you need to address to achieve the outcomes you want for the youth?**	*10.1/8.5 What outcomes have you documented for your project? Include system change outcomes as well as client outcomes, such as strong, new partnerships.*

Patterns a. **Youth characteristics** b. **Industry focus for training** c. **Involvement of the schools community** d. **Completion of GED and Work Readiness** e. **Having a mentor** f. **Previous involvement with the Justice system** g. **In school youth compared to out-of-school youth**	*10.6 Are there patterns to observed outcomes?*
	10.7 Do you have any evidence that delinquent behaviors have been reduced among project youth who have received services?

Explore (PMM 3, 7, DATA):	9.2 *How are you using project data to support your case for sustainability?*
a. **Are there local evaluation efforts underway?** b. **Who is taking responsibility for building the case?** c. **What resources in the community could help?** d. **Have you produced any evaluation reports to-date?** e. **Who receives data reports locally?** f. **Do any partners use the data?**	
	10.5 *Are the civic and public communities aware that the demonstration funding is ending? Has the project received pledges of support from them?*

Explore (PMM 7): a. **Which organization(s) will take responsibility for serving youth offenders and youth at risk of court involvement?** b. **Will project sustainability have employers' support?**	*10.3 Have you planned to secure the responsibilities for delivering services to the target population with specific organizations or agencies at the end of the DOL grant? Which organization will take responsibility for route counseling?*
Explore (PMM DATA, C.I.): a. **Does the grantee give or ask someone to give feedback on project progress?** b. **Does anyone review and critique reports?** c. **Has the project used the previous evaluation reports for self-assessment?** d. **Has the project used TA? Was it helpful?** e. **What would have made TA or evaluation reports more useful?** f. **Are clients taking more responsibility for their improvement?** g. **Have you used the Public Management Model in shaping your project?** h. **Was it useful?**	*10.2 Describe the assessment, feedback, or course correction and reassessment process your project has in place, that is, its continuous improvement processes.*

	10.4 How has the project changed because of the continuous improvement process?
Closeout question: **Explore:** a. **How did Demonstration funds affect your community re: finding employment for youth at livable wages and reducing youth crime?** b. **Did you feel well supported?** c. **Was there anything you would have done differently?**	*11.0 Is there any other feedback you would give DOL or us about your experience with this demonstration?*

APPENDIX D

Third Evaluation Site Visit Reports

Youth Offender Demonstration Project
Process Evaluation
Final Report Summary for
Chicago, IL

Project Description

Context

A consortium of 40 community-based organizations formed by Goodwill Industries provides the framework for Chicago's Youth Demonstration Offender Project, which is called YouthLink. The grantee is the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development (MOWD), which subcontracted management of the project's day-to-day operations to Goodwill Industries of Metropolitan Chicago, Inc.

The project uses a grassroots approach to planning, delivery and coordination of comprehensive services to youth offenders and youth who are at risk of court involvement. Project participants, who range from 14-17 years old, come from the city's Westside.

The project links service providers, subcontractors to Goodwill, and their referral networks and resources to deliver what the project calls a holistic response to project participants. Although many organizations provide similar services to the targeted youth throughout Chicago, the project differs in that it attempts to provide services through an integrated delivery system. As a result, partners provide a seamless continuum of services that includes: education, career preparation, route counseling, support, and other health and human services interventions to meet the needs of participants. Consortium members believe that this approach provides the best opportunity for youth to develop healthy lifestyles and become responsible, productive members of their communities.

YouthLink is a complex project in the sense that it is the only Demonstration project that receives overlapping DOL funds under two rounds. Initially the Round Two project was to serve youth both younger and older youth, 14-24 years old. That model changed, however, when Goodwill Industries became a Round Three grantee in the summer of 2002. At that time youth were divided between the two grantees. The Round Two project was to serve 14-17 year olds and the Round Three project was to serve 14-17 year olds. By October 2003 the Round Three had expended most of its grant funds and the Round Two project resumed serving both younger and older youth. (At the time of the third evaluation site visit, however, responsibilities were still divided: Round Two targeted and provided services for mostly younger youth, while Round Three targeted and provided services mostly for older youth.)

This shifting arrangement in itself has caused some confusion about how to assign and handle youth (double counting in some instances, for example); how to allocate staff dollars and responsibilities; how to keep track of the youth (at the time of the third site visit in October 2003, the Round Two project had remaining funds and the grantee had requested a no-cost extension; the Round Three project, however, had spent most of its funds and was coming to what appeared to be a premature ending).

The City of Chicago targeted three police districts – the tenth, eleven, and fifteenth – for its project. These districts, where crime and poverty rates are among the city's highest, comprise the communities of Austin and North and South Lawndale. The neighborhoods are part of a larger Enterprise Zone that is on the city's Westside, about two miles from the city's heart.

The three target communities consist mostly of homes and there are no major industries located there. There are, however, several small shopping areas with some services, such as fast food restaurants, groceries, liquor stores and storefront churches. According to the most recent available data:

- There were about 300,000 residents in these three neighborhoods;

- 11% (32,628) of residents were white;

- 68% (199,598) of residents were black; and

- 28% (83,610) of residents were Hispanic;

According to the city's application for DOL grant funds:

- Unemployment in the target area is high: 14% in 1998 (most recent data);

- the four-year dropout rate at Austin High School in the target area is about 33%. In addition, about 59% of its students are chronically truant;

- the median household income in this area (1990 census) was $13,712;

- both Austin and the North Lawndale communities have significant gang problems. In 1999 there were more than 6,479 gang-related crimes recorded in these communities. The most prevalent gang-related activities included possession of drugs, simple battery and aggravated battery with a handgun; and

- in 2000, 681 youth and young adults from the eleventh and fifteenth police districts were on probation.

In general, the feeling among project staff has been that good paying jobs are scarce in these neighborhoods and that most project youth will have to go outside of their neighborhoods to find them. During the past decade, however, these neighborhoods have

begun to experience some revitalization. According to project staff, the city's community policing program has improved police response and coordination to help make them safer.

According to police, violent crime in both the eleventh and fifteenth districts had declined more than 30% since 1995 while crime in the tenth district had declined from 30% to 15% during the same period. Police are building a large substation in the South Lawndale community, which should help deter crime and make the neighborhood safer.

Transportation services, including rapid transit and bus systems, in the target area are good, which makes traveling throughout the city convenient. During the summer months, MOWD provided transportation passes to youth in the city's summer jobs programs in which they work four hours a day, five days a week.

According to project staff, the crime rates in these communities are perhaps the result of barriers that are both systemic and individual. These include, for example, gaps in providing services to residents and a lack of educational attainment or drug abuse that prevent many residents from gaining employment, which in itself offers the best alternative to crime. City officials estimate that nearly 70% of young adult males living in the North Lawndale community have had some contact with the corrections system and are at a great risk of not participating in the workforce. According to the city's application for the Demonstration grant, "…without the assistance of comprehensive programs designed to address their problems, it is unlikely that these young people will ever be able to competitively enter the workforce."

The city's public school system faced many difficulties related to the low socio-economic circumstances of several of its neighborhoods. In October 2003, for example, the Chicago Tribune reported that a study by the Alternative Schools Network, an association of independent schools, found:

- Almost 16% of Chicago teens, ages 16 to 19 were not enrolled in school and did not have jobs;

- The teens were likely to be minorities since almost 20% of blacks and 18% of Latinos, ages 16-19, are not in school, compared to 7% white; and

- The city's dropout rates for 16-to-19 year olds were 23% for Latinos; 15% for blacks; and 7.5% for whites.

The executive director of the Alternative Schools Network said that unemployed, under-educated teens have fallen through the cracks and that they need more options to further their education and gain job skills. Dropouts tend to earn less, have a harder time finding jobs, and are more likely to be incarcerated than high school graduates. Policymakers point to the need for more alternative programs to keep students in school and to make sure they graduate.

At the time of the third evaluation site visit in the fall of 2003, the context in which the project operated had not changed significantly during the past year. Unemployment in the Chicago area had increased slightly from the citywide 6.8% figure reported at the time of the second site visit, according to MOWD staff. And, the mayor had convened a task force to look at the effects of jail/prison overcrowding and subsequent early parole.

Destruction of the Cabrini-Green low-income housing on the edge of the target area had caused an influx into the target neighborhoods of displaced residents seeking housing. Perhaps as a result of this, project case managers reported that crime rates, especially those involving serious crimes, had risen in 2003.

In recent years there have been greater attempts in the project target neighborhoods to better coordinate resources and approaches and become better organized, however. U.S. Rep. Danny Davis, whose congressional district falls in the target neighborhoods, has focused on improving living conditions and reducing crime on the Westside as well as training and educating ex-offenders.

Chicago's political establishment appeared supportive of efforts to help troubled youth who were either offenders or at risk of court involvement. According to project staff, the mayor has focused on establishing several jobs programs for youth. Project staff estimated that in 2001, as a result of the mayor's efforts, the city managed to help place 17,000 youth in jobs, including temporary summer work. The state legislature in 2003 passed legislation to expunge records of parolees to remove barriers that hinder them, especially their ability to find work.

At the time of the third evaluation site visit, case managers at Latino Youth and Scholarship & Guidance Association, which are Goodwill subcontractors, reported that they had not noticed significant contextual changes since the second site visit.

They believed, however, that more youth were becoming involved with gangs, although the YMCA gang intervention unit, which is stationed at Latino Youth and receives funds through the Demonstration, has experienced some successes in deterring and extracting youth from gangs. In all, the unit works directly with 4 project youth and more than 50 others who are not enrolled in the project.

Project Organization

Chicago's project changed several times during the Demonstration period. At the time of the first evaluation site visit in March 2002, the project had just begun to take shape following more than six months of delays. The project was in the process of developing a new and detailed implementation plan and had benefited from technical assistance to get it going.

The new implementation plan called for MOWD to provide broad oversight of the project, with Goodwill Industries, which had assembled a consortium of 40 members, managing day-to-day project activities. About 13 consortium partners were to provide

services for fees under subcontracts with Goodwill. Route counseling services were to be provided by Project C.I.T.Y., a consortium member. According to the plan, youth were to follow this path:

- Recruitment of youth was to be primarily through the city's Juvenile Probation Department. Project C.I.T.Y. was to be notified of a participant's release from a correctional facility and then schedule a meeting with the youth either at the service provider's facility or elsewhere.

- After referrals were made to the project, staff at Goodwill and Project C.I.T.Y. were to process the youth for intake and assessment. Assessments and screenings, using both face-to-face interviews and standardized assessment instruments, were to be used to help determine a participant's personal and training needs as well as career interests. This would ensure that participants received referrals to appropriate services.

- Individual Service Strategies (ISS) were to be prepared for each project participant, taking into account a youth's life experiences, academic proficiencies, cognitive assets and barriers that he/she faced.

- Even after a project participant was assigned to another agency, Project C.I.T.Y. staff were to continue to serve as a liaison between the juvenile justice system, the participant, the referring agency and the service provider to ensure that the participant receives intensive aftercare, route counseling, and participant monitoring. Assessments of youth were to continue while they moved through the project. Services were to be added or dropped, as needed. Service providers were to be paid as subcontractors by Goodwill.

- Participants also were to be provided supportive services such as drug and alcohol treatment, mental health services, adult mentoring, tutoring, child care, transportation assistance, counseling and other essential services to help ensure that they succeed in the project.

- If a participant unexpectedly left or disappeared from the project a crisis intervention team consisting of partners were to be notified so they could become involved. Under a subcontract, Leonard Communications Associates was to operate a 24-hour hotline that youth could use if they needed help, such as if they were arrested. When they received a call, Hotline staff members were to have access to a participant's computerized case history file so that they could call the appropriate agency to provide participants with immediate help.

Between the second evaluation site visit, which was conducted in November 2002, and the third evaluation site visits, which were conducted in September and October 2003, the project had undergone several important changes:

- The original project director had been dismissed from his job, apparently because of budget difficulties and a staff reduction at Goodwill.

- The original route counseling unit, Project C.I.T.Y., had been dismissed, apparently because it had not adequately fulfilled its responsibilities, according to MOWD staff.

- The number of subcontractors providing services had been winnowed from about 13 to about nine.

As a replacement for Project C.I.T.Y., two other agencies had been given subcontracts to provide route counseling services. These were Latino Youth and Scholarship & Guidance Association, which already were consortium members. New procedures called for youth to be assigned to one of the agencies based upon Zip Codes where the youth lived. Another major change was that with the granting of DOL funds to Goodwill for the Round Three Demonstration youth were to be assigned to the project according to age group, with the Round Two project serving primarily younger youth, those 17 and under. The project's components and client flow remained essentially unchanged, however, although there were some refinements.

Education and Training

Youth 16 years of age and under are required by Illinois state law to attend school; many youth served by the project fall into this category and attend alternative schools or regular school, if they qualify. Project youth who do not qualify for assignment to regular school, or who request assignment to an alternative school, are assigned to a consortium member, such as Latino Youth, that provides schooling in an alternative setting.

Although the project now deals only with younger youth, older youth who enrolled in the project before the start of the Round Three project remained with the Round Two project. Therefore, a few older youth, those 17 and older and not attending school, were referred to other service providers, including One-Stop centers, for training and help finding jobs. If they needed GED classes, they were referred to consortium members who provided them. Both Latino Youth and Instituto del Progresso Latino, another consortium member, offered GED programs, for example. Youth received job preparation services and training while they are enrolled in the project, primarily through the Youth Employment Service, Inc. (Y.E.S.), which also is a consortium member.

Aftercare

According to the initial project plan, Project C.I.T.Y., which specialized in providing aftercare services, was to work with probation officers and court staff to ensure that project youth received suitable and appropriate aftercare services. This component of the project, however, was not implemented, apparently because probation officers were unhappy with services provided by Project C.I.T.Y., according to project staff.

Recruitment and Retention in the Program

According to the redesigned implementation plan approved by DOL in March 2002, project youth were to come from several sources:

- The Nancy B. Jefferson Alternative School for students who are involved with the Circuit Court of Cook County as detainees, on probation or on parole;

- Corrections facilities in the Lawndale community; and

- Street outreach efforts by participating agencies and organizations that will seek to identify youth as potential participants.

Project staff members believed that a large number of youth who became participants would be court involved and ordered to participate in the project. Potential participants were to be screened in coordination with probation officers before they were assigned, however, to determine whether they were suitable for the project. A requirement was that participants must live in the neighborhoods that are targeted for the project. Those youth who were deemed not suitable to participate in the project were to be referred to other agencies, including One-Stop centers, depending upon their circumstances and needs.

By the time of the second evaluation site visit in November 2002 it was apparent that recruitment efforts were not working as planned. The project's staff had not been able to develop a solid working relationship with probation officers and confidentially concerns kept case manager from accessing youth and their case files before youth were released from confinement facilities. According to project staff, Project C.I.T.Y. also was not properly managing those youth who had been recruited into the project or referred by probation officers. Complaints from both service providers and probation officers reportedly included: recruitment of youth who lived outside the target area; most older youth were assigned to receive only pre-employment services, even when they were not at that stage in their development; case managers did not follow through or keep track of youth enrolled in the project. It appears that these initial problems with the route counseling unit may have hindered the project, possibly keeping it from reaching its goal of recruiting 165 youth. By October 2003, the project had recruited 84 youth and enrolled 76 of them.

By the fall of 2003 the project had reached out again to probation officers and, it appeared, that the POs, convinced that the new route counseling units were handling youth properly, were eager once again to refer youth to the project. During a meeting of probation officer supervisors and the staffs of MOWD and Goodwill the consensus was that the project should approach the courts and ask judges to order offenders to the projects as an alternative sentencing program.

Services Offered by Project

The project used a decentralized approach to deliver comprehensive services to project youth. By the time of the third evaluation site visit, the contact with the original route counseling unit had been cancelled and replaced by two new route counseling units, from among consortium partners. The two subcontractors were Latino Youth, which served primarily Hispanic youth in the South Lawndale area, and Scholarship and Guidance Association, which served primarily African American youth in the North Lawndale and Austin communities. Youth are assigned to one of the agencies based upon the Zip Codes where they lived.

Route counselors at agencies where youth were assigned also provide some counseling services for individuals and families. The route counselors use an Internet-based tracking system to track youth as they progress through the assessment and intake process and as they are assigned to other service providers. Each service provider enters case notes into the system.

In general, youth receive one intervention at a time, which in many cases is assignment to an educational component. Most youth, for example, are enrolled in an alternative school, such as Latino Youth. In the case of Latino Youth, youth who do not function at the fifth grade level are enrolled in a self-paced computer program of study until they reach the appropriate level of competency, which allows them to enroll in the alternative school. Some youth, however, receive multiple interventions, depending upon their immediate and pressing needs, which frequently includes substance abuse counseling.

Challenges Involving Services

The project has had difficulty connecting with the workforce development system, specifically getting the support of the local Workforce Investment Board. At the time of the first evaluation site visit, project staff reported there was a good deal of reluctance by the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) to serve this population of youth, who often have staggering educational and training deficiencies as well as personal needs, such as family problems, and personal issues such as those involving drug and alcohol abuse – all which limit their possibilities for acquiring good paying jobs with career potential.

Some project youth also reject efforts to help them with substance abuse and mental health treatment, according to staff. The project's staff, for example, has found it difficult to get some youth to admit that they use drugs and need treatment; many youth don't consider marijuana a drug. According to staff, many youth are immature and route counselors must make extra effort to meet participants on their level to understand the youths' frame of reference and be effective.

Assessments

Assessments/screenings are done on youth entering the project to determine their assets, risks, and needs. These include needs for drug and alcohol abuse, mental health,

counseling and treatment as well as for education, workforce development, and reentry services.

Route Counseling (Case Management)

Individual service strategies are prepared for each youth enrolled in the project based upon each youth's assessed needs and individual goals. Route counselors include youth, their families, probation officers and services providers in the development of individual services strategies. Through its consortium of service providers, the project can meet any conceivable need of project youth.

The route counseling approach used by the two case management units focuses on the most-pressing needs of each youth, often one intervention at a time. Route counselors called this "taking baby steps" toward realization of individual goals. For about one-half of the youth in the project, this usually consists of schooling of some type, as indicated by the number of youth receiving schooling. Youth with multiple and immediate needs, however, receive several services in tandem, if required.

Workforce Development Services

Because most youth served by the Round Two project fall into the 14-17 age range, these services consist mainly of pre-employment training, or soft skills training, that are designed age-appropriate and serve to introduce the youth to the world of work. Latino Youth offers periodic workshops to youth that address topics such as how to dress for work, how to prepare a resume, and how to interview for a job. The Youth Employment Service, Inc. (Y.E.S.) provides these services to older project youth who have been assigned to them. The main focus, however, is to keep youth in school and to provide them support services that address their immediate needs, such as drug and alcohol abuse treatment and other services to help them deal with personal and family issues.

Reentry Services

The project offers all reentry services, which are provided primarily by consortium members. The project has a active gang intervention program. Demonstration funds pay for one position in the YMCA's seven-member gang intervention unit that operates out of the Latino Youth facility, which is in neutral territory between two large gangs in the South Lawndale area. At the time of the third evaluation site visit, the unit was serving about four Demonstration youth, counseling them and, in some cases, helping them to become extricated from gangs.

Non-routine Services

Health care, drug abuse and mental health treatment, and other services are provided by consortium partners whenever youth needs are identified. Emergency housing, if needed by a participant, is provided by Latino Youth, which operates a small residential facility for the homeless. If necessary, Goodwill provides youth with vouchers to purchase

clothing. The project also provides bus passes; the YMCA provides recreational services as well as community service projects for clients.

Public Management Model

Organizational Attributes

Three strengths are particularly worthy of note:

The first strength is grantee involvement **(Organizational Attribute No. 4).** The MOWD staff provide close guidance and supervision of the subcontractor. Since the project's inception, they have worked hard to help the project connect with other governmental agencies, especially the juvenile justice system.

Early on the MOWD's commissioner noted that the original project design was inadequate and needed to be more comprehensive, if it was to work properly. As a result, MOWD reached out to Goodwill to manage the project's day-to-day operation and to Goodwill's consortium of 40 partners to provide comprehensive services to target youth.

Since then the project's design has been continuously strengthened and the project itself has been refined to meet changing needs and address pressing project issues, such as when it had difficulties with the original route counseling unit and the resulting reluctance of probation officers to refer youth to the project. Throughout the Demonstration period the MOWD staff has remained engaged with the project, ensuring fiscal accountability and that the project is progressing toward its implementation objectives and goals.

Staff at MOWD also serve on the project's advisory board, including on its sustainability subcommittee, which is considering ways to help the project continue after DOL grant funding ends. At the time of the third evaluation site visit, MOWD and Goodwill were working together, hoping to tap into Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds to sustain the project and also convince the city of the need to establish two One-Stop centers for youth in the Demonstration target areas.

The second strength is the project's strong effort to develop a community support/network **(Organizational Attribute No. 3).** By all appearances, MOWD's commissioner has worked hard to mobilize the MOWD staff as well as Chicago's political community in support of the project. The commissioner frequently touts the project at public forums, news conferences, and in speeches – as does the city's mayor. This strong community-wide effort also has gained support for the project from the congressmen , U.S. Rep. Danny Davis, who represents the police districts that constitutes the project's target area. His support is key to the project's success. Davis is particularly sensitive to the needs of ex-offenders and troubled youth and supports efforts in Congress.

MOWD also has made great strides to involve the Cook County's juvenile justice system in the project and its efforts to serve the project's target youth. And as a result of years of experience working with community-based organizations, Goodwill has established strong grassroots connections throughout Cook County while seeking to spread word of the project's efforts and the needs of youth. Goodwill holds the respect of these various organizations, which perhaps is best indicated by its ability to bring a diversity of different community and governmental agencies together to create the consortium.

The third strength is the sharing of information and leadership among partners **(Organizational Attribute No. 7).** A consortium of members, under Goodwill's leadership guides the project. Since the consortium was formed in late 2001 to apply for a similar grant, it has developed a common and well-articulated vision to provide services to youthful offenders and youth at-risk of court involvement. The fact that consortium members generally agree on objectives and goals and appear committed to the project has ensured that coordinated and delineated systems and networks provide effective and efficient route counseling and service delivery to project participants. This approach also allows an individualized approach for serving participants who are assessed upon entry and then assigned to an appropriate service provider (a consortium member) that has adequate and appropriate experience and expertise.

Weaknesses included, first, a poor initial plan for the project that delayed and complicated implementation of the project early on **(Organizational Attribute No. 1)** and, second, the inability of the project to leverage additional funds from sources other than DOL **(Organizational Attribute No. 6).** The project does receive some in-kind services from consortium members, however.

Also, until recently the project has not succeeded in building a strong relationship with the juvenile justice system **(Organizational Attribute No. 5).** Poor performance of the initial route counseling unit apparently created distrust among probation officers, who stopped referring youth to the project after poor tracking and service delivery to youth they had referred. By the time of the third evaluation site visit, however, it appeared that MOWD and project staff had regained the confidence of the probation officers and who were urging the project staff to approach judges to assign youth to the project as an alternative sentencing program. About 90% of referrals to the project now come from probation officers.

Workforce Development Services and Reentry Services

The project primarily serves younger youth, focusing on educational activities. Consortium members provide an array of services, including reentry services, as identified by youth and their route counselors.

Data Collection and Analysis

The project has an impressive data collection system. Youth are tracked via a web-based route counseling system. Case managers also maintain hard copies of files. (In the fall of 2003 the system had been disabled for about a month and route counselors had to track youth using paper files.)

Each partner has access to the system and can enter case notes on youth. Access to some information is restricted, however, and, according to route counselors, this has caused some frustration. Route counselors said that they cannot search the database by name or by case number. In addition, dates of changes and updates of data are not tracked by the system. And, there are some poor quality entries of case notes that make it difficult for route counselors to track the youth adequately. At the time of the third evaluation site visit, the system still appeared in flux and the project coordinator mentioned that these kinds of issues are slowly being resolved.

Although this information is collected it does not appear that the project uses the information other than for tracking youth. The route counseling supervisor at Latino Youth, however, said that her organization performs statistical analysis and compiles demographic and other information on participants as part of the agencies efforts to publicize its programs.

Continuous Improvement Loop

Chicago's project has experienced continuous change since its inception, which indicates that the grantee and project staff are sensitive and respond to issues that affect the project. The plan originally set forth was not acceptable to the commissioner of MOWD because there were too few partnerships involved. As a result, MOWD sought out Goodwill and its Consortium of 40 partners.

At midpoint in the project, the arrangement for route counseling was modified because, according to project and MOWD staff, youth were not being managed correctly; there was improper recruitment of youth; and youth were being improperly assigned to services. As a result, two route counseling units were contracted to provide these services to youth, based upon their home Zip Codes.

In addition, the nature of the project changed when Goodwill received a grant for Round 3 of the Demonstration. As a result, the focus of the Round 2 project is now on younger youth, while the Round 3 project focuses on older youth.

Chicago's project depends heavily upon the project's consortium of partners for improvements in how the project operates. Consortium members meet monthly to discuss project issues and iron out differences and procedures. Responsibilities for meetings rotate among partners as a means to improve cooperation and coordination among partners as well as delivery of services to participants. Hosts are expected to give a 45-minute presentation to help other consortium members become more familiar with

the capabilities and services provided by the agencies/organizations hosting that month's meeting.

As mentioned before, the MOWD staff remains very active in monitoring and keeping informed about what is going on with the project; staff members use a hands-on approach to ensure that the project gets proper help and advice when problem areas are spotted. The staff sometimes intervenes to help the project correct deficiencies and improve operations. An example of this is the discussion in the challenges section explaining how the MOWD staff planned to become involved in trying to resolve issues with the juvenile justice system. MOWD staff members also serve on consortium subcommittees, such as the one on sustainability, and they actively participate in advisory committee meetings.

The project also actively seeks technical assistance and uses it to improve project operations. Both MOWD and Goodwill staff members involved in the project attend seminars and conferences to improve their knowledge base about youth development issues and youthful offenders.

The best example of the continuous improvement process was shown in how the MOWD staff handled problems with the initial project design. The commissioner of the agency recognized design adequacies early on and took prompt action to correct them by broadening the project's reach and seeking a subcontractor that was better suited to handle the day-to-day management of the project.

Outcomes

Individual/Client Level

At the time of the third evaluation site visit, about 31 of 76 (45%) of youth enrolled in the project remained active and a large percentage of those youth were in schooling of some type: two were in traditional public schools; 14 were in an alternative school such as Latino Youth; 12 were enrolled in a pre-literacy self-paced computer program; and two others had enrolled in a local college.

There was some anecdotal evidence that youth enrolled in the project were progressing toward goals they had set in their Individual Service Strategies. Persistence in the project and in school and progress toward completion of their ISSs were, perhaps, the most important indicators of positive outcomes. Perseverance provides evidence, for example, that delinquent behaviors have been reduced among those youth receiving services. In fact, route counselors reported that feedback from probation officers had been positive, which appears to be evidence that project youth were progressing toward their goals. The route counselors, however, said that they have little communication with public schools.

Outcomes, as reported by the site director from Goodwill as of the end of August 2003, included:

- 84 youth have been recruited; 76 have been enrolled;

- 34 youth (45%) were active at the time of the third evaluation site visit;

- 4 youth were incarcerated 1 violation of probation; others uncertain (12%);

- 2 youth have completed their educations and have entered college;

- 12 have been enrolled in Latino Youth's Computer Credit Program;

- 14 are enrolled in some type of schooling (41%);

- 2 youth in the Round 2 project are employed (6%);

- 4 youth were receiving substance abuse/mental health counseling;

- 7 youth were in pre-employment/job readiness training with Y.E.S. (21%); and

- 4 youth were involved with the gang intervention unit

Younger youth seeking jobs are placed mostly in part-time jobs during the summer, such as at grocery stores and other odd jobs with consortium partners; some youth attending Latino Youth also are provided part-time work while attending the school.

Project/System Level

The MOWD staff believes that the consortium is likely to stay together after grant funding ends. Some partners may leave, however, mostly those that are not providing direct services. At the time of the third evaluation site visit, the project planned to drop the contract for a 24-hour hotline because few youth were using it. In all about five of the consortium members were providing services to youth.

The Goodwill site director agreed that several key partners will continue to work together after the grant ends – even if additional funds cannot be found. The partners include: Goodwill, the YMCA, Scholarship & Guidance Association, Latino Youth and Juvenile Probation. She also said that some education and employment components could continue through other funding sources; the project, however, will need to limit enrollment, primarily because the youth it serves, who are generally legally involved, have greater needs and require more attention.

Partners will try to absorb youth being served by the project after DOL funds end. The project should have enough funds to carry it through June 2004. MOWD has requested, and received, a no-cost extension.

Staff members at MOWD and Goodwill believe that the bigger vision for the project is to create such a solid linkage with the Juvenile Justice system that the project becomes

institutionalized as an alternative sentencing option. A second goal is to create youth One-Stops in an area where there are few service providers.

Barriers and Challenges

A key barrier, as pointed out by the Goodwill staff, are the unrealistic expectations of youth themselves. When asked what they want from their experiences in the project, many clients claim that they "want a job." According to staff, many older youth are shortsighted in that they often fail to understand the potential that entry-level jobs offer. As is the case in other cities where projects are found, placing participants in entry-level jobs such as retail or food preparation is not that difficult; but retaining them in those jobs has been a major challenge, especially for those participants with low educational attainment, drug and mental health issues, and other family and personal problems that often overwhelm them.

An area of greatest need for improvement involves the project's difficulty connecting with the workforce development system **(Organizational Attribute No. 5).** During the second site visit the project manager at Goodwill noted that the project had struggled to get the One-Stop delivery system fully involved with project youth. Apparently there is a good deal of reluctance by One-Stops to serve this population, whose members often have staggering educational and training deficiencies as well as personal needs, such as help with family problems and drug and alcohol issues – all of which limit their possibilities for acquiring good paying jobs with career potential.

This situation is hardly unique to Chicago's project, however. Many other first and second round projects faced similar difficulties. And, there are no easy solutions, perhaps other than providing even more intensive services and training to help youth overcome great difficulties before and after they enter the workforce. These efforts, however, would require a much larger amount of money, greater community support, and much more time to bring about significant changes to help youth enter the workforce at other than entry-level jobs in service industries.

Since Goodwill became grantee for the third round demonstration the situation has been somewhat ameliorated. Since August 2002 the second round project no longer has recruited older youth, who often need and want jobs above all else. This change in focus has allowed the project to concentrate more intensely on the pre-employment, especially educational, needs of the younger youth before they are handed off to the third round project once they turn 18 and begin to seek work in earnest. If experience holds true, connecting the third round project to the One-Stop delivery service system will take considerable effort and time if the effort is to be successful.

The last area concerns delays in implementation that resulted from having a less-than-adequate implementation plan in place early on **(Organizational Attribute No. 1).** Unfortunately, the delay meant that the project did not start recruiting participants until May 2002, or about half-way through the grant period. Recruitment continues to lag beyond expectations, reaching only about one-half of the project's initial goal.

It should be pointed out, however, the project has made considerable and remarkable progress in recovering the footing that it had lost early on. In summer 2002 Goodwill applied for and was awarded funds for the third round of the Demonstration, which appears to indicate that Goodwill had learned valuable lessons from the round two experience.

Sustaining the project after grant funds end in June 2004 appears to be a problem for Chicago's project. At the time of the third site visit, no additional pledges of support had been offered and the Round Three part of YouthLink had run out of funds early. Latino Youth is a trusted mature agency, which may continue to provide some aspects of the project, such as route counseling services, even after funding ends. There appears to be a consensus among project staff that if YouthLink is to survive, it will need to become an alternative sentencing program.

MOWD's plan is for Goodwill to go after WIA youth funds. MOWD will issue an RFP for grants that will be awarded in July 2004. And, Goodwill and MOWD are working together to advocate for development of two youth One-Stop Centers in the target area. The MOWD and project also are pushing for a community assessment of the target areas to identify resources, and they plan to use the project's Gang Prevention Advisory Board, with its diverse membership, as part of its effort to ensure that the project becomes sustainable through highly coordinated service delivery efforts. The partners plan to look toward the Juvenile Justice system for additional funds to continue some route counseling aspects. Finally, the partners have been trying to increase involvement of additional community leaders such as Westside Ministers Association, which has ties to an influential alderman and is co-located in the facility where route counselors from Scholarship & Guidance work.

Youth Offender Demonstration Project
Process Evaluation
Final Report Summary for
Cincinnati, OH

Project Description

Context

Cincinnati's Youth Offender Demonstration Project serves Cincinnati and surrounding Hamilton County. Hamilton County covers an area of 414 square miles. Cincinnati, the county seat, is on the banks of the Ohio River and at the convergence of three states – Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana. According to the 2000 Census, the county population was 845,303; about 40% of the population (331,285) lived in Cincinnati. While the Cincinnati Metropolitan Statistical Area continues to grow, the population of Hamilton County itself and – to an even greater extent – the City of Cincinnati is declining. Like many large industrial centers in the Northeast and Midwest that have declined since the 1970s, the area faces hardship, including increased poverty, crime, and low achievement in schools.

Since 2001, when the project began, Cincinnati has had to deal with an economic downturn that project representatives believe has not improved for their target population. The Cincinnati unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) in July 2003 was 5.1%, up from 4.8% in July 2002, while the Ohio rate was up from 5.9% to 6.4%. In addition, many people are known to be out of the workforce, and, thus, would not be reflected in the rates. The difficult economic situation is seen as adversely affecting the availability of jobs for youth, especially youth offenders.

The educational system is described as not serving the offender population well. For example, the school system's zero tolerance policy regarding violence and drugs is seen as making it harder for offender youth to get educational services. Youth offenders are more likely to be put "out on the street," and there are no educational services for them while out of school. Vocational education services have been eliminated. Project managers believe that tougher testing has also pushed some youth out of school. They described the dropout rate as greater than 60% overall and greater than 80% among inner city black youth. Fees required to get a diploma are also seen as an obstacle to some youth.

Particularly troubling is the history of racial tensions within the city. In April 2001, the police killing of an unarmed black man, the 15th since 1995, set off the city's worst riots in more than three decades. The street protests, police confrontations and vandalism of businesses brought national attention to the city. Project staff describe police enforcement since the April 2001 riots as having been "on a roller coaster." There was "almost a work stoppage" by police for a year or so, and arrests plummeted. Since March/April 2003,

police have been much more aggressive in enforcement, and the prosecutor's office has become tougher in bringing cases. As a result, by late 2003 there was more community awareness of crime--and there were probably more arrests for criminal activity--but this was seen as more related to enforcement policies than to the amount of criminal activity.

Police briefings to project staff suggest that criminal activity has become more violent, and younger youth are involved. More females also seem to be engaged in criminal activity, while at the same time they may be less likely to be imprisoned, in part because there is a lack of facility space for females. Most crime in this population is thought to be drug related. The Police Anti-Gang Task Force was dispersed with the assertion that gangs are not a problem. But the justice system agrees that there is "neighborhood focused" criminal activity and "turf-related activity that is negative in nature." Youth in the project have a keen sense of where it is safe for them to go, and where it is dangerous for them to go.

There are, however, encouraging signs. In January 2002, at the time of the first evaluation site visit, the mayor announced a large redevelopment project to clean up what has been a dividing line between east and west, between the poor and more affluent parts of the city. According to the mayor, the redevelopment of Vine Street near the epicenter of the riots would "be a signal" that that area, known as Over-the-Rhine, is a neighborhood for all, "not just people at the lowest income level." In his State of the City address in January, the mayor also set several goals to improve police-community relations. The Human Relations Commission, which was formed after the riots, is seen as having had a positive influence on the community context. The number of local community organizations has increased, and there are more multi-party agreements, such as the corporately funded Cincinnati Action Now. A faith-based group, the Amos group, has emerged as a strong advocate for youth offender issues. An Ex-Offender Task Force is also focusing the community on this population's needs.

Organization

As the project comes to an end in December 2003, the City of Cincinnati's Department of Community Development and Planning is the grantee, and all direct services for youth are provided or arranged by the Service Navigator Unit (SNU) of the Work Resource Center (WRC). WRC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that has grown to include several community-based employment and education sites throughout Greater Cincinnati since it was founded in 1972. In addition to its responsibility for the project, it also has the contract to provide Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services to all youth in Cincinnati and Hamilton County. About 10% of the SNU's active caseload in October 2003 were PROJECT youth.

Several significant organizational changes have occurred over the life of the project. The location of workforce development services within the city government has changed since the project began, key managers have been reassigned or left the organization, and the number of staff assigned to workforce issues has been sharply reduced. For example, the PROJECT has had two project coordinators, and neither of them has been on the job

for the last few months of the project. Service delivery was originally contracted to another organization before it was transferred to the SNU, and there were some difficulties in transferring records and responsibility. The project design and the community partners involved, however, have not changed significantly over the course of the project.

Recruitment and Retention in the Program

In order to be eligible to participate in PROJECT, youth must document that they

- have been "adjudicated for committing crimes and/or delinquent acts,"

- are between the ages of 14-25 and have parental/legal guardian consent if they are

  a minor,

- are a resident of Hamilton County and a U.S. citizen,

- assert that they are willing to work to further their education and/or career, and

- meet WIA economic eligibility guidelines.

Because of its emphasis on starting with capacity building, the demonstration did not start actively recruiting youth until about October 2002. For the quarter ending on September 30, 2002, it reported the first youth enrolled. As of September 30, 2003, the project reported a cumulative total of about 175 youth recruited and 107 enrolled. Of those 107, about half (53) are youth whose "service start date" was before October 2002. That is, they enrolled in WIA and were later counted as project youth, even though they were unaware that they were enrolled in a separate program and received no different services than what they would have received if the project did not exist.

The project's active recruiting consists largely of community contacts and presentations at correctional facilities. Some youth also come into the project as an alternative to incarceration. In addition, service providers in the community have been made aware that they may be compensated for services to youth offenders if the youth can be determined eligible for WIA, so they may get youth into the project through a "reverse referral."

Youth in the project are all offenders, consistent with a target group change that was made after funding was received. The 107 youth enrolled as of September 30, 2003 were about equally divided between those under 18 and those 18-24 years old (52 and 55 respectively). The majority of the youth are male (78%) and African-American (83%). The project has had more out-of-school youth (61) than in-school youth (46) enrolled. They had expected to enroll more "older" youth, but the eligibility documentation requirements have made it especially hard to enroll them. The economic eligibility

documentation, in particular, has been an obstacle for enrolling youth, as parents and others, such as a girlfriend the youth might be living with, are reluctant to provide documentation of their income. Also, the documentation requirements have kept them from starting to work with younger youth while they are incarcerated because they have difficulty getting information from parents to support the youth's eligibility.

Project managers have focused largely on getting youth into the project rather than on keeping them enrolled. A recent analysis showed that the 45 youth who have left the project--largely without achieving their goals—represents a higher percentage (42%) of departures than is typical of their WIA clients. They are considering what kind of strategies might be more effective in retaining youth offenders

Project Planning and Sustainability

This project was characterized from its beginning by a 2-part focus on (1) planning for community capacity building and (2) delivering services to youth in a way that would "build in" sustainability after funding ended. The challenge facing the project was to link the emphasis on community capacity building with improved service delivery to participants. It was hoped that, by the end of the project, more youth offenders would be recruited to and receive services from the WIA provider than would have been the case without the project. In addition, there would be an enhanced awareness of the unique needs of this population and a more extensive and integrated network of community services available for them—with the result of improved employment outcomes.

The project's vision was to involve a broad coalition of partners in its planning activities. Community partners were to be involved not just in periodic formal meetings but also in work groups to focus on specific areas, such as administrative, programmatic, and system development. The hope was that these partners' interaction would lead to more awareness of the unique needs of this population, more awareness of the range of services now available to meet their needs, and more willingness to collaborate to serve this population.

Partners met regularly at first, but the last meeting was in February 2003. The plan is to convene the partners again in early December 2003. At that time, they will be connected with the Ex-Offender Task Force and its Reentry Subcommittee, which will continue to address initiatives for this population. It is the role of the Workforce Policy Board to take the lead in initiatives for youth, and offenders are one of the target groups they are to address. The Workforce Policy Board's Youth Council will continue with the effort begun under the project to develop an "open referral process," that is, a way that a single application and set of materials about a youth will be acceptable to the various agencies, instead of the youth having to start all over again with each agency.

The focus on sustainability in service delivery relied on full integration with the existing WIA-funded services for youth. Even though project participants would be receiving services from the same provider who served WIA youth, the original plan was that the project would fund one or more individuals to focus specifically on project youth.

Instead, project funds have been used to fund general operations of the SNU, and project youth have received route counseling and services through a system that is the same for them as for other youth coming through WIA.

After December 2003, youth offenders already enrolled in the project will continue to be served by the same organization. As new youth offenders are recruited, those over age 21 will be served by Affiliated Computer Systems, the organization that has the contract to serve WIA-eligible adults. The only difference might be that some youth eligible for the project might be ineligible for WIA service because their family income is too high. Given the current integration of WIA and the project, staff feel there is no need for the project to make a "case" for sustainability. There has been little or no involvement of youth, parents, employers, or community leaders in planning for sustainability.

Services Offered by Project

The grantee contracts all service delivery to the Service Navigator Unit (SNU) of the Work Resource Center. The SNU, in turn, sub-contracts all services except route counseling to providers with contracts to serve WIA youth (WIA providers) or to non-WIA providers. By contract, the SNU is not allowed to provide direct services, such as work readiness training or job placement, unless they are a "last resort," i.e., no other provider can be found to meet the client's needs. However, they can let clients use the resource materials available at their office for self-directed assistance while they pursue the sometimes lengthy process of certifying their eligibility for WIA. The grantee's policies have not allowed them to refer project youth for services until their WIA eligibility was determined.

Youth receive route counseling services at the SNU office. For other services, they are given a referral and go "on their own" to meet with other providers. Youth receive the same services they would receive as WIA youth not in the project. There is no public acknowledgement that some youth are in the project and others are not. Some youth have discovered on their own, however, that other offenders are in the project. To some extent they have formed an informal, unofficial support group.

The array of services project youth receive is limited to those regularly available through the workforce development system. Service emphasis is on assessing and improving basic educational skills, work readiness, and job placement and retention. At the initiative of the justice system, there has been some use of participation in the project as an alternative to incarceration. Services generally expected, or required, to be part of the project that are not included in Cincinnati's project include substance abuse and mental health assessments and treatment; aftercare; community service; anti-gang support; screening and referral for health and housing needs; recreation; and mentoring.

Assessments

The SNU assesses each youth in order to set goals, develop an individualized service strategy (ISS), and decide which provider to use to deliver needed services. The major

required focus of the assessments is the youth's basic educational skills level; each youth completes both the Wide Range Achievement Test and the Test of Adult Basic Education. Beyond these instruments, information comes primarily from interviews with the youth or--if the youth was referred to SNU by a service provider—from information that came with the referral. Information from a provider might include assessments performed by the provider. Areas of need that might become apparent in the interview or in information from a provider would include work readiness, occupational skills training, living situation, physical/mental health needs, or supportive services such as transportation. No substance abuse or mental health screening or assessment tools are used, but the referral, if there is one, may provide some information in those areas.

Route Counseling (Case Management)

In assessing the areas of need for each youth, each youth is automatically determined to need "comprehensive guidance and counseling"—their term for route counseling or case management—which the SNU provides. A first item of business for the Navigator and youth is to agree on the ISS, including a service provider, and have the youth sign the agreement. If the youth is a minor, a parent or guardian must give signed permission for a youth to enroll in the program; sometimes that person is also involved in establishing the ISS. If an agency has referred the youth, that agency may also review the plan. The ISS can contain up to 3 skill attainment goals, called "system" goals, for which the SNU and other providers will be held accountable in performance measures. An example would be "improve reading skill by one grade level in no less than 6 and no more than 12 months." If the youth is deficient in basic educational skills, that must be one of the 3 goals.

Each Navigator has a caseload of about 80 youth. The Navigator is expected to review the youth's progress—preferably at an in-person meeting—at least every 90 days. At that time, skill attainment is documented and new goals are set as needed. This also provides an occasion to identify and secure additional support services if they are needed.

Workforce Development Services

The SNU has standing contracts with six providers for workforce development services. The choice of provider would be determined, in part, by particular youth characteristics. For example, Literacy Center West serves out-of-school males ages 19 through 21. Arrangements can also be made for services delivered by a wide range of other providers. For example, youth ages 22-24 can be referred to the organization that provides WIA-funded services for adults. The specific curriculum and activities depend on the provider. All of the WIA providers offer work readiness training and job placement, and most of them can address basic skills deficits. Some of the providers may have employer networks and relationships that help them find jobs for youth and allow them to follow up with employers to confirm job retention and attempt to resolve any difficulties that may have come up. The SNU itself does not work directly with employers to arrange job placement or encourage job retention.

The SNU provides little in the way of supportive services, such as occupational skills training or education or treatment for substance abuse and mental health problems, that might help youth overcome employment barriers. In the case of substance abuse and mental health, the Navigators do not attempt to determine whether such needs exist. With respect to vocational or occupational skills training, they may be aware that such training would be helpful, but they are unaware of many resources in the area for referral. According to SNU managers, for them to get approval to use funds from their budget for supportive services is a difficult process, and the amount of funds is small.

Reentry Services

The project's involvement with reentry services has been largely at the system-wide, rather than individual, level. As part of its community capacity building efforts, the project brought partners together to share information about gang activities and discuss anti-gang efforts. At the individual level, the SNU has had no direct involvement with any anti-gang activities and is unaware of whether any of the project youth are involved in an aftercare program. The SNU has had some informal involvement with alternative sentencing, in that a judge has sometimes allowed a youth to participate in the project in lieu of being incarcerated. SNU managers could not say how often this has happened, since their management information system does not track this informal alternative sentencing as a service. A youth in this situation would receive the same services as any other youth, and there would be no provision to report back to the judge about the youth's participation. Follow up to ensure the youth continued to meet the terms of this alternative sentencing agreement, if there is any, would be the responsibility of the parole officer.

Public Management Model

Organizational Attributes

The project has manifested few of the organizational attributes considered important for successful project implementation. The project's original plan was well-developed, with a clear and focused vision and mission. That plan was described as being based on the Public Management Model. Implementation of the plan, however, became largely a matter of revising deadlines as they were missed rather than reconsidering whether certain goals, objectives, and tasks were realistic. The grantee had limited prior experience with the justice and health care systems. Community organizations were willing to be involved with the project at a systems level, but there was weak support for the program at the level of improving services for individual youth. The grantee was actively involved with carrying out the specific tasks involved in community capacity building efforts but did not provide effective leadership for the project as a whole to ensure that the capacity building and direct service delivery came together to improve service delivery for the youth offender population. Connection between the workforce system and the juvenile justice system improved somewhat at the level of the individual youth but less so at a higher, system-wide level. Little to no improvement appears to have been made in connection between the workforce system and behavioral health care

services. Although multiple partners came together for discussions, there appears to have been little to no leveraging of resources to improve services available to youth. There was also little to no meaningful sharing of project information, decision making, and leadership with stakeholders.

Workforce Development Services and Reentry Services

The project provides a very limited array of workforce development and reentry services, in comparison with those advocated as desirable for this population. Services focus primarily on removing basic educational skills deficits and providing work readiness training. Youth receive no services specifically intended to address obstacles to employment they might have because of their history of involvement with the justice system. Even though this population is known to be at high risk for substance abuse and mental health problems, the project neither assesses the presence of such problems nor provides referrals for education or treatment.

Data Collection and Analysis

The grantee receives little information about youth enrolled in the project, services they are receiving, and outcomes occurring--and management has made little use of what information they did get. For example, the quarterly reports the grantee sent to the Department of Labor (DOL) showed that, after the project had been in place for almost 2 years, no youth had ever been in GED preparation and none had ever been in either subsidized or unsubsidized employment. But there is no evidence that project managers noted these facts with concern and inquired as to whether they were data errors or danger signs for the success of the project.

The SNU collects much more detailed information about youth since they collect all the information required by DOL for WIA youth.   For example, their database includes the goals set by each youth and how many of them are attained. As of October 2003, however, the SNU had just begun to analyze the data to learn anything about their success with project clients or ways in which they might improve services for those clients.

Neither the grantee's nor the SNU's databases contain all the information needed for the quarterly reports to DOL. For example, neither data base contains information about those recruited but not enrolled in the project or which youth are studying for their GED. Instead, the additional information needed is manually compiled each quarter.

Continuous Improvement Loop

The Cincinnati project exhibits a weak to nonexistent continuous improvement loop. The PMM envisions continuous improvement resulting from the use of appropriately analyzed data, in the context of an organization managed in accordance with the desirable organizational attributes to deliver needed workforce development and reentry services.

The lack of a meaningful continuous improvement effort is no doubt related to lacks in the other four components of the PMM: available data are not used to manage the project, desirable organizational attributes are missing, and reentry and supportive services are lacking.

Grantee officials had originally expressed a strong commitment to project monitoring and continuous improvement. The grant application had outlined internal evaluation plans, and a detailed implementation plan was developed. Periodic review of the implementation plan was intended to provide an opportunity to determine where things were not "on track" and corrective action was needed. In practice, however, the implementation plan was used more as a way to document revised deadlines than to identify changes that might be needed in goals, objectives, or processes to attain them. As of October 2003, the internal evaluation was still being discussed but had not yet been designed or implemented.

The project has sought and received technical assistance and has had three visits from evaluators. Project management describes the input from these sources as valuable and can point to some changes that were made in response. For example, eligibility criteria were changed in response to the evaluator's observations after one visit.

Outcomes

Individual Client Level

At the individual youth level, the project has little quantitative or anecdotal info about outcomes. Of the 61 out-of-school youth, 8 have obtained subsidized or unsubsidized jobs. Of the 45 who have exited, 5 were considered to be leaving with positive outcomes. Of the 40 who were terminated for negative reasons such as refusal to participate, 6 had, nevertheless, attained the goals in their ISS. The project's focus has been on getting youth into the project more than on getting them employed or achieving other positive outcomes.

Project/System Level

SNU managers and grantee representatives believe that the project process—especially the involvement of partners in the community audit and other system-wide activities—had value. People came together and talked about the needs of this population, which had not happened before. Other system changes that they agree are positive include the following:

- the workforce development system is better connected with the justice system;

- using more non-WIA providers has built relationships and partnerships and opened opportunities for staff development, which will benefit all youth;

- attitudes in the community about working with youth offenders have changed;

- experience with the project has raised issues about appropriate goals for workforce development programs (e.g., whether contracts with the city and county should specify a required minimum of 6 months for achieving improvement in basic skills and whether basic skills improvement should be the primary focus with older youth);

- future workforce development services for the offender population will be improved by the strategies developed to recruit and serve project clients; and

- several local policy decisions for the project and WIA have been seen to be too restrictive and in need of change. If they can be changed, the benefit will be to all WIA youth, not just youth offenders.

Opinions differ, however, on the value of the report that resulted from the months-long, labor-intensive community audit. The grantee representative believes that the 377-page resource directory, with its Executive Summary with recommendations, is a useful resource. But others feel the material will not be very useful until it is better organized and analyzed. Even though the directory was completed in April, as of October 2003 it was not being used by the Navigators to find appropriate resources for offenders.

Barriers and Challenges

Sustainability, in the sense of some organization's providing workforce development and related services to youth offenders in Cincinnati, is not in doubt. Uncertainty remains, however, about how well the demonstration's overall goal—to help youth offenders and youth at risk of court involvement prepare for and secure long-term employment at wage levels that will prevent future delinquency and break the cycle of crime and juvenile delinquency—will be met. As the project comes to an end, project managers are just beginning to focus on outcomes for the youth as well as on enrollment goals. The challenge facing the workforce development community is to increase the focus on outcomes and to use program data in a continuous improvement approach to modify the program as needed to generate more positive outcomes. In addition, the community capacity building efforts that will continue, especially the Ex-Offender Task Force, need to be used to leverage additional resources to improve services for youth offenders: the system-level and individual level efforts need to be closely linked rather than operating on parallel, non-intersecting tracks.

Youth Offender Demonstration Project
Process Evaluation
Final Report Summary for
Colorado

Project Description

Context

Colorado's Department of Human Services, Division of Youth Corrections is grantee for the Colorado Category II Youth Offender Demonstration Project. In the state of Colorado, the youth correctional system is part of the Department of Human Services, which has a history of cross-program collaboration. The project has the political support of the Governor and leaders in the Department of Human Services. It is a policy of Colorado, however, to accept federal grants only with the understanding that the State would not be expected to assume responsibility for the funded activities at grant's end.

The project operated during a difficult fiscal period for the State of Colorado. The economic recession hit the Denver area hard because of its dependence on the high technology industry. The counties surrounding Denver are dependent on the metropolitan area economy, so the economic downturn affected all the counties in Central Colorado, the catchment area for the Youth Offender Demonstration.

The State budget crisis surfaced in many ways during the project. Members of the Consortium of stakeholder-advisors experienced layoffs. The parole period for youth offenders dropped from 9 to 6 months. The capacity of Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center (LMYSC) increased from 210 beds to 240, and young men were double-bunked to accommodate everyone. Services usually provided with Division of Youth Corrections funds were absorbed by DOL grant funds: Housing, mental health and substance abuse services.

Project Purpose

The title of the project is "Youth Employment and Academic Resource Services" (YEARS) a name given through a contest among the leadership of the youth incarcerated at Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center, the target facility for the demonstration. LMYSC is partially operated by the state and partially privatized; it is on the former campus of the Colorado School of Mines at the western edge of Golden, CO. LMYSC is the most secure facility for young males in the Division of Youth Corrections system, and receives youth from all over the State of Colorado.

The demonstration differs from most of the other demonstrations in that a strong aftercare program was in place before the grant, and the DOL funds added a workforce development dimension to an already rich array of services and supports. DOL funds provided work readiness and work experience opportunities to the young men while they

were still incarcerated, and job placement and employment retention services through a local One-Stop center upon release to their home counties.   Several factors affected the original design.

Midway through the project, it became clear that many of the youth were being released to "step-down" facilities somewhere within the Division of Youth Corrections participating regions (Central, Denver, and Northeast). This meant that the workforce specialists were traveling some distance among the youth in their care rather than having them concentrated in their four county workforce catchment areas. Youth were, at least initially, uncomfortable going to the workforce centers. Workforce specialists, therefore, continued to meet them at or near their homes, schools, or work places. Toward the end of the grant period, fewer youth were being assigned to step-down facilities, so more youth were returning directly back to the places where they had gotten into trouble.

Grant funds were allocated to the Center for Network Development to assist key stakeholders in developing a common vision of the project and resources for sustaining their collaboration for youth offenders. The project envisioned a sustainability strategy from the start, given the state policy of not absorbing additional services after grants. Because of the budget cuts described earlier, the project leadership continued to struggle with the sustainability strategy, but the remaining members of the Consortium committed to finding a sustainable path by March 2004, three months before the end of the DOL grant money.

The Y.E.A.R.S. project will complete the DOL funds in June 2004. Youth will not be enrolled after February 2004. Youth enrolled up to February will receive the program of services that were designed for the final phase of their incarceration plus the post-release job placement and retention services through June 2004.   Services will continue at LMYSC, through June 2004.

Project Organization

The Division of Youth Corrections subcontracted out the entire demonstration project. The Tri-county Workforce Center, the Workforce Investment Board for Jefferson, Gilpin, and Clear Creek Counties received the bulk of the funds, and it is the fiduciary agent for the grant. Tri-county Workforce Center subcontracted funds to each of the other workforce development centers serving the youth in the central region of the state: Adams, Arapahoe-Douglas, and Denver Counties' workforce development centers.

The Tri-county Workforce Center hired an experienced grants manager to be the project manager. Each workforce development center hired a workforce specialist who would link youth at LMYSC to jobs in the respective counties and assist the youth with employment retention. Each center used the hiring standards and procedures it used for hiring any other professional staff. Once hired, the staff received the training required of any worker assigned to LMYSC; staff members also received the regular orientation and training required by the hiring workforce center.

Workforce development services began while the youth were incarcerated at LMYSC. Before the grant, the youth were encouraged to complete the GED or high school diploma and received training in construction, silk screening, central dining, facilities management, and culinary arts. The project added construction and refurbishing of horse trailers and detailing them. Honors youth, called Eagles, were allowed to attend classes at Red Rock Community College or to work off campus. Project youth received stipends for their on grounds work experience while other youth who qualified for these jobs did not.

Workforce specialists began working with the youth 90 days before release: Establishing rapport, leading workforce development sessions, working with youth to find a job even before release. Workforce specialists also contacted families to let them know about the program and the assistance they were trying to provide to the young men.

After release, workforce specialists brought youth to the One-Stop centers to learn about their resources and to learn about specific job openings that matched youth's interests, skills and schedules. Youth made job interviews by themselves, but the workforce specialists might accompany them. Workforce specialists also visited youth at places of employment or schooling to facilitate problem solving, if that seemed appropriate.

The parole period of the youth was the responsibility of the Client Manager/Parole Officer. This person supported the employment component of the youth's individual plan, and the two professional staff members contacted each other with relevant observations and concerns. After parole, youth tended to slip—stop taking their medications, returning to substance abuse, etc. Youth often thought that the workforce specialists' role would end with the end of parole. The workforce specialists counted on the support of families to keep the youth on target with his medications, rehabilitation, work readiness and employment goals, and families as well as participants received incentives for youths' progress.

A small portion of the grant funds went to the Center for Network Development for assistance in developing a youth employer network and for facilitating the development of the stakeholders into full partnership. The Consortium included representatives of all subcontractors, the grantee, the Director of LMYSC, and other collaborators. The Consortium struggled with its role and with the degree of members' commitment. Some dropped out when they realized that their organizations would not receive funds from the grant. There were difficulties meshing the expectations of the workforce centers, LMYSC, DYC, other collaborators, and the project staff. The facilitator from the Center for Network Development reported that such struggles were part of forming a cohesive group that would be able to collaborate as the DOL funding was depleted.

A small amount of funds awarded to the Center for Network Development was intended to develop an employer network, but this task was not accomplished. In June 2003, that portion of the subcontract ended.

Recruitment and Retention in the Program

At the time of the third evaluation visit, the Y.E.A.R.S. project had enrolled 190 youth. Of that number, 26 youth were still incarcerated at LMYSC. All the youth entered the program by volunteering during the time they were at LMYSC, and they generally persisted through the time of parole.

All the enrollees were male, and the average age at LMYSC was 17.7 years. That means that most youth were at least 18 at release. Many of the youth assigned to the Lookout Mountain facility had serious personal issues to address: mental illness, substance abuse, or lack of a family. Some youth were assigned there by virtue of the crimes for which they were convicted: violence and/or sex offenses. Some youth were assigned because they did not fare well in the less structured environments of other facilities.

The Division of Youth Corrections did not automatically return a youth to incarceration for parole violations. If the infractions were minor, the youth was given a "time-out"—a day or a weekend in detention. A youth returned for lengthier periods for more severe infractions. These penalties interfered with the youths' employment in some cases, but the Client Manager/Parole Officer worked with the workforce specialists to avoid disrupting the employment component of the youths' plans.

At the third visit, it appeared as though 60-75% of the youth were active. The other youth had violated parole, run off, or committed a new crime. Some youth in each workforce center area were still not working or in school, but they were considered active if they remained in contact with the workforce specialists.

The Y.E.A.R.S. staff devised an incentive program for project youth. They received cash and non-cash incentives for achieving certain milestones; but to receive the cash, they had to also be in complete compliance with LMYSC or parole rules and regulations. Activities for awards included project participation and grades "C' and above for those in school. Non-cash incentives involved gift certificates, phone cards, grocery vouchers, and family incentives (gas vouchers for helping youth with transportation, or grocery vouchers). Staff reported these as big "carrots," keeping the youth engaged.

Project Planning and Sustainability

The Y.E.A.R.S. project designed its implementation plan according to the attributes of the Public Management Model (PMM). The initial planning for the proposal involved the staff of DYC, Tri-County and Arapahoe-Douglas Workforce Development Centers, the Center for Network Development, and LMYSC. The Consortium of stakeholders continued the planning. The Consortium, as mentioned earlier, lost members during the last year of operation as agency budgets were cut, but the members as of the third visit were:

- Division of Youth Corrections – Central Region, Northeast Region, Denver Region

- Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center,

- Lookout Mountain Youth Services Center – Metro State College-Denver Metro Academy.

- Tri-county Workforce Development Center,

- Adams County Workforce Development Center,

- Arapahoe-Douglas Workforce Development Center,

- Denver Mayor's Office of Workforce Development,

- University of Colorado Health Sciences Center,

- DAYS Youth Opportunity Center,

- Jefferson County Justice Services,

- Colorado Department of Vocational Rehabilitation,

- Center for Network Development,

- Jefferson County Public Schools,

- Youth Track, and

- Lost and Found.

The initial plan for sustainability was that each workforce development center would assume responsibility for making permanent the workforce specialist it hired with grant funds. Occupational work experiences on grounds were sustained by the funds they acquired through the services they provided customers. The Consortium members would apply jointly for new grant opportunities.

A sustainability plan was scheduled for February 2003, a time when the reality of the recession was on every agency's mind, but the cuts proved to be much deeper than the Consortium members realized at the time. The period from spring 2003 through fall 2003 was trying for the Consortium members.

By then, the workforce development centers were still hoping to hire the workforce specialists; there was still hope that the industries on grounds would become self-sustaining; and there was some hope that the funds from the Department of Justice's "Serious and Violent Offender" grant would be applied to the Y.E.A.R.S. effort. The Department of Vocational Rehabilitation's (DVR) assignment of 2.5 full-time-equivalent

staff remained in place for another two years, with DYC paying 22% of the cost and DVR paying the remainder. The DOL Academic Skills grant award meant that cuts to the Metro Academy would be restored and other educational activities added. There was a sense that the DOJ funds would be used to make sure that the core elements of the sustainability plan would be realized, but the person responsible for the grant had not directly stated this.

Services Offered by Project

Assessments

An array of assessments is performed at the Regional Assessment Center run by the Division of Youth Corrections (DYC), which is the grantee. All the youth spend time there getting an orientation to the system as well as receiving the assessments. Once they had the "Client Manager's Discrete Case Plan," youth were assigned to a facility within the Central Region. After arriving at LMYSC, the Metro Academy administered an educational assessment for placing youth in classes and the Vocational Rehabilitation staff for special employment considerations. The vocational rehabilitation assessment, for example, tried to gauge the effect of mental illness or developmental delays on work readiness and employment prospects. Each workforce center also administered an employability assessment.

Individualized Service Plans

As described earlier, the individual plan, the Client Manager's Discrete Case Plan, is prepared at orientation to the correctional system. The client manager/parole officer, along with the facility treatment staff, assures that the youth is receiving the services and complying with other elements of the plan. When the workforce specialists and the youth prepare the employment portion of the plan, it becomes part of the Client Manager's Discrete Case Plan, that is, the client manager also monitors youths' compliance with this portion of the plan.

Route Counseling (Case Management)

Client managers provide one level of route counseling. They have responsibility to provide aftercare and reentry services. They are also responsible for connecting youth to schools. Client managers provide aftercare, health, mental health, substance abuse treatment/counseling and housing. Clients may disconnect from the program when they are no longer on parole.

Workforce specialists provide another level of route counseling. The YEARS grant provides workforce development services (work readiness, placement, retention and follow-up route counseling). Workforce specialists try to make clear to their clients that the employment plan does not end with the end of parole. This has been difficult to do. One reason the workforce specialists stay in contact with families is so that families know

that the young men can still receive services after parole through the workforce specialists.

Over the duration of the project, workforce specialists have established good relationships with many client managers (There are, for example 18 in Denver, 8 in Adams County.) They contact each other to resolve issues between the plan requirements or to consult about a youth. Client managers grew to appreciate the value of the employment component and the involvement of the workforce specialists.

Toward the end of the project, grant funds were absorbing some client manager/DYC activities. Client managers continued to arrange substance abuse, mental health and housing service arrangements, but the DOL grant funds were paying for them as long as the services affected education or employment activities.

Workforce specialists were well integrated with the LMYSC, but they worked differently from the One-Stop centers. One-Stops wanted clients to come to them while the specialists go to the clients. Arapahoe-Douglas Workforce center appreciated the progress youth were making with the support of the workforce specialist there, and staff began to use similar approaches for adult offenders.

Workforce Development Services

Workforce development services are offered through the Tri-county Workforce Development Center to youth who are residents of Gilpin, Clear Creek, and Jefferson Counties; and through the Adams County, Arapahoe-Douglas Counties, and Denver County workforce development centers. Youth receive work readiness and work experience while they are still at LMYSC. Work experience can be both on-site and within the community of Golden, while they are serving at Lookout Mountain.

The Metro State College Lab School (Metro Academy) provided some work experience modules as part of its regular educational programming. The workforce specialists, along with the Metro Academy transition team members, organized and delivered the STEPS (Striving Toward Employment and Personal Success) workforce component as well. STEPS, initially developed by the Metro Academy and the Center for Network Development, was revised by the workforce specialists based on their experience with placement and retention issues with youth after release. It was offered from 7:45 am to 1:15 pm (5.5 hours) for 5 days to groups of young men who are about to be released. Each workforce specialist reported that it was a much better preparation than the original readiness effort. The five days cover a range of topics:

- Day One – Career assessment,

- Day Two – Dress for success, phone interviews, introduction to job search resources,

- Day Three – Resume, cover letter, reference list development, presentation of the

offense,

- Day Four – Mock interviews,

- Day Five – Tape recorded interviews and critique.

Another pre-release employment preparation is participation in "Be Real Games." A workforce specialist received training to lead youth through the game sequence. Youth volunteer for this activity for 6-8 weeks, 3 days a week for an hour.   Each youth is assigned a character and certain resources; part of the game is tracking the fate of these characters as they are given options about their lives and careers. At the end the youth compare notes about choices made and results experienced. It attempts to give the youth a more realistic sense of choices and consequences, and makes the point that good outcomes do not just happen to those who start out with the most advantages.

Workforce specialists reinforce the STEPS training with youth at the workforce centers. Workforce specialists try to connect with youth within 48 to 72 hours after release. The workforce specialists try to offer the youth something useful at the time, like a bus pass, to establish that they are able to assist the youth with his plans. Getting the youth to attend a session at the workforce center is also an early objective, so youth can learn about the employment resources available there.

Many of the workforce centers assigned a workforce aide to each workforce specialist. These aides research the labor market information in the center's catchment area, and prepare lists of openings that match interests of the youth. Aides also handle requests for transportation assistance or child care that may arise in the process of a job search. Workforce specialists might go with the youth for the early job interviews, but once he is more confident, he goes alone.

The kinds of jobs youth have found include the following:

- Welding apprenticeship,

- Food service,

- Jiffy Lube,

- Auto detailing,

- Night watchman at a cattle company,

- Events workers at the coliseum,

- Landscaping/gardening,

- Construction,

- Printing,

- Window and siding installation, and

- Pipefitting.

After finding a job, workforce specialists contact the youth once a week for at least 90 days or until he seems settled into his work. After that, the contacts are at least once a month. Many youth do not want to be contacted at work, and the workforce specialists honor that. If the youth is struggling with some aspect of his job, however, the workforce specialist may try to arrange a joint meeting with the employer.

Youth with developmental disabilities, severe learning disabilities, mental illness, or other personal concerns that limit the kinds of jobs for which they are qualified are part of the caseload of the staff person from the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. She administers an assessment and assists the youth in finding work that is suitable from the employer network developed by the department. The departmental goal is that its clients find work for at least $10.00 an hour.

YEARS purchased a package of Federal Bonding certificates, but has been unable to use it. Staff offered the certificates to others in the Consortium—just to see them get used.

Reentry Services

The project offers all reentry services, except alternative sentencing (all the youth are offenders). Anti-gang efforts at LMYSC consist primarily in group sessions to learn the effects of violence on communities. Gang members are forbidden to display and insignia or to make gang references. After release, youth returning to the Tri-county area can be assigned to the GRASP curriculum (Gang Reduction and Suppression Program) and those at other workforce centers receive anti-gang counseling as well.

Community Service is part of most youths' sentence, and they are able to apply participation in some activities to their assigned hours while they are at LMYSC. Similarly, many youth make efforts to work off their restitution while incarcerated.

Following their release from the correctional facility, some youth are sent to a step-down facility that is much less structured while others are sent directly to home or another family, if the home family group was not appropriate. Although the youth at step-down facilities were still incarcerated, they receive more freedoms. Sometimes the step-down facility was in the boys' home county, but often it was not. So, the workforce specialist assigned to the youth because of his home county of residence had to drive to another county to check on a client. With the budget crisis, fewer men were sent to step-down facilities, but that meant that more were sent directly back to the milieu where they got into trouble.

DYC arranges other reentry services such as mental health treatment, drug rehabilitation, etc through the client manager/parole officers. Aftercare services and route counseling are offered by DYC as part of the state budget, but YEARS is picking up the expenses for some services as long as it is related to education or employment.

The project assigned released youth to other activities within the community, such as arts organizations and a gay and lesbian support center, to assist them make the transition to the community safely.

Education Services

Almost all the education services are received while the youth are incarcerated at LMYSC. Metropolitan State College operates Metro Academy on the grounds and aims to have each young man finished with high school before release. Few youth are age-eligible to return to a high school after release, and others have been expelled. Few want to continue schooling unless they are close to earning the GED.

While at LMYSC, youth get hands-on experience in silk-screen printing, furniture assembly (discontinued), construction, culinary arts, facilities management and construction/horse trailer repair, grounds keeping, institutional cooking, and webpage design. With the new academic skills grant, YEARS would like to attract an apprenticeship union to come to LMYSC to prepare the men as pre-apprentices so they would be eligible for apprenticeship training after release. There was some interest from the pipe fitters' apprenticeship in teaching the numeracy skills the men would need to begin an apprenticeship in pipe fitting.

Support Services

Many youth are assigned to LMYSC because of the mental health issues they present. One residential unit at the facility is assigned to those with serious mental health issues, and every other residential unit has at least twelve youth with these issues. Part of the client manager's discrete case plan is the requirement for the youth to remain on his medication and participate in other activities to treat his condition. If the youth is limited by his mental health issues, he is assigned to the staff from the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation for workforce development services.

Substance abuse was a condition many of the youth experience. Individual and group intervention sessions were a routine part of everyday activities at LMYSC. The drug testing by the client manager after release continued to demonstrate that many of the youth returned to using alcohol and other drugs upon release. Client managers arranged for treatment services, and YEARS paid for them toward the end of the grant.

Health assessments were part of the orientation process in which every youth participated. Health issues have not been a major difficulty for the young men. YEARS arranged for health insurance after release if the youth was not covered through his family.

Housing became more of an issue when step-down assignments became less common. If there were no appropriate family arrangements, the client manager took responsibility for working with the youth to secure housing.

Successful Service Delivery Strategies

The YEARS project used various strategies for coordinating service delivery: Route counseling by workforce specialists and by client managers and the use of individual service strategies. The route counseling became tighter as the project developed because the workforce specialists and the client managers were more likely to coordinate interventions with the youth between them. Together, as well, they tracked the youth's progress with his individual plan and arranged for services the youth needed.

Although co-location of services was essential for LMYSC services, after release, workforce specialists worked with youth one-on-one. YEARS arranged several Family Nights to develop a greater sense of camaraderie among youth who were trying to change their lives and to engage families in their efforts. These events proved difficult to produce, but toward the end of the project, YEARS held two events that were well received. They were held at the Youth One-Stop center at Denver Area Youth Services (DAYS). They involved a simple supper and the award of vouchers for groceries or gasoline.

The incentive program seemed successful to the YEARS staff. The staff believed that periodically giving youth financial awards or vouchers for progress helped them persist when they were plagued with personal issues or struggling with employment.

YEARS collected data from each workforce center, and a consultant developed a bridge program to aggregate the data for the DOL quarterly report. The aggregated data were not easily used for planning and management. The disaggregated data were not used for these purposes either, nor were data used to build a case for sustainability. This was a lost opportunity.

The Public Management Model

As mentioned earlier, YEARS prepared its implementation plan against the attributes of the Public Management Model (PMM). Staff admitted, however, that no one reflected on these attributes as part of managing the project. Nevertheless, the project demonstrates many of these attributes.

The project developed a **plan** with clear objectives and strategies. The plan has been revised regularly during meetings of the Executive Committee of the Consortium and confirmed through Consortium meetings. It has served its purpose to keep the project focused on its goals.

Preparing the proposal was the first attempt to have the **justice and workforce agencies** work together. The leadership showed foresight in planning to have a facilitator work through the issues of regulations, language and operating styles among the agencies represented in the Consortium. Each evaluation visit uncovered a set of tensions within the group, but it continued to meet regularly and to resolve many, if not all, of the issues that divided them. The budget difficulties raised old issues of responsibility and commitments, but they continued to work together to plan for the future.

The grantee subcontracted all the grant funds to other agencies; yet the grantee remained involved, guiding the development of the project and supporting the initiative of others. The **grantee leadership** was respected by the other agencies.

The project staff repeatedly reported that the political and administrative leadership respected the project. The staff did not work to develop a more public face for its efforts through strategies to develop **community support**.

The project was extremely resourceful in gathering the **partners** of all the agencies whose services the youth needed: education, workforce, justice, vocational rehabilitation, and community-based organizations. Essentially every stakeholder was at the Consortium table. The budget crisis created tensions about the extent to which the agencies would commit to **leveraging resources** through this partnership. None of the workforce centers would say outright that it would hire the workforce specialists after DOL funding ended. Staff from the workforce centers reported that they hoped they could pick up the specialists through attrition by the ending of the grant. The justice agency had reduced budgets in its own office and at LMYSC, but it did have control of the "CARES" funding from the Department of Justice's Serious and Violent Offender Initiative. The project manager had begun to replicate YEARS at other facilities in the Central Region, and stakeholders hoped that some of those funds would fill in the gaps in the YEARS services. The Department of Vocational Rehabilitation funding was secure for several additional years.

The project **shared leadership and information** from the beginning. The grantee devolved the entire project to other agencies; the stakeholders held regular meetings of the Consortium; the executive committee involved multiple organizations. From every perspective except funding, the Consortium members share ownership of the project.

The lack of use of the MIS was reported earlier, but the careful monitoring of the project in other ways demonstrated a commitment to **continuous improvement**. The regular Consortium meetings, core staff meetings, and the opportunities to raise issues during these meetings led to a series of changes that reflect continuous improvement:

- Initiation of STEPS;

- Dropping the Employer Network subcontract,

- Replaced the furniture assembly industry with the horse trailer refurbishing,

- Started work readiness at 90 days before release, instead of the planned 180 days, to improve skill retention,

- Divided general responsibilities for the project among the workforce specialists,

- Worked through the agency relationships on the Consortium, and

- Utilize the computer system used by the workforce development centers on the grounds of LMYSC for career exploration and job searches.

Outcomes

The workforce specialists each reported that the project provided all the services youth needed. They believed that the coordinating mechanisms among the services and between them and the client managers worked well. Each maintained a list of where each youth on his/her caseload was, and there were few that were not engaged with either work or schooling. After some apprehension on the part of workforce center staff, there had been no incidents of any kind involving the youth offenders. Centers' staff believed that these youth were indistinguishable from other youth seeking services.

While no one could claim credit for reducing recidivism, the recidivism rate for YEARS youth was about 12% during project involvement, including those who were detained pending a court hearing for new charges. The grantee reported that the rate declined slowly over a period of years. When asked if they could predict outcomes when they were working with the youth, YEARS staff reported that the young men that were re-incarcerated for a new crime rarely surprised them. They were youth who never committed to the case plan or its activities. Yet they reported that it was hard to know which youth would succeed. Even "Eagles" became disengaged or ran-off after release. The difference was that these youth tended to come back and try again eventually.

The project, facing a budget crisis, still foresaw that the workforce development program at LMYSC would be sustained, and the educational services were assured by the academic services grant for another year or so. The representatives at the workforce centers believed that the staff no longer were fearful of the youth, and had learned ways to help them. With the CARES funding, plans were already underway to use the workforce specialists to train their counterparts at other workforce centers funded through the DOJ grant. Should some of the YEARS workforce centers decide not to hire its workforce specialists, their training and experience would be extended to these other centers. The Vocational Rehabilitation representative on the Consortium reported that the Department is pleased with the YEARS collaboration and believed that it could continue indefinitely.

The main challenges and barriers are clear from the report. The barrier surfaces in different ways, but it is essentially funding. Finding the budget to continue activities

every stakeholder reported as worthwhile will be the most serious task for the remainder of the project.

The challenges remain the multiple concerns of project youth and the development of an evidence basis for documenting project achievements and concerns. The MIS is in place, so the documenting task would not be too difficult. The challenges the youth bring to the project will remain, but the project demonstrated that good case planning, careful monitoring, incentives, and patience with relapses paid off for most youth.

Youth Offender Demonstration Project
Process Evaluation
Final Report Summary for
Des Moines

Project Description

Context

Des Moines, Iowa's capital and largest city, is located in Polk County in the center of the state. The city has a population of over 190,000, the county population is 327,000, and the metropolitan area approaches 400,000. Polk County as a whole has relatively high rates of adults with a high school diploma, low rates of households receiving TANF, a low proportion of 16- to 19-year-olds who are not in school or employed, and a relatively low percentage of families with children below the poverty level.

In contrast, some areas of Des Moines have much higher proportions of the population with high-risk factors (e.g., low-income, low educational levels, high proportion of single-parent families). Specifically, the grantee has identified an area consisting of 12 contiguous census tracks in central, north-central, and eastern Des Moines, including the city's federally designated Enterprise Community, to form the target area for the Youth Offender Demonstration Project.

These census tracts also have a higher proportion of persons who are on parole or probation. The grantee noted in its application that while the minority population consists of approximately 11 percent of the city's residents, minorities comprise a disproportionately large percentage of youth offenders in Polk County. Between 1993 and 1999, over 40 percent of the youth held by Polk County in juvenile detention facilities were members of minority population groups. The application also notes that while gang suppression activities brought some success during the 1990s, recent reports indicate an increase in gang recruitment.

The need for the Youth Offender Demonstration Project was established during a comprehensive planning process undertaken by Polk County in 1999 to identify and address gaps in meeting the needs of youth offenders and youth at risk of court or gang involvement. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention led the planning process, resulting in a report "A Comprehensive Strategy for Polk County Youth: 1999-2019." The community planning team included 75 organizations involved in human and social services, education, law enforcement, juvenile courts, health, housing, government, and the faith community.

One gap identified in the Comprehensive Strategy was the lack of work preparation programs for system-involved youth. As the grant application stated, "Youth offenders and at-risk youth who are no longer in school, or who are not 'attached' to school as a result of truancy issues or residential instability, are missing out on career development activities that are critical in establishing self-sufficiency and reducing recidivism."

In assessing existing services, Comprehensive Strategy team members noted that "provisions are not in place to link youth in graduated sanctions to work preparation programs." The needs of some specific groups of youth offenders and at-risk youth were not being met and some of the available services were not connected to other programs and services in the community.

The local Youth Advisory Council consists of members of the Workforce Investment Board who have a special interest or expertise in youth policy, as well as a number of persons representing agencies serving youth, the local public housing authority, juvenile justice, parents of youth eligible for WIA or served under JTPA, former JTPA Youth Program participants, Job Corps, and the private sector. A primary goal of the Council was to seek to strengthen relationships among partners as service providers, provide input to the project, and work to build networks and capacity to serve the target population beyond clients in the Demonstration. A staff member of the Central Iowa Employment and Training Consortium provides support to the Council.

Project Organization

The Central Iowa Employment and Training Consortium (CIETC) is the grantee for the project, and the principal partners are Iowa Comprehensive Human Services (ICHS) and the Spectrum Resource Program. CIETC is the region's One-Stop Center operator and WIA Title I Adult Program provider; ICHS is the region's WIA Title I Youth Program provider; and Spectrum is a private non-profit organization that provides employment and training services in the construction industry for ex-offenders.

Service delivery is primarily carried out by the two partners as subcontractors. Intake can occur at either location, and from that point, case managers meet with clients to complete an individual service strategy form, entitled Career Awareness and Navigation.

While the initial project seemed to have the two partners as essentially operating mostly distinct programs for younger and older youth, with no clear overall project manager, the grantee did appoint a project manager approximately nine months into the project. Since that time, the project seems to have taken more of a team approach to planning and decision making, relying on active involvement from all three organizations. It is clear that the two partners that are responsible for case management have developed a close working relationship and continually consult each other about the needs of individual clients.

With regard to the project's relationship with the local One-Stop center, some youth have been able to make use of the One-Stop Center's resource room, but the project overall has had very little success with job placements. Project staff believe this is largely due to WIA performance measures whereby One-Stops must do a certain amount of "creaming" of clients whom they believe can gain outcomes the most quickly, which is not the case for the Youth Offender Demonstration population who need more time-intensive support.

Project staff did note that youth are co-enrolled for WIA youth services, which has helped to pay for various support services.

Over time, the project has been gradually building a stronger relationship with the Juvenile Court, which sees ICHS as providing opportunities for positive work experiences which the Court does not have the staffing to do itself. The ICHS case manager has been going with some project youth to the Court to get reduced or suspended sentences based on the condition that the youth continue to participate in the program.

Recruitment and Retention in the Program

In its implementation plan, the project identified a number of community partners with which to work to select youth for the program. Partners include Juvenile Court, Polk County Decategorization (probation and parole), Youth Offender Program, PACE, Urban Dreams, Creative Visions, the One-Stop Center, and the Des Moines School District, as well as other community organizations. In addition, ICHS and Spectrum began to receive direct referrals to their agencies as the program became better known.

The initial project plan called for recruitment of an average of 10 youth per quarter, or 40 per year. Each person was expected to be in the program at least two years and thus the project expected to have served approximately 80 clients by the end of the first two years of the grant. Project staff indicated at the first site visit that it was their intention to start with a small number of clients in order to evaluate an initial group as the clients move through the process, and make refinements before a large number entered the program. Project staff were concerned that they not "oversell" the program at the beginning, and believed that there would be more than sufficient referrals from community partners to meet the goal of 10 clients per quarter. The project retained that steady approach to recruitment throughout the period of the grant, and by the time of the third site visit, the project had enrolled over 90 youth. Recent referrals have come primarily from word of mouth and from probation and parole.

As will be discussed further in the section on services, the project has developed a new approach for working with out-of-school youth that seems to have had a positive effect on retention. Youth who participate in a daily, one-hour life skills and leadership class, and then continue on directly to a two-hour GED preparation class are experiencing high rates of retention and persistence through to achievement of their GED. Youth are paid stipends (minimum wage) for the three hours in the morning and then receive further compensation through a new arrangement with YouthBuild, or in other subsidized work experience, in the afternoon. Project staff report that youth have specifically stated that they would not have stayed in the program without the financial incentives. In addition, the compensation for GED participation is only paid if the instructor certifies the youth is making progress. This approach has been in effect since December 2002, and as of the third site visit, no youth had quit the program and a number had already completed a GED, at a faster rate than had been the experience earlier in the program. For in-school youth, the project has also provided subsidized work experiences from the beginning of

the program, and there has been a very high rate of retention in school for this group as well.

Project staff also noted that for the out-of-school youth, there may be other motivation at work besides the financial incentives. As part of the daily life skills class, there is weekly goal-setting, which had previously been done on a periodic basis through the wraparound process, and that youth seem more motivated when they report weekly progress toward goals, no matter how small, to their peer group and to the two case managers conducting the class. In effect, the case managers act as "team mentors" and in their own view of their role, sometimes as parents as well. (Both case managers are the age of parents – one is a white female, the other a black male – which seems to provide a good balance in their relationships with youth experiencing a broad range of problems and barriers; there is always *someone* to talk to.)

Project Planning and Sustainability

The project planned to use the Demonstration grant to address the findings of the community report, "A Comprehensive Strategy for Polk County Youth: 1999-2019," to develop partnerships that would build capacity and a collaborative approach to service delivery that could be sustained beyond the period of the grant.

In December 2002, project staff participated in a conference call with Technical Assistance at Research and Evaluation Associates, during which future funding was discussed. As a result, a group from the three partners participated in a site visit to West Palm Beach, which had demonstrated a highly-successful approach to providing for the sustainability of their project. Further technical assistance was provided by a consultant who attended the West Palm Beach sessions and conducted a follow-up session in Des Moines in February 2003. The consultant discussed the need for placing more emphasis on systematically sustaining the *method* of service delivery established in the Demonstration through collaborative efforts, as opposed to attempting to sustain the project as a "stand alone program." The project was advised that at this juncture, it would be best for project staff to closely analyze, and if necessary strengthen, its current priorities and activities and then evaluate the outcomes that have been produced through the Demonstration. This analysis would assist the project in enhancing its plan of action for sustaining its current delivery strategy, whether in its entirety or in part.

As a product of this technical assistance initiative, the grantee was to draft a sustainability plan to submit by March to the TA team at Research and Evaluation Associates. An outline plan was received in April but the grantee did not resume work on planning for sustainability until later in the grant period. As of the third site visit in September 2003, the grantee (CIETC) had formed a "Community Coalition" in conjunction with the Director's Council, a non-profit group of inner city provider organizations in Polk County. They have prepared a PowerPoint presentation and working document entitled "Polk County Low Income Workforce Initiative: Building an Employable, Self-Sufficient Community." As stated in the materials, this partnership "will serve as the driving force in the development of a comprehensive service network." They intend to provide

evidence that collaborations such as the Youth Offender Demonstration produce results. They also plan to bring in more organizations to broaden the community commitment to changing the system, and make presentations to funders as a group based on the argument that collaborative approaches are more effective and in fact necessary to meet the needs of the target population.

With regard to continuation of services to youth, CIETC, ICHS and Spectrum are likely to stay together as the core group, and they expect continued partnerships with YouthBuild, the justice system, Polk County Decategorization, Des Moines Area Community College, Human Service Planning Alliance (United Way), and Grubb YMCA. ICHS plans to provide for the continuation of the case manager who has been with the project since inception, enabling some case management for currently-enrolled youth and a few new youth, depending on other sources of funding. They also expect to continue the daily life skills class and wraparound approach, as well as subsidized work experiences if the youth are eligible and there are slots available through other programs such as WIA Youth Services and Promise Jobs (welfare-to-work). It will be more difficult to provide support services that the Demonstration grant has paid for, such as bus passes, books, cost of drivers education classes (required in the state of Iowa to get a license), emergency needs such as rent, and the stipends for the three hours of daily participation in the life skills and GED classes.

At the time of the third site visit, the project staff were beginning to assess the data on youth in order to better support their case for sustainability. They have not really performed internal evaluations and because of problems of gaining agreement on a common database with the One-Stop, the project was slow in putting together a single database system that would have facilitated tracking of youth and their outcomes. At the grantee level, there seems to be a feeling that it takes all their time and energy just to keep the project operating, and thus they haven't developed a plan or process for analysis of the data they have. There does seem to be some recognition by the project director at the grantee level that the example of West Palm Beach, which had an internal evaluator on the project staff from the beginning, could be informative going forward. The Des Moines project has indeed accomplished a lot but needs to better document successes, beyond the anecdotal success stories of selected youth, to demonstrate how the lives of the youth, at least during the grant period, are very different from similar youth in the inner city area of Des Moines.

Services Offered by Project

While the grantee is the Central Iowa Employment and Training Consortium (CIETC), service delivery is primarily carried out by two subcontractors: Iowa Comprehensive Human Services (ICHS) and Spectrum Resource Program. Intake can occur at either location, and from that point, case managers meet with clients to complete an individual service strategy form, entitled Career Awareness and Navigation. This collects comprehensive information about the client, including employment history, education, public assistance, household situation, health care, and status with the justice system, if any.

As the client becomes more fully involved in the program, a "wraparound" process is scheduled, which becomes the central method for ensuring integrated service delivery. The case manager for the client convenes a session where what the project terms "supporters" (representatives of relevant service providers) work with the client to identify strengths and barriers facing the youth. With the active participation of the youth, goals are established whereby both supporters and the youth agree to actions to be taken, such as completing requirements to re-enter school, work on job relationships, open a bank account, obtain child care, etc.

In some cases, the client can take the actions and in other cases assistance from supporters would be needed. The group also identifies leisure activities and community service choices as appropriate. At the next session, progress on the goals is reviewed and additional goals established. The range of services encompasses all types of services envisioned for the Demonstration and can produce a fully integrated service approach for each youth. This approach has been used from the inception of the program.

As noted in an earlier section, the project has added another approach to case management and service delivery for out-of-school youth. In this case, the wraparound process is not needed since the two case managers meet with the youth on a daily basis in the life skills class. Through regular interaction with these youth, case managers can assess individual situations and problems as they occur, and then make referrals for services and treatment interventions as appropriate.

Assessments

Initially, the project lacked access to assessment tools used for mental health or substance abuse, but as of the third site visit, the project had developed a partnership with Polk County Primary Health Care. This enables the case manager to make a referral for assessment based on the individual service strategy and information gained through interaction with the youth over time. The staff looked at academic/career assessment software based on recommendations from the technical assistance team, but was not able to purchase the software due to lack of resources. Drug tests are not required, although the staff may suggest testing if they are concerned about youth behavior.

Route Counseling (Case Management)

Iowa Comprehensive Human Services (ICHS) and Spectrum Resource Program provide route counseling for project youth. As of the third site visit, case managers had a caseload of approximately 25 youth each, though not all of the youth are "active" to the same degree.

Based on the information collected through the Individual Service Strategy (ISS) form, a case manager will contact service providers to confirm they can provide services for each youth, and often accompanies the youth to the provider. Youth offenders and youth at-risk of court involvement have access to the same range of services.

The project appears to have sufficient access to services within the community to meet the needs of the youth. In part, this has been possible because the project staff has purposely added youth at the rate of about 10-15 per quarter, thus not overburdening service providers with requests. Services are well integrated due to the project's wraparound approach, along with the new approach to working with out-of-school youth on a daily basis.

Workforce Development Services

Project staff at ICHS and Spectrum provide a foundation for work readiness through the daily life skills and leadership class for out-of-school youth. This is complemented by subsidized afternoon work experiences with Youthbuild and other organizations, which are intended to combine work experience with a learning component. The project has been able to get some Workforce Investment Act (WIA)-supported training but not as much as they would have liked. A few youth have recently enrolled in degree programs at Des Moines Area Community College.

Project staff also assist youth in getting short-term, entry-level unsubsidized jobs, which youth have indicated are needed for them to be able to continue in the program. As of the third site visit, a few youth were being placed in full-time employment in construction based on their work experiences at Spectrum and YouthBuild. The project has encountered difficulties in developing an employer network beyond the construction field, and the One-Stop does not have a network of employers who hire youth offenders. Case managers do periodic follow-up with youth who are employed, but there is not a structured system for retention.

Reentry Services

By the time of the third site visit, the project had made progress in building a partnership with the Juvenile Court, and case managers go with youth to the Court as needed to demonstrate that the youth is meeting the conditions of probation. Information is collected on requirements of probation or parole during the intake process. As part of the daily life skills class, youth indicate the goals they need to meet to satisfy conditions of probation or parole; e.g., get a job to pay restitution. These goals then become part of the regular goal-setting and weekly review process.

The cohort of out-of-school youth have recently participated in some community service that is not court-ordered but voluntary, including building and installing benches at a local senior home facility and painting the GED classroom at the YMCA. While the project does not necessarily have an organized anti-gang strategy, project staff believe that the current approach for working with out-of-school youth (a full day of activities: life skills class, GED class, afternoon work experience) may be the best "anti-gang" strategy because it does occupy the full day and thus youth have less time to interact with neighborhood friends who are in gangs.

Other Support Services

Out-of-school youth attend GED classes on a daily basis until the GED is completed, receiving a minimum-wage stipend for attendance and progress. In-school youth had an opportunity for one-on-one tutoring during a summer program sponsored by ICHS, but there is no longer funding for this program.

Through its recent partnership with Polk County Primary Health Care, the project has been able to arrange for assessments for substance abuse and mental health, and then that agency makes referrals to community services providers for actual treatment as needed in each case. PCPHC also provides direct services for health care, which had not been available on a regular basis earlier in the project's history. Housing has continued to be a major challenge for youth enrolled in the program. Youth under age 18 cannot obtain housing on their own under Iowa law, but in the view of case managers, many should not be living at home because the family environment is not positive or supportive. The local YMCA no longer accepts youth offenders in its residential facility.

How Workforce and Reentry Services Mesh

While the wraparound process was originally the central focus for the coordination of services, this is only used "as needed" for some youth. For most (older) youth, the daily life skills class provides an opportunity to surface a youth's needs, issues, and barriers, and then the case manager in effect negotiates services with each provider as appropriate for that youth. For younger youth, the primary goal is to keep them in school and productively occupied during their after-school time, generally through subsidized work experience.

Public Management Model

Organizational Attributes

While the project did not consciously follow the organizational attributes that were presented at the Post-Award Conference in October 2001, they do exemplify some organizational attributes that seem to contribute to project success. Of particular note is the project plan to recruit youth at a steady rate over the period of the grant, rather than a major effort at the beginning. This enabled the project staff to implement the program on a gradual basis, and then make changes and improvements as they went along. By the time of the third site visit, the project was right on schedule for the number of youth they had planned to enroll by the end of the grant. This approach had the added advantage of permitting case managers to shift attention to new youth as earlier youth completed their individual service plans.

Another attribute is evident in terms of shared leadership and information, in this case, at the case manager level. Though the project originally seemed to have two relatively

separate entities that were each carrying out a particular mission for younger and older youth, these distinctions have blurred over time. Now, senior staff at both subcontractors work together throughout the process, regardless of the age or interests of the youth. While the intent of this organizational attribute may have been directed at the management level of participating organizations, a team approach among front-line staff may be as important in terms of meeting the immediate needs of the youth being served. This goes back to a theme that has often been expressed in programs working with youth, and that is the importance of a caring adult in a young person's life – in this case, two caring adults who work with out-of-school youth on a daily basis during the life skills class. While this approach is very labor-intensive, it seems to be highly effective in fostering youth's persistence in the program. The team approach may also help facilitate the development of new strategies by sharing information about what works and what doesn't work when dealing with the range of challenges and barriers facing these youth.

Despite this evidence of positive attributes, especially with the case managers, the organizational attribute of grantee involvement has been a question throughout the period of the grant. After the initial site visit report noted that there were two subcontractors leading the project but no overall project director, the grantee appointed a project director. However, the grantee never really assumed responsibility for actively providing direction for the project. The staff of the two partners really provided leadership, direction, and day-to-day management, but lacked authority to push the project forward. This was especially evident when despite intensive technical assistance on sustainability in early 2003, by the time of the third site visit in September 2003, the grantee was just starting to bring together a broader group of partners to develop a plan for sustainability. This has left the project in a tenuous situation at the end of the Demonstration grant, and could potentially have been a factor in affecting the grantee's applications for other funds.

Grantee involvement also affects the ability of a project to leverage resources through partnership and collaboration. While staff at ICHS and Spectrum were able to gradually develop a network of staff at other service providers over the course of the grant, the grantee only lately has seemed to recognize the importance of gaining the support of directors of community-based organizations and other senior administrators at key agencies. These partnerships, with commitments at the top, take months if not years to develop. Front-line staff at the two subcontractors were able to negotiate services for individual youth, but didn't have the clout to get organizations to make commitments to provide services on a continuing basis. To some extent, this may reflect a typical history in communities where various agencies working with youth see themselves more as competitors than partners. The grantee has recognized the degree of the challenge involved in changing the culture and increasing the level of trust in order to change the system to better serve a traditionally hard-to-serve youth population. But it will take a substantial commitment from CIETC and the WIB to bring about systemic change. Fortunately, the grantee has gained enough experience through the Demonstration grant to be able to present a case to the community that collaboration, where youth are treated in a more holistic way, can really make a difference in youths' lives.

Workforce Development Services and Reentry Services

By the end of the grant period, the project has been largely able to provide a full array of services to the target population. While developing partnerships with some community agencies has been a slow process, the addition of Polk County Primary Health Care has helped to close some gaps in service.

By the time of the third site visit, it was too early to assess the full extent of the workforce development services being received. Even though the project began enrolling youth in the fourth quarter of 2001, many of the youth were either in school or in GED preparation programs. The project also placed considerable emphasis on subsidized work experiences as a foundation prior to further job training or placement in full-time employment. And because the project intentionally enrolled a relatively small number of youth each quarter, there has not been enough time for many of the youth to complete their individual service plans through to training and employment. Consequently, this aspect of workforce development cannot be assessed at this stage in the grant.

Data Collection and Analysis

The project had originally intended to take advantage of a comprehensive WIA database at the One-Stop to record services and monitor progress of the youth. However, the grantee was never able to resolve internal problems with maintaining confidentiality. Essentially, each subcontractor started out maintaining records on the youth they had enrolled, and then ICHS accumulated the data to provide for the DOL quarterly reports. As a result, the project never seemed to recover to develop a strong database system with thorough information on youth that could be accessed in an efficient manner.

There is also little evidence that CIETC as the grantee has been involved in the analysis of data to document the achievements of the project and its youth. This may have contributed to difficulties in winning grants, since evidence of success was largely anecdotal, rather than showing analysis that supported the contention that youth were doing substantially better on several key outcome measures than similar youth in similar personal and family circumstances would have been expected to achieve.

Continuous Improvement Loop

A key example of continuous improvement is the willingness of the staff to conduct internal self-assessments of their approach to service delivery and case management. Front-line staff regularly obtains feedback from youth about what it would take to keep youth interested in obtaining a GED. When youth consistently expressed a need for at least some income, the monetary incentive for participation in the life skills and GED classes was instituted. In addition, through internal discussions, staff recognized that the population they were serving needed a more intensive and structured approach – essentially a full day of activities, for five days a week until a GED is completed – and even beyond. In effect, this was what might be termed a "mid-course" correction for their approach with out-of-school youth.

In a broader sense, it is not clear that the grantee has made continuous improvement and self-assessment a regular part of its management strategy. The project managers indicate that they use their team meetings as a central mechanism for continuous improvement, whereby the three partners bring issues to the table for discussion and decision-making. The project also works with its Youth Advisory Council by presenting progress reports and getting feedback and suggestions for future actions. On the other hand, at the time of the second site visit, managers indicated that they had not found the Public Management Model to be useful in project management because they spend so much time and effort on day-to-day operations that they were not been able to develop a strategy for adapting the PMM attributes into their routine practices.

Outcomes

Individual/Client Level

At the time of the third site visit, project staff was still compiling some information on outcomes beyond that provided in the quarterly reports. There had been a total of 94 youth enrolled up to that point, and the project had a very good persistence rate for younger youth to stay in school and older youth to complete a GED. In fact, starting with the cohort enrolling in the fourth quarter of 2002, when the project instituted the daily life skills and GED classes, essentially all of the 23 out-of-school youth have persisted in the GED classes. Of that number, 11 have already received a GED.

Given that the project has placed so much emphasis on keeping youth in school or working toward a GED, it is too early to assess the extent to which these youth will continue on to training and employment. The two case managers believe that youth in the early stages of their participation in the program still have enough risk factors that full-time employment is not often feasible. Instead, the youth first need to have an adequate amount of work experience, subsidized or otherwise, to achieve a level of "employability" to increase the likelihood of employment that would persist. The life skills class and the YouthBuild-type experiences provide an opportunity for project staff to continually reinforce positive behaviors needed to be successful employees later on.

In terms of outcomes related to the justice system, project staff feel that the potential for delinquent behaviors has been significantly reduced due to the full-day schedule for out-of-school youth and the daily support of the case managers and their peers in the program. While almost 65% of enrolled youth had prior involvement with the justice system, a very small proportion have been involved in the justice system since their enrollment in the program.

Project/System Level

Project staff believes that a major accomplishment of the project has been the creation of new partnerships, including the Juvenile Court, Polk County Decategorization, Polk County Primary Health Care, YouthBuild, Des Moines Area Community College, and the

Grubb YMCA. All of these relationships are expected to continue after the end of the grant period. In the view of the evaluator, the grant has also enabled staff at ICHS and Spectrum to have the time to identify service providers and other key organizations and work with their counterparts in those organizations to ensure that youths' needs can be met.

The project director at the grantee also noted that the grant has provided critical experience in working with this youth population that will be valuable in developing the plans for the "community coalition" consisting of a range of community partners. In the working paper for the coalition, they specifically cite continuation of the efforts of the Youth Offender Project with plans to expand the approach to adults. As stated in the paper, "The focus of the Coalition will be to garner resources for the creation of a virtual network of services among Community Coalition agencies and emphasize the concept of developing self-sufficiency at a community, neighborhood, family and individual level." The Demonstration grant appears to have provided the foundation for bringing together a variety of organizations in a collaborative approach to service delivery in a way that would have been unlikely without the experience of the project. Planners for the coalition have identified specific service providers in the core areas of housing, employment, supportive social services, supportive "concrete" services (child care, clothing, food, and transportation), and continuing education services.

Barriers and Challenges

While the three partners have been able to rely on each other to meet many of the needs of their clients, for much of the period of the grant it had been a challenge to bring in stakeholders from other systems, including juvenile justice and health care. This was evident when they tried to bring in representatives from various community agencies to the wraparound process and not every relevant service provider would be represented. It also appears there may not always be enough "buy-in" from service providers to meet the needs of clients on a timely basis and within the budget constraints of the project. The recruitment of Polk County Primary Health Care as a service provider in the later stages of the grant indicates that progress is being made to solidify some of the crucial relationships with service providers.

The project also faces challenges in the local economy that have been common among many communities during the last year or so of the grant period. Employers have been in a "buyers" market and can afford to hire adults with substantial work experience and without a record of involvement in the justice system. In fact, the project has experienced significant difficulties in placing youth in jobs in the construction industry, which is the strong suit of Spectrum. Throughout the period of the grant, it has been difficult to build a network of employers who are willing to look at this youth population. In addition, there does not seem to be sufficient local advocacy for improving opportunities for youth employment compared to an interest in adult workers and displaced workers. It appears that the One-Stop system itself has not gotten buy-in from employers in general, so this potential resource is even less likely to be able to affect youth employment.

The project continues to face challenges in developing collaborations and partnerships that would bring resources sufficient to sustain the project over the long term. As discussed previously, the grantee has been slow to develop and implement a plan for sustainability that would draw on a broad group of key stakeholders. If the Community Coalition does succeed in bringing together those stakeholders around the concept of a comprehensive service system, then the project could point to the grant as a crucial foundation in the effort to build a system that could be sustained and further expanded.

As part of the process of building a case for sustainability, the project seems to be still in the relatively early stages of developing an integrated, comprehensive data management system. While they are able to collect and maintain the DOL data elements, only recently have they begun to add other types of data to be tracked that would provide more information on the accomplishments of the project in terms of youths' outcomes.

Youth Offender Demonstration Project
Process Evaluation
Final Report Summary for
Erie, PA

Project Description

Context

Erie's Category III Youth Offender Demonstration Project, called BroadReach, targets youth ages 14 to 24 who are already involved in the juvenile justice system or who are at risk of becoming involved in the system. The primary target area for the project is Erie County with a population just under 280,000.

Erie County and the city of Erie are in an economic transition. Many factory jobs have been eliminated as large plants have closed. Much of the inner city contains the empty buildings where workers and jobs used to be. Like other states, there have been dramatic cuts in state funds for health, education, and other human services. While federal funds have replaced reduced state funds in the latest budget cycle, the long-term availability of adequate resources is questionable.

In addition to the poor economic condition, other conditions make the need for services for these youth imperative.

Poverty: Thirty percent (30%) of Erie city's public school students live in poverty; 67 % qualify for free or reduced lunches; and 25% live in Public Housing Authority projects. Erie ranks 12th on the list of U.S. cities with the highest percentage of citizens in poverty. The average per capita annual income of $23,622 trails both the state and national averages.

Families: Over half of the students in the Erie City schools live with just one parent; with guardians; with a step-parent; with near relatives; or in foster care. While most youth are Caucasian or African American, English as a Second Language has grown from 100 students in 1990 to over 500 students by 2000 due to a significant increase in Balkan family immigration.

High Youth Population: Erie has the highest percentage of population under age 20 for any urban area in Pennsylvania. A research study cited job training for these young people as one of the most critical challenges facing the local economy.

Educational Level: Eighty percent (80%) of all Northwest Pennsylvania regional employers now require technical training beyond a high school diploma or general equivalency degree (GED). However, 26% of Erie adults have not completed their high school education and only 13% have college or graduate degrees. Student performance as measured by state tests is in the bottom quartile, and takeover of the school district by the State is being considered.

Juvenile Crime: No significant progress has been made in the last decade concerning the total number of juvenile arrests per annum, which stands at between 3,000 and 3,500 per year. The violent juvenile arrest rate is 19% higher than the average Pennsylvania urban third class county rate.

The number of youth involved in violent crime has increased over the past 10 years. These increases include: 11-12 year olds (25%), 13-14 year olds (24%), 15 year olds (87%), and 16 year olds (24%). Juveniles under the age of 16 were responsible for 58% of weapons arrests.   They were also involved in over 22% of all drug abuse arrests.

Teen Pregnancy: Erie County's birth rate for teens, ages 15 to 19, consistently falls between the national rate and that for the State of Pennsylvania. Although the local teen pregnancy rates are not exceedingly high, single teens in Erie County are more likely to have their babies than teenagers who live elsewhere. This may be due to teens having fewer abortions and receiving better prenatal care which results in fewer fetal demises. The birth rates of teens of different races and ethnicities vary considerably. The birth rate for Blacks is much higher than that for Whites, but the rates for Blacks, unlike that for Whites, has declined over 29% from 1989 to 1998.

The needs of youth in Erie County are numerous. The project saw an inter-agency collaborative effort to train at-risk and youth involved in the criminal system and to help them find employment as one promising solution to many of these problems.

Project Organization

The BroadReach program was built upon two existing programs that had close ties to the community's agencies and programs for youth. Strong interagency agreements and alliances were in effect when the program was initiated. The primary services of the BroadReach project are provided by the Perseus House, the grantee, and by The Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies through a subcontract. Perseus House is a non-profit organization that provides services for youth who are at-risk for becoming or already involved in the juvenile justice system. It provides prevention and rescue services through its own organization and through partnerships with agencies such as the Erie City School District, the Erie County Office of Children and Youth Services, the Erie County Juvenile Probation Department, the Erie Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation; and a local children's center. For the BroadReach project, Perseus House provides administration of the overall project and route counseling.

The Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies is a non-profit organization that provides maritime experiences to teach citizenship, discipline and teamwork, self-esteem and confidence, and craftsmanship. The center works with neighboring school districts, the Erie Catholic Diocese, all of the juvenile placement facilities in Erie County, Scout groups, and others. For BroadReach, the Bayfront Center provides an 8-week program on Saturdays designed to prepare youth for work and to develop basic workplace skills.

Participating youth are introduced to Career Link, the area's One-Stop center and are registered there and in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program for youth. The latter is important because it provides stipends for attendance at the Bayfront Center and for work experiences after the eight-week program for those youth who are too young or insufficiently trained to obtain a regular job in the community.

Other services, specified in each youth's Individual Service Strategy (ISS), are provided by appropriate community agencies, e.g., mental health, health, substance abuse, etc.

Recruitment and Retention in the Program

The initial plan for the BroadReach program was to recruit youth from Perseus House programs. These included residential programs for court-ordered youth, community based programs for court-ordered youth, and the Erie City School's Alternative Education program housed at Perseus House. During the first year, the project experienced difficulty in retaining youth from these programs on a purely voluntary basis.

A second plan was developed and implemented in the second year that increased the number of organizations from which referrals were sought. Also, arrangements were made with the WIB to pay youth $3.25 per hour for participation in the eight-week Bayfront program. These two strategies helped the project to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of youth and to expand the program to more of the community's youth.

Referring agencies for the second and third years included:

- Perseus House Chronic Incorrigibility Resources: A Community Linked for Effectiveness (C.I.R.C.L.E.),

- Perseus House Florence Crittenton Female Maternity Facility,

- Perseus House Collaborative Intensive Community Treatment Program,

- Perseus House Boys Residential Education Program,

- Erie School District Alternative Education program (housed at Perseus House),

- Area school districts,

- Erie County Family Services,

- Stairways Behavioral Health,

- Erie County Wrap Around Services,

- Greater Erie Community Action Council (GECAC) [a substance abuse program],

- Erie County Case Management Support Services,

- Erie County Juvenile Probation Department

The only restrictions to enrollment were for girls who were or became pregnant. The chemicals used in boat building at the Bayfront Center were considered a risk for their pregnancy, and they were not allowed to participate.

As of June 30, 2003, the project had recruited 318 youth: 203 were at-risk and 115 were youth offenders. Of these 86 at-risk youth and 58 youth offenders were enrolled into the BroadReach program. Two-thirds of the enrolled youth were male and most of the youth (114) were still in high school.

The project initially hoped to select 20 youth for each of its four session or 160 total per year. This was determined to be an excessive number (80) for the two Aftercare Coordinators. A decision was made to try to keep the number of enrolled youth to less than 15 per eight-week session that would provide the Coordinators with 60 youth per year to oversee individually-based services. Since the project enrolled 144 youth, the actuality was somewhere in between.

Project Planning and Sustainability

Changes are planned for the program when the DOL grant funding is over, a number of which are already underway. Both Perseus House and the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies found that the short-term program at the Bayfront Center was insufficient for the needs of these youth. As a result, the eight-week program for workforce preparation at the Bayfront Center will be discontinued at the end of the DOL grant funding. However, the major design for workforce activities developed by the project will continue and expand at Perseus House.

During its experience with the BroadReach project, Perseus House created a new emphasis on workforce preparation, placement and retention within its programming for youth. Three new full-time Perseus House staff, one of the Aftercare Coordinators, the Project Director of the BroadReach grant, and a new workforce administrator recruited from the One-Stop, will work with Perseus House youth on workforce placement and retention as will a teacher at the new charter school. This will provide workforce services and activities for youth in residential treatment, community treatment, and alternative education as well as in a new "Earn-N-Learn" program and Perseus House's new charter school.

The Workforce Essential Skills program used in the BroadReach project will become part of the curriculum of all Perseus House programs, i.e., the residential, community-based, alternative education, and charter school programs. In addition, Perseus House received a supplemental DOL grant to place academic and keyboard skills software at all of its sites.

This effort is designed to meet the educational needs of youth that have, to date, limited their ability to find employment.

A new six-week summer work experience program, named "Earn and Learn," has been designed by Perseus House, the Erie City School District, the Erie County Office of Children and Youth, the Erie County Juvenile Probation Department, and the Workforce Investment Board (WIB). Based on what was learned from the BroadReach project, the program was initiated in July of 2003. Fifty-seven youth participated in a three-level, paid, supervised work experience and education program paid for and staffed by the participating partners. Seventeen staff representing four agencies staffed the program. Youth earned over $30,000 as "employees" in 14 various employer-sponsored sites spread throughout Erie County. The court-involved youth who owed restitution were able to pay over $11,000 back to their victims. The Erie School District afforded all program enrollees the opportunity to earn transferable academic school credits in conjunction with the workplace skill development learned on the worksite. Certified teachers awarded 30 school credits to 17 youth in 12 different academic disciplines. Expansion to a year-long work experience is anticipated.

New partnerships, created with the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies and the local WIB, will continue. It is anticipated that youth in Perseus House residential programs will continue to participate in programs at the Bayfront Center. The WIB will continue to be an important partner as Perseus House strengthens its workforce preparation and placement activities for the youth its serves. The WIB is already a partner with Perseus House and other community organizations for youth in the new "Earn-N-Learn" program.

The BroadReach experience and the strategic plans of Perseus House led to the successful creation of the Perseus House Charter School of Excellence. This school, which opened in September of 2003, seeks to enhance the academic success of low performing youth in 6th through 12th grades with the ultimate goal of developing educational and workforce competencies and achieving a high school diploma.

Although it will not continue to serve as a component of the city's workforce services for youth involved in the juvenile justice system directly, the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies will continue to serve youth at risk and those with court-ordered placements with workforce and life preparation services using maritime activities. The Center has received state funding for a new, permanent building. This will provide more room and more appropriate facilities for its activities. Like Perseus House, the Bayfront Center is working to develop a charter school that will provide an experiential learning program for needy youth.

There were a number of accomplishments of the program, many of which both Perseus House and the Bayfront Center will be able to use in future program building efforts. They include:

1. More youth were served than would have been served without the project.

2. There were important outcomes for youth, most of whom were ages 14-17. Ninety-percent of the school aged youth (114 of the 144) stayed in or returned to school. Forty-seven youth were employed. Only five youth were convicted of a crime, three of which were incarcerated.

3. The staff had the opportunity to network with other professionals across   the country. This provided fresh new looks at what was being done locally and modifications for improvement in existing services and activities.

4. The project provided funds for a new collaboration between the Perseus House and the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies. Future collaborations are envisioned as a result.

5. The BroadReach project gave credibility in the community and state to the Perseus House and the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies.

6. The project gave the participating organizations a large entry into the WIA and its resources. It also opened the eyes of the local W.I. B. and staff as to what the Perseus House and Bayfront Center were doing.

7. This new partnership with the WIA and the BroadReach activities have led both the Perseus House and the Bayfront Center into new directions in workforce preparation for needy youth.

8. The BroadReach project sparked a new program called "Earn-N-Learn."

Services Offered by Project

BroadReach services, which are designed to assist youth in developing workforce skills and in acquiring jobs, are provided through an eight-week program at The Bayfront Center and a year-long individualized aftercare program managed by two route counselors at the Perseus House. The eight-week maritime program is supplemented by a formal workforce development education curriculum, "Workplace Essential Skills Program." The aftercare services are based on a comprehensive, individualized needs assessment and the core elements in the WIA Youth Program. All youth are enrolled in CareerLink, the local One-Stop center, and participate in their programs and services as appropriate. Leadership training is provided through Family First, a local sports facility.

The first year of project operation revealed that most of the youth were under the age of 18. For this reason, the majority of project activities focused on support for youth remaining in school (with 90% of the youth doing so) and workforce exploration and skill development. Few youth were in jobs because few were 18 and older and because of the

economic downturn. Shadowing and work stipends were added to provide meaningful work-related experiences for the younger youth. Also, "Learning for Life," a career exploration program sponsored by the French Creek Council of the Boy Scouts of America was added during the second year of the project for youth ages 14-15. Budget cuts in the Boy Scouts organization, however, resulted in cancellation of the program in the third year.

Assessments

Youth receive assessments for medical, drug and alcohol treatment and education needs. They are also assessed for employment and criminal histories, family background, appearance, behavior, and speech difficulties.

Route Counseling (Case Management)

Individualized service strategies are planned and coordinated by Perseus House route counselors, who are called "aftercare coordinators." Services such as education, health, transportation, substance abuse, etc. that are provided to clients vary according to the individual needs of the youth. These services are not provided directly by the project, but are provided by appropriate community agencies. Workforce services also vary, primarily by the age of the youth. Younger youth (ages 14-15) participate in career exploration activities while older youth participate in activities designed to lead to employment.

Family Sports Park, a faith-based sports center, offers recreation through its scholarship program for needy youth.

Workforce Development Services

Work readiness, job placement, job retention, academic education and mentoring are offered to project youth. Group services related to workforce and education for all youth participating in the program are subcontracted to the Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies. Workforce development education at the Bayfront Center is provided under one roof.

A formal workforce development education curriculum, "Workforce Essential Skills" from the Public Broadcasting System (PBS), was added to the Bayfront Center's maritime and environmental experiences in the second year of project operation. This program provides instruction via video and accompanying workbooks for developing math, reading, communication and employment skills. It was added to provide needed academic skills and to enhance the workforce readiness skills of the youth. Additional workforce services are provided through collaborative agreements with CareerLink, and the Youth Services Division of the local WIB.

CareerLink, which is a project partner, provides workforce services. For example, youth are initially taken to CareerLink offices where they are trained to use the One-Stop center's resources. After the initial visit, youth reach CareerLink in variety of ways. As

an example, the Therapeutic Support Staff (TSS) of Perseus House may transport them to the center.

The individual service strategies prepared for participants are provided to CareerLink for its reporting requirements (all strategies are linked to WIA Youth Services Elements). CareerLink also provides funds to the project for stipends for attending the workforce preparedness program at the Bayfront Center and for work experiences following the Bayfront experience.

Reentry Services

Reentry services are not part of the project per se. Perseus House, which has multiple ongoing contracts with agencies in Erie County involved with residential treatment centers, alternative high schools, and delinquency prevention programs, provides these services for the youth enrolled in its programs. Other youth receive these services through their schools or other community agencies. Youth in the BroadReach project receive a year of individualized services designed to meet their workforce needs. If there are overlaps, these may be coordinated with their reentry services. If there is not overlap, the services are provided through the project directly or through referrals.

Public Management Model

Organizational Attributes

The greatest strength of this project is the existing infrastructure in Erie for services to youth in trouble or at risk of becoming so. Several local agency leaders have, over the years, actively sought to collaborate with others and combine resources to provide integrated education, mental health, substance abuse and other health and human services for the area's youth. Among these leaders is Mark Amendola, the Director of Perseus House who, in less than a decade, increased its budget from $800,000 to $9 million per year and forged working collaborations and partnerships with all of the community agencies serving youth involved in the juvenile justice or other court related systems. The BroadReach project brought organizations interested in workforce preparation for youth into the partnerships and created an interest in this area among the existing organizations providing services for these youth. The result of the BroadReach experience is the new "Earn-N-Learn" program in which five community agencies including Perseus House, juvenile justice, mental health, the school district, and the WIB are combining staff, facilities, and/or funds to provide academic and workforce experiences for these youth.

The initial conditions in Erie County and the continued efforts through the BroadReach project exemplified most of the organizational attributes. Partnerships with juvenile justice and mental health care systems were previously established. Resources from a number of community organizations were leveraged to create new programs. Community support increased. Information and leadership were shared to create new collaborative initiatives.

The BroadReach project was based on a well-conceived plan by two organizations with clear, focused, and particularly visionary missions for the community's youth. Both organizations had plans for future growth and expansion that strengthened the sustainability of the BroadReach project. Both were directly involved in direct services to the youth and were therefore continuously involved with and supportive of the project.

An additional organizational quality that enhanced the project was the quality and enthusiasm of the staff that designed the program and provided its services. The Perseus House administration reflected considerable experience in community programs for these youth. The effectiveness of the Executive Director has already been described. The Associate Executive Director was the former head of the local juvenile justice organization. The BroadReach Director for the last two years of the project had been the vocational director for another of the community's residential programs for youth. The organization had a Director of Development who, in addition to other fund raising activities, wrote grants and summary reports. The Route Counselors were the weakest in the organization because the persons in the positions changed quite often. However, those persons chosen to be route counselors were experienced in working with youth and enthusiastic about providing quality services for them. The staff of the Bayfront Center had been providing similar programs for youth in the community. They were also experienced coaches and seamen. The third new workforce staff member was the former head of the area's One-Stop. The expertise and experience of most of the staff, their commitment to youth, and their connections in the community were as important an organizational attribute as those specified in the model.

Workforce Development Services and Reentry Services

As described in the services section of this report, the BroadReach project provides a full array of services directed at and supporting workforce preparedness either directly or through referrals to appropriate community agencies. Because the relationships among agencies are collaborative, it has been relatively easy to ensure that youth get the individualized services they need.

Data Collection and Analysis

Route Counselors documented the specific services provided to each of the youth who participated in the project. One of the Route Counselors then summarized the information needed for required reports and provided the data to the Project Director or Perseus House Director of Development as needed. The project did not have a formal system for data collection and analysis related to formative and summative evaluation except as the data required by DOL for reports. While this was an area that could have been improved, the continuous improvement strategies at Perseus House and the small committed team at the Bayfront Center kept staff informed of project activities and successes and problems.

Continuous Improvement Loop

The management and operation of Perseus House is grounded in the principles of Total Quality Management (TQM). The organization has Quality Improvement Teams that meet every two weeks to discuss progress. They conduct what is called a S.W.O.T. analysis to understand the overall program's organizational STRENGTHS and WEAKNESSES (areas needing improvement), the OPPORTUNITIES that exist, and what is most THREATENING to accomplishing the opportunities. Twice a year the staff participate in strategic planning.

The project used the TA offered through their participation in the project and found it to be exceptional. The staff stated that the TA was something they had not had available to them in any of the other programs or projects in which they have or are currently participating.

The project identified a number of needs and addressed them during the three years of its operation. Examination of the ages of the youth led to the development of activities such as job awareness and job shadowing for the large number of youth in the program who were below the age of active employment and a focus of route counseling on keeping these youth in school. Finding that there was insufficient assistance for youth in becoming prepared for work led to: (a) the inclusion of the Workplace Essential Skills curriculum in the BroadReach program and all of the Perseus House programs, (b) the hiring of an experienced vocational educator as the full-time project director for BroadReach and as the new, permanent vocational programs operations administrator for Perseus House, and (c) the successful pursuit of a DOL supplemental grant to address the academic inadequacies of many of the youth in the program.

Outcomes

Individual/Client Level

At the end of the third year, 114 of the 144 youth were in high school, one was in college, five were in a GED preparation program, seven were in other education or job preparation programs, one enlisted in the military, and nine were out of school. Forty-seven of the youth were employed with 20 of those in subsidized employment situations. Five youth were convicted of a crime and three of those were incarcerated.

As mentioned previously, most of the youth who participated in the program were ages 14-17. For these youth, staying in school is the outcome that can best benefit them in the world of work in the future. That over 90% of them were in school speaks well for the project and it efforts. A third of the youth were employed. While this may appear to be a low percentage, it is in fact a good one for a program where most of the youth were in school. Of more concern is that these jobs were in entry-level positions in service industries, e.g., fast food establishments and grocery stores. None were in manufacturing plants or other organizations or businesses where youth could obtain higher wages. This is in part due to the age of the youth and their lack of job readiness or skills. It is also due to the loss of manufacturing jobs in the area and a rather bleak economic situation.

Project/System Level

The most dramatic change as a result of this project has been the introduction and expansion of workforce preparedness training and experiences to Perseus House. Prior to the BroadReach project there were no formal structures addressing workforce preparedness other than those found in standard high school curricula. As a result of BroadReach, all youth in Perseus House programs including residential programs, community programs, an alternative school and a charter school will participate in the Workforce Essential Skills program, will use software for academic preparation if they need it, and will have actual work experience through the Earn-N-Learn program.

A second major outcome of the project has been the establishment of a strong relationship with the WIB The WIB became a partner in the BroadReach project in its second year when it paid stipends for students who completed the eight-week program at the Bayfront Center. The WIB is a full participating partner in the new Earn-N-Learn program. The project introduced Perseus House and The Bayfront Center staff to the resources of the WIB It also introduced the WIB to the resources and programs at the project sites.

The BroadReach project gave a new focus to collaborative efforts for youth associated with juvenile justice or those at risk of becoming involved with the system. While Perseus House, the juvenile justice department, the local school district, and the local mental health organization had been working collaboratively on programs, this project brought them together, with the WIB as a new partner, to focus on the job futures of these youth. They have collaborated on the creation of the Earn-N-Learn program and the new Perseus House charter school.

Barriers and Challenges

The biggest barrier to the successful employment of these youth will be the economic situation in the city, county, state, and nation. While resources have remained relatively stable, there have been major cuts in state funding for human services. It is probable that the effect of these cuts will reach communities in the near future. Simultaneously, there has been a continuing loss of jobs in the manufacturing sector due to cut backs and plant closings. Unemployment is high. These contextual factors have the real possibility of reducing workforce preparedness services for youth who desperately need these services and limiting the number of jobs for which they might be eligible.

While Perseus House has added three full-time staff with workforce preparedness responsibilities with a fourth having workforce preparation responsibilities in the Charter School, it is unclear how an increasing number of youth will receive an adequate level of individualized assistance and support in preparing for and seeking employment. This was given as one of the most important features leading to success for youth in the BroadReach project. It remains to be seen if this feature can be maintained at the level at which it was provided by the BroadReach project.

Youth Offender Demonstration Project
Process Evaluation
Final Report Summary for
Hartford, CT

Project Description

Context

The city of Hartford differs dramatically from its suburbs and surrounding jurisdictions. The general perception of those with whom the evaluators met during the first site visit was that persons economically able to exercise choice flee the city when their children reach adolescence, largely due to the poor reputation of the Hartford school system. (The public school drop-out rate is estimated at more than 50%. According to one staff member, fewer than 40% of the youth who enroll in 9th grade graduate from high school in Hartford Public Schools.)

The racial and ethnic composition and economic status of Hartford is very different from that of the Region. The City, which has about 128,000 residents, has more people of color and a less affluent population (38% black; 39% Hispanic, and 22% white). According to police, arrest records for 2000 show that males between 14-24 accounted for 44% of all arrests that were made (5,393 for younger males compared to 6,729 for males 25-65+). Officials estimate there are more than 10,000 gang members in Hartford.

There is a council of governments, which considers matters of regional interest. There is no county government.

The evaluators also noted several important contextual points:

- an estimated 5,000 – 6,000 14–18 year olds are out of school;

- much of the public housing stock of Hartford has been demolished and section 8 vouchers distributed to former occupants of public housing;

- Hartford has the third lowest rate of home ownership in the nation—22 %;

- Hartford historically has had a reputation for being a "warehouse for poor people," according to project staff;

- there is little or no public transportation in the surrounding jurisdictions.

One way that the project is addressing the context is by considering eligibility requirements of various programs and trying to arrange for youth ineligible for one program to be referred to and served by another. Staff members are acutely aware of the

contrasting conditions in Hartford and its suburban communities. They reported that the design of the project was based on an assessment of needs and gaps in existing services.

Project Organization

From conception of the project, the Capital Region Workforce Development Board (CRWDB) as grantee has envisioned a comprehensive system for improving the integration of delivery of services to the target population. The central feature of this system is Hartford Connects, an internet-based database of route counseling information on youths receiving services.

At the time of the third site visit, the program had Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with more than 20 local agencies that have agreed to provide services to project youth, with the full range of needed services encompassed by these agencies (and agencies continue to be added).

The Hartford Connects system enables route counselors to create a record of enrollment and make referrals for services as determined by an individual service plan. Route counselors can then monitor the progress of each youth and determine if additional services and referrals may be needed.

While some youth are referred to the local One-Stop center, the project staff are still trying to develop a stronger relationship where the One-Stop would be more responsive to this youth population. Up to this point, the staff at the One-Stop have not been able to provide the individual attention needed by the youth. However, the Mayor's Taskforce on Hartford's Future Workforce has specifically recommended the use of the Hartford Connects route counseling system by the One-Stop, and a new retention specialist at the One-Step attended a training session in September 2003 and indicated that he intends to make full use of the system.

With regard to connections to the Justice system, the grantee CRWDB and the Department of Probation began a pilot referral process in February 2003. Since then, the Department of Probation has been referring a steadily increasing number of youth to the project. Hartford Youth Access Project (HYAP) case managers go to the probation office two mornings a week to meet with youth offenders to enroll them in the program. HYAP has been working with the probation office to train staff so they can enroll new clients directly into Hartford Connects and do route counseling. HYAP also collaborates with Community Partners in Action (CPA; formerly Connecticut Prison Association) which operates 17 programs for offenders, including Coalition Employment Services (CES). CES provides assistance with transportation, documents needed for employment, job preparation skills and other work readiness. CES also develops relationships with employers to overcome concerns about hiring offenders. In spring 2003, CRWDB funded a position of retention specialist at CES to work out of the local One-Stop.

Recruitment and Retention in the Program

The initial goal of the project was to enroll 75 in-school youth and an equal number of out-of-school youth by the end of the 24-month period for planning and implementation. HYAP's recruitment of program participants began with telephone calls to groups that had been members of a previous task force. It continued with presentations by the project manager and invitations to organizations to join the network. By the time of the third site visit, the project was receiving significant numbers of referrals from its major partners: Hartford Public Schools, City of Hartford's Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Probation.

As of June 2003, the project had enrolled 138 youth. Of this number, 35 were offenders and 103 at-risk youth. Sixty percent were male and 86% were black or Hispanic. The project had reached its goal for in-school youth, with 86 as of June 2003, and had enrolled 53 out-of-school youth. Seventy percent of the youth were between 14 and 17 years of age at the time of enrollment.

Given that enrollment just began in January 2003, and many youth were being enrolled during the spring and summer of 2003, it is too early to assess which groups of youth are persisting in the program and which are not. Similarly, it is too early to identify successful strategies for keeping youth engaged in the program through to the completion of their individual service plans. There have been a number of individual success stories, but not enough experience to determine patterns of effective strategies.

Project Planning and Sustainability

HYAP, with the grantee, CRWDB, continue to see capacity-building, partnerships, and collaboration as the common objective and vision for the project. The goal has been to get all key stakeholders – especially Hartford Public Schools and the city's Department of Health and Human Services – to work with a range of community-based service providers to develop a fully integrated, comprehensive system that would assist every youth in the community that needs help. In order for this to work, all the stakeholders and partners must buy in to the comprehensive, holistic approach and move away from the historical tendency of piecemeal delivery of services to only some segments of the population.

More recently, the mayor of Hartford, with strong involvement from the grantee as well as other community "champions," has formed the Future Workforce Investment System (FWIS) Leadership Committee to produce a true system with commitment from the stakeholders and a coordinated strategy for collaboration and leveraging of resources. The central focus is on "critical age-appropriate services for youth and young adults, which includes Route counseling, Alternative Education and Career Readiness and Occupational Skills linked to employers' workforce needs." At this stage in the process, the greatest effort seems to be directed toward keeping youth in school or helping youth who have left school to get in a program that will result in educational attainment, whether through adult education for a GED or alternative schools. This focus is

complemented by three other strategies: route counseling process using Youth Opportunity's Pathways to Success and the Hartford Connects database system; professional development through the project-funded Youth Development Practitioners Academy; and the Hartford Leadership Committee, including the mayor, superintendent of Hartford Public Schools, and the CEOs of CRWDB, Hartford Metro Alliance, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, and United Way of the Capital Area.

The leadership committee has specifically asked HYAP to present data on outcomes achieved to date through the project grant at a key meeting in October 2003. At the same time, CRWDB and HYAP see the capacity-building initiatives under DOL funding as vital components to gaining long-term buy-in from both service providers and funders. The expectation is that since Hartford Connects results in a highly interconnected system of comprehensive service delivery, all participating agencies will have an increasing commitment to its continuation. In addition, the Youth Development Practitioners Academy has provided a no-cost mechanism for improving the professional skills of participating agencies' staff.

In addition to continuing commitments to Hartford Connects, a business plan was drafted in July 2003 for the creation of the Greater Hartford Youth Development Practitioner Academy. This would become a permanent initiative supported by CRWDB, the United Way, Hartford College for Women/University of Hartford, Goodwin College, Hartford Youth Network, City of Hartford, Boys and Girls Clubs of Hartford, Capitol Region Education Council, and the Village for Children and Families. Again, this initiative is an outgrowth of the project-supported academy that would strengthen the collaborative nature of service delivery to youth in the community by bringing together front-line staff who would go back to their agencies with not only more skills to serve the youth, but also with greater commitment to a comprehensive, integrated approach to service delivery.

Given the project's ambitious goals, it should not be surprising that the project has experienced some varying levels of commitment among some of the smaller community-based agencies over time. HYAP continually works with agencies that have signed MOUs to attend training for use of the Hartford Connects database system and then provide support for the staff of the agencies to use the system. The Hartford Public Schools has needed encouragement from the mayor to make a commitment to the broad community initiative and to stick with it, despite discouraging budget cuts that have eliminated counselors and staff in the critical Student and Family Assistance Centers. The recent receipt of a $9 million, three-year grant will hopefully enable the schools to become a fully participating partner so that all school-age youth will be in some form of educational program through age 18.

A related goal is to have community funders such as the United Way and the Hartford Foundation focus their own resources on building and supporting the Future Workforce Investment System, which may mean shifting away from traditional approaches to funding local nonprofit social service organizations.

At the time of the third site visit and looking beyond the period of the project grant, CRWDB will continue to provide leadership to develop a community-wide system, broadening the target population over time to essentially all at-risk and offender populations between 14 and 24 years of age. Eventually, responsibility for route counseling will be spread throughout the system, such that an agency that enrolls a youth through Hartford Connects becomes the agency responsible for route counseling and for monitoring the client's progress on their Personal Learning and Career Plan over time. Current case managers at HYAP are taking on more of a technical assistance role, since they clearly cannot manage a caseload of 138 youth (as of June 2003), which is growing steadily.

Services Offered by Project

From conception of the project, the grantee has envisioned a comprehensive system for improving the integration of delivery of services to the target population. The central feature of this system is Hartford Connects, an internet-based database of route counseling information on youths receiving services. Initially, the database will contain records of youths recruited and enrolled by Hartford Youth Access Program. The program's two case managers perform intake and an initial assessment of a youth, create a record of enrollment, and then contact appropriate services providers for referrals for service delivery. Within a short period thereafter, the case manager meets with the youth and his or her parent(s) to develop a Personal Learning and Career Plan (PLCP), which is then entered into the youth's record in Hartford Connects, and updated as actions and goals are achieved or added over time. For youth with more difficult situations, the case manager together with staff from Health and Human Services and other appropriate agencies form a case review team to develop a more comprehensive service strategy. As more agencies fully utilize the Hartford Connects system, they will be able to directly access a link to the 211 InfoLine for services throughout the region.

The program currently has Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with more than 20 local agencies that have agreed to provide services to project youth, with the full range of needed services encompassed by these agencies.

The Hartford Connects system enables case managers to track the actual delivery of services to project youth through an activity log; when fully functional, the system will enable the agencies to enter their actions and services directly into the youth's record. Case managers can then monitor the progress of each youth and determine if additional services and referrals may be needed.

It should be noted that as a Category III grantee, Hartford's focus has been more on the development of an integrated service delivery *system* to eventually serve thousands of at-risk youth and youth offenders, than on the short-term delivery of services to project youth. Never the less, HYAP has been making referrals and services are being received by youth. However, HYAP cannot fully document the receipt of services because only a few of the agencies providing services were using Hartford Connects to record service delivery as of the date of the third site visit.

As discussed previously, the Hartford Connects database system has the potential to substantially change the way in which service providers work together to ensure that at-risk youth and youth offenders receive needed services in an integrated manner and on an on-going basis. The route counseling records are comprehensive and should enable front-line staff in any participating agency to immediately access all the information needed to work with a youth requesting their services. Currently, the enrollment section of the database contains linked webpages with the following types of information on each youth: referral source, youth demographics, family, education, training history, disabilities, court history, interests, abuse history, assessments, drug history, and other information. There are additional sections on the youth's Personal Learning and Career Plan (PLCP), case notes, participation in activities and services received, placement, educational achievement, and WIA.

For participating agencies, there is a great advantage in using the system because they do not need to collect and enter basic data for the youths who are already in the database. Also, depending on confidentiality agreements, the agency will be able to look at a range of characteristics and information about the youth that will be very useful in gaining a full understanding of that youth's situation, history, and needs. Since the system is internet-based, information is continuously updated and authorized staff in each agency will have access to the most current information on every youth. This also reduces the chances that a youth may present a different "story" to different agencies or different staff, since the full history of the youth is contained in the same database record.

The Hartford Connects system has the further advantage of being highly flexible and relatively easy to modify and improve. Rather than having to install changes to software at each site (e.g., add a field to an Excel file), a single change can be made in the internet database used by all agencies. The system has the capability to generate reports for state and federal agencies, thus meeting their requirements for reporting, and the flexibility to produce a variety of reports for both individual agencies and a group of agencies. Of special note is the ability to track and report information on both intensity and duration of services received.

Assessments

HYAP and the city's Health and Human Services are responsible for conducting initial assessments for education, life skills, and employability as soon as possible after enrollment. The assessments are largely based on self-reported information or information obtained from the agency making the referral (e.g., school, probation). If interventions are needed for substance abuse or mental health, the city's department of Health and Human Services is contacted to help develop a treatment strategy.

Route Counseling (Case Management)

Since HYAP has only two case managers for 138 youth as of June 2003, route counseling is a major challenge for the program. In-school youth are referred to the Student

Assistance Centers in their school, if the referral was not originally from the school system. Out-of-school youth are strongly encouraged to participate in some form of educational program, whether an alternative school, regular school, or Adult Education. HYAP has been using the YO "pathways" approach for making basic assessments and then referrals for work readiness, job training, and placement depending on the individual youth.

At the time of the third site visit, the individual service plan, Personal Learning and Career Plan (PLCP), was actually more of an information form for personal and family information than a plan for services. Eventually, as enough route counselors are trained throughout the participating agencies, the plan could be completed at the agency where a youth first made contact. The plan would become the central focus, or pathway, for a unique set of services as reflected in the information contained in Hartford Connects for each youth. The goal is to have 30 front-line staff in community agencies to act as route counselors. For example, eight staff members from Hartford Public Schools were scheduled to begin training in Hartford Connects in October 2003; this is a crucial step for the vision of the project, since the school system is a central component for identifying youth at an early stage.

Workforce Development Services

Since the initial recruiting focus for HYAP was on in-school youth, services related to workforce development are still in the early stages of creation. The principal activity sponsored through CRWDB is the Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program, in which 50 project youth participated in 2003, combining summer jobs with employability skills training. The WIA contractor, Workforce Training Associates, had not provided services to project youth as of the time of the third site visit. As discussed earlier, HYAP also collaborates with Community Partners in Action, which operates 17 programs for offenders, including Coalition Employment Services (CES). CES provides assistance with transportation, documents needed for employment, job preparation skills and other work readiness.

As the number of older youth has increased during 2003, the project started to focus more on job placement. However, it has been the general belief of project staff that educational attainment and work readiness are essential prior to placement in full-time employment, and thus there had been relatively few job placements as of the third site visit. Similarly, the project has begun initiatives for job retention with the One-Stop Center and CES, which has a retention specialist who works out of the One-Stop and helps youth to address barriers to persistence in a job, whether family, personal, or job-related.

HYAP staff noted that obtaining appropriate training for at-risk youth and youth offenders has been a continuing challenge. In their experience, WIA-contracted training providers have an incentive to fill specific classes, which may not reflect the needs or interests of the youths. HYAP is trying to use what they term a "single slot" approach, which allows each youth to choose his or her own training rather than be pushed into classes with available slots. The larger goal is to better match youths' preferences with

high-demand occupations, rather than training classes that happen to be offered by WIA providers. It appears that community colleges and voc-tech institutions have more capability and capacity to meet the needs of the target population than the smaller training providers that still have to fill slots to get classes to "make" their minimum enrollments.

Reentry Services

As more youth offenders are referred to HYAP by the Department of Probation, the project has started to look more closely at reentry services. The state of Connecticut has recently begun to consider new approaches to alternative sentencing because their high rate of recidivism seems to indicate the current approach to corrections is not working. One approach would be route counseling at an early stage of a youth's interaction with the justice system, to bring together a broader range of services and interventions in a more holistic way, which is the intent of the HYAP design.

The HYAP case managers make referrals to agencies with MOUs for other services, but only some of the agencies such as Health and Human Services actually have sufficient staff and resources to provide the needed services for the target population. Initial experience indicates a high demand for mental health and substance abuse referrals.

As of the third site visit, the goal is to provide individual referrals for those youth with the most pressing needs. As more agencies are trained in the use of the Hartford Connects system and all participating agencies make a commitment to provide services upon request, the referrals would become more routine and a part of the integrated service delivery approach. The agency getting a referral would access the youth's records in Hartford Connects, provide specific services, and then record the services provided back into the database.

Public Management Model

Organizational Attributes

One of the strengths of this project has been its commitment to a vision that has been reflected in its original proposal and subsequent implementation plan. The grantee in its original proposal identified three components of its approach to the project: 1) create a database of all social services programs for youth; 2) provide extensive route counseling training to a large cohort of youth workers; and 3) provide follow-up services for youth to ensure that services were being received. Up to the time of the third site visit, the grantee continues to put its full focus and efforts on these three components. The project has also taken care to obtain feedback from partners and stakeholders on these components, especially the first two which involve a broad range of agencies, to make sure these are responsive to the needs of service providers.

Through the leadership of the grantee and its executive director, there has been a continuing commitment to capacity building, collaboration, and sustainability. The

Capital Region Workforce Development Board sees the target population of at-risk youth and youth offenders as central to its mission to build the local workforce. As quoted in a May 2003 issue of the *Hartford Business Journal*, the executive director stated that to meet the longer-term workforce needs of the region, "we need to look at all of our resources, and that includes people who are coming out of the corrections system." The project-funded Hartford Youth Access Program is just one of the initiatives supported by the Workforce Development Board for the targeted youth population.

The importance of long-term capacity building, in conjunction with community-wide collaboration, is evident in two of the components of HYAP, as noted previously. As the agencies make more use of the Hartford Connects system, they should have a vested interest in its continuation. Further, the more agencies that use the system and add their own youth to the database, the greater the advantage for all the agencies, because it increases the likelihood that a large amount of case information will already be in the database for a youth that is new to them but not new to the system. This could have a snowball effect, in that other agencies will then want to become participants to share in this advantage. And in turn, this could substantially increase the likelihood the system will be sustained.

Another example of how collaboration can lead to capacity building and sustainability is the Hartford Youth Development Practitioner Academy. While the project could have concentrated its project resources on training for just project staff, they have instead sought to leverage their resources to develop a training program for youth workers throughout the community. Partners include the grantee, Hartford Youth Network, United Way, City of Hartford, Goodwin College, and Hartford College for Women. By involving a broad range of agencies' staff in professional development, there would seem to be an increased likelihood that the agencies would work together in the future on this and other activities that would help improve services to the target population that goes well beyond project youth.

Workforce Development Services and Reentry Services

A principal goal of the project is to build capacity to offer a full array of services to all target youth through a broad collaboration of community agencies. Given that service delivery has only begun on a large scale relatively late in the grant period, it is too early to assess the extent of services actually delivered through HYAP. A strength of the Hartford Connects system is that, when fully implemented, the process of route counseling will be much more integrated than would be the case if the system had not been designed to use as many service providers in the community as are willing to participate.

Data Collection and Analysis

The Hartford Connects database has the capacity to provide a tremendous amount of information about the youth being served in the community. However, until all agencies are entering data, data "collection" is incomplete and thus data analysis will have a

number of caveats concerning the extent to which the project is delivering services to the degree needed. In addition, while the database has the capability to report outcomes, this will not be fully usable until all participating agencies are recording the accomplishments of the youth participating in their programs. A key milestone will be the presentation of outcomes to the Future Workforce Investment System Leadership Committee in October 2003, which is a crucial step in making the case for broad support for sustaining the system. The project is also developing outcome measures for the Youth Development Practitioners Academy. Outcomes will be assessed for how front-line staff are using the knowledge and skills learned in the Academy on the job, as well as how this has changed the way that their agencies operate and deliver services. Since the first cohort to go through the Academy was relatively small, the evaluation will focus on the second cohort who will be going through the Academy from October 2003 to January 2004, and then a third cohort to follow in the winter-spring of 2004.

Continuous Improvement Loop

The project has made substantial use of an advisory committee of partners to get input on the design of the Hartford Connects database system and on the training curriculum for the Youth Development Practitioners Academy. Both components have undergone revision and refinement based on continuing feedback on earlier versions. For example, the training curriculum has undergone several revisions to reflect varying needs of agencies' staff, so that it would not be simply a one-time workshop but a more extensive program for professional development. The project also wanted to make sure it had local partners for delivery of the training and reached an agreement that the coursework in the curriculum could count toward an associate's degree. The goal has been to "get it right" from the beginning so that participants will find the training to be worthwhile and also encourage other staff members to enroll in future academies. The project also continually seeks feedback from users of the Hartford Connects database system so that it will be responsive to the varying needs of the agencies and thus increase the likelihood of buy-in and commitment to the system over time. As modifications are made to the system, whether to meet agency-specific needs or as general enhancements, the changes become immediately apparent and usable since the system is internet-based.

At the community level, HYAP is part of the Future Workforce Investment System initiative, which will provide feedback on the needs of the stakeholders from the leaders of major community organizations.

Outcomes

Individual/Client Level

As noted previously, youth are just making their way through the process and the two project case managers are overwhelmed with just getting youth enrolled and entered into Hartford Connects.

Project/System Level

The goal of the Hartford grantee to impact the larger community has been well-documented throughout the series of site visit reports on the project. At this point, it may be sufficient to say that it has always been the intent of the grantee to use DOL funds to literally change the way that service providers meet the needs of youth throughout the community, and not just for the youth enrolled in their project. With a goal of this magnitude, an assessment of "outcomes" at the system level would be premature after a period of only two years. Probably the best evidence of the potential for system-level change is the creation of the Future Workforce Investment System (FWIS) Leadership Committee, which features a group of organizational "champions" in major stakeholder organizations in the Hartford community. In its working document, the leadership committee noted that since "a number of workforce initiatives focused on youth are currently under development, that without intervention, would create multiple approaches to the same issues requiring the same expert resources," it is the mission of the committee to convene and assure "one coherent set of future workforce investment strategies." A review of this document finds numerous references to the central efforts of the grantee: the Hartford Connects database system and the Youth Development Practitioners Academy. Clearly, the project grant has provided a significant impetus and foundation for changing the workforce development system for target youth in this community.

Barriers and Challenges

The Hartford Youth Access Program seems to reflect the ideal of a demonstration project – it has developed a vision that can truly change the way in which agencies work together to serve at-risk youth and youth offenders, well beyond the number of youth that might be initially enrolled in the project during the 30-month period of the grant. The program design could very well serve literally thousands of youth within the next few years. Such an ambitious and complex program has meant that a very substantial amount of time and effort has been invested upfront on a scale that would later permit relatively easy expansion to the full community. In order to implement such a complex program, it takes a lot of planning time and thus the project was well into the grant period before the system was operational, because they sought broad input into the system's design and tried to obtain agreements with a large enough number of agencies that they would be able to make referrals for youth across the full range of needed services.

In a way, this is a sort of an "all eggs in one basket" approach. A major issue that has yet to be determined is whether the agencies will really buy in to this approach for all the youth they serve and not just for the project youth. For example, will agencies forgo their own client data systems and use Hartford Connects? If they don't, it seems highly unlikely that they would enter information on youth twice – once in their own system and then again in the central system; this is not only time-consuming, but they would constantly run the risk of having different sets of client data. Unless the project can reach – and retain – a "critical mass" of fully participating agencies, the system may not be sustained.

As of the third site visit, an indication of the degree of challenge of implementing such a comprehensive system concerned the need for HYAP to continually hold introductory-level training sessions for front-line staff from a range of agencies expected to participate in Hartford Connects. In addition, more advance training will clearly be needed in order for agency staff to fully utilize the system, including enrollment of new youth, route counseling, and monitoring of client progress. This will probably require more advanced training sessions for staff who participated in an introductory session and/or on-site training and technical assistance. This is very time-consuming for the two HYAP case managers, but it is also essential for Hartford Connects to become a fully functioning system.

At the same time, "buy-in" by community agencies remains a question. Not only do agency directors need to fully commit to this approach to route counseling and service delivery, but they also have to give front-line staff enough time to both attend training in the system and then to use the system. As noted by an executive with Hartford Youth Network, an umbrella organization of community-based service providers, front-line staff generally feel a high need to work directly with youth and much less of a need to enter extensive information on each client they enroll. In addition, every youth who receives services or participates in any activities offered by that agency (regardless of whether the agency was the one originally enrolling the youth in Hartford Connects) must also have each service/activity recorded in the database in order to track not just services received by individual youth and monitor their progress toward educational, employability, and employment goals, but also to report services and outcomes at the agency and community level. This latter purpose is necessary to document the performance of the full service system to community leaders and funders.

Another challenge for this project is to produce results to demonstrate that the initiative is worth the support of community organizations as they go forward. Because of the time needed to develop the program, the enrollment of project youth did not begin until 18 months into the grant. Consequently, there is relatively little the project can immediately show in terms of the results for youth being served. For example, they won't know if youth are making progress toward completing their education, gaining work-readiness skills, or obtaining jobs. In addition, it is probably not reasonable for the project to make a major effort in recruiting employers when they do not have youth far enough along in the process to place with employers, and thus they won't know what types of barriers to employment they may have to deal with in the future.

On the other hand, community leaders do seem to recognize the degree of the challenge involved in changing a complete system. In its working document on the Future Workforce Investment System, CRWDB projects it will take five years to fully implement FWIS, with the next two years needed to expand the YO Hartford components across the city through the Hartford Youth Access Program. This requires a lot of high-level negotiation to shift the allocation of resources from public and private funders, and within community-based service providers. To produce system-level change, the actual process looks like "two steps forward, one step back" – it is slow and constantly

challenging, especially given the history of fragmentation in the community, but it will certainly provide a "demonstration" of how one community attempted to change the way in which it tries to meet the needs of a group of youth who are traditionally difficult to serve in the intensity and duration that is needed to truly provide an opportunity for positive change.

Youth Offender Demonstration Project
Process Evaluation
Final Report Summary for
New York City, NY

Project Description

Context

Friends of Island Academy (FOIA) is the grantee for the Youth Offender Demonstration in New York City. FOIA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1990 to provide mentoring and employment assistance primarily to youth leaving the Rikers Island Youth Correctional Facilities, but also to other youth returning to the city from correctional facilities. Since its inception, services to these youth evolved as staff came to appreciate the multiple handicaps the youth faced when they left the correctional facilities: Substance abuse, depression and other mental health issues, learning disabilities, history of truancy and low educational achievement, past trauma, and family problems.

Before the DOL grant, FOIA offered delinquency and gang prevention through outreach to area middle schools and high schools for peer counseling and presentations. FOIA offered post-incarceration intensive services: mental health and educational assessments, GED preparation classes, substance abuse and other personal counseling, work readiness and employment placement for former residents of Rikers Island and other facilities. Youth offenders receiving intensive services were referred to as "members" of FOIA.

The goals of the Demonstration were to:

- Expand the prevention outreach to two high schools,

- Add a formal Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) program for 60 youth, and

- Increase the presence of transition outreach to youth in both the young men's and the young women's correctional facilities on Rikers Island.

FOIA organized its implementation plan around the nine attributes of the public management model. FOIA redesigned its educational program with DOL grant funds in order to reduce a common barrier to employment—the lack of adequate educational skills and certification. FOIA hired certified teachers to offer classes and referred youth to other opportunities:

- Literacy,

- Basic education,

- Pre-GED, and

- GED classes.

- With referrals, some youth received community college, vocational skills training, and college classes.

FOIA also increased its employment retention effort, and implemented its outreach to area middle schools and high schools as planned.

The alternatives to incarceration (ATI) was an innovation, working with small numbers of youth referred by the court in lieu of incarceration. FOIA and the judge who advocated ATI, Michael Corriero, believed that if the pilot project proved itself, the courts would sustain it.

Project Organization

Outreach services are in place for youths incarcerated at the four youth facilities on Riker's Island. Youth are encouraged by former youth offenders, who visit youth at their classes, to become members of FOIA. These outreach workers are trained for their role by FOIA staff and their performance is monitored by the staff and by school personnel at each facility. Coming to FOIA is voluntary for all members except those youth sent under the ATI component.

Virtually all services to members are offered under one roof and by staff of FOIA. Referrals are made outside of FOIA for serious mental illness, serious substance abuse, and health care. FOIA is supported by a variety of foundation funds and in-kind services. Youth members are supposed to spend most or all of the working day at FOIA; staff checks attendance and follows up, which keeps youth engaged.

Intensive services to members were organized by function: Employment, education, counseling, etc. Early in the project, staff of each department served as route counselors for the youth assigned to it. Overall, functions have been reduced from five areas to three to provide greater coordination of services. By the end of the project, staff redesigned its internal organization and provided a group of case managers who are accountable that all aspects of the youth's "progress plan" is being addressed.

Staff reports that youth that remain engaged for 6 months or more will succeed in realizing the goals of their progress plan; they are less sanguine about the youth who drop out sooner. Nevertheless, youth members can always come back to get job search assistance or to reengage in other project activities.

The project provides outreach activities to middle and high schools and to youth living in housing projects. Outreach activities are of two kinds: presentations and peer counselors. Teams of 4-5 members are trained to give anti-gang and anti-violence presentations at middle and high school classes and at public housing projects.

Four former youth offenders have been trained to provide peer counseling, anti-gang and anti-violence interventions, and crisis interventions at two high schools. These FOIA members are expected to be attending college classes and spending several hours each day at their assigned high schools. They receive mentor training from both staff at the high school and staff of FOIA.

Project Planning and Sustainability

FOIA prepared its plan in relationship to the attributes of the Public Management Model. The plan served as a guide, even as the project redesigned key parts of it based on experience. Receiving the DOL grant raised the planning stakes because the project realized that its current fund-raising efforts were not going to replace the $750,000 per year that had allowed it to expand its services and its clientele.

The staff hired a grants writer, and representatives attended a cross-project site visit to West Palm Beach, FL to examine how that project had garnered the funds its program needed. A consultant visited FOIA after the cross-site visit to help it rework its sustainability plan.

The major shift for FOIA was moving to a more collaborative strategy for planning and sustainability. The program has admirers and advocates, but they had not been convened as an advisory group. Staff had resisted any strategy that empowered outsiders to make recommendations that might alter its mission and its transformational internal culture.

Despite these misgivings, an advisory group was convened in December 2002, and has met regularly since. It has developed an ownership of the project and several members have offered collaborative opportunities that will bring resources to FOIA. Sustainability efforts are bearing fruit, and one staff member wished they had only started sooner. The connection made for FOIA with the Commissioner of Corrections may offer ongoing budget support, something FOIA has not had. With the reorganization, consolidation of services, and the new DOL academic skills grant, FOIA knows it can hold its own during the coming year as it works to mature its development strategy.

Recruitment and Retention in the Program

Youth are recruited in several ways:
- ATI youth are referred by the New York Supreme Court,

- Outreach workers recruit during classes at Rikers Island's four youth facilities, and

- Some youth come from New York State facilities.

All the youth members are offenders; they are primarily male (85%), and the average age is 18. Forty-seven per cent of the males and 38% of the females report current substance abuse. FOIA became aware that many youth did not persist in the program through the

enrollment process and they were disproportionately the most troubled youth. FOIA is open to youth with mental health or substance abuse disorders, and it works to keep such troubled youth engaged.

Staff assess youth for risk issues early after contact, so the more troubled youth get help even before enrollment is complete. Data records show that 64% of the males and 75% of the females receive at least some services after enrollment. Persistence is still a major concern. Staff believe that a youth who remains engaged for 6 months will realize his or her progress plan goals; yet 40-60% of the youth do not make that milestone.

Services Offered by Project

Assessments

These are done at the time of orientation and look for mental health issues as well as substance abuse and other risk factors (MAYSI) and education needs (Weschler). The employment department of FOIA devised its own employment readiness assessment, and the education department has prepared a GED predictor assessment. Through a member of FOIA's advisory group, youth take an on-line health assessment (Project Stay). Clients attend a conference on education, work readiness, and almost all receive counseling of some sort.

Route Counseling (Case Management)

As described earlier, this aspect of the organization changed as the DOL funding was ending. Instead of route counseling occurring in every unit, there is now a route counseling unit. Existing personnel were reassigned to staff the unit. Thursday night meetings are also considered part of route counseling; they are a way to check in with youth to learn how they are doing. Staff thinks that mentoring in groups would be better since most youths don't do well with the intensity of a one-to-one mentor.

Workforce Development Services

Education, work readiness and job retention are offered. Education now includes efforts to improve literacy, basic education, pre-GED, GED, and some community college and vocational programs. Vocational education or community colleges are educational experiences based on referrals outside FOIA. Only the training through high school (GED) is offered in-house. All the FOIA teachers are certified.

At one point during the grant period, FOIA offered two levels of work readiness, but it no longer does so. With the end of the DOL grant finding, FOIA needed to retrench, and staff decided to focus on basic work readiness for youth who were unlikely to complete the GED. The focus is on offering a class followed by one-on-one job coaching: Preparation for the application process and letter, interview, resume, and on-the-job behavior. The sessions last from one week to two months, depending on the skills of the

youth. The biggest concern for the work readiness staff is that many youth need to find work before they are ready for it.

Some youth find jobs by themselves. Otherwise, the workforce development staff tries to identify the kind of work the youth are interested in. Staff brings groups of three or four youth to employers that match their interests. Staff keep repeating the process until the youth have jobs. Job coaching continues while the youth is looking for work.

There are three employers who have been open to youth from FOIA: Hale and Hearty (a restaurant chain), Old Navy (a clothing retail chain) and Duane-Reed (a drug store chain). Youth are also interested in security jobs, and these jobs often work better if a youth is in school. FOIA staff remains in touch with employers who hire FOIA youth consistently and gets feedback about the skills the youth have and those that they need to be successful with them. These relationships were developed during the grant period when FOIA was able to afford a job retention specialist. The job retention specialist is now responsible for work readiness, and she reports that the work readiness class and tutoring are stronger because of the job retention experience. Other staff commented that the job retention specialist's work made a difference in helping youth and their employers work out issues before the youth lost his/her job. When FOIA is able to afford a retention specialist again, staff will fill the position again.

Reentry Services

FOIA is not responsible for reentry services for its regular members, but probation/parole officers are more likely to come to the premises now than before the grant. They have found that it is a good place to check in on the youth and appreciate the efforts of the staff to assist the youth. The probation office has indicated an interest in having FOIA staff participate in training new probation officers.

Through the technical assistance team, FOIA has made contact with the Commissioner of Corrections for the City. He has asked staff to participate in planning for the unit. This appears to be a helpful partnership in the making.

The ATI program was introduced as a pilot with the DOL funding. The youth referred to FOIA through ATI were different from other FOIA members in several ways:

- More likely to be in school,

- More successful in school,

- Younger,

- Fewer other personal problems, and

- The only members of FOIA who were not volunteers.

These youth remained in school and attended FOIA after school. Staff assisted them with homework, meeting other court conditions, and personal counseling. FOIA staff hoped that the example of ATI would garner funds from local court budgets to continue the program. With New York State and New York City budget concerns, such support was not available. The ATI portion of the program was eliminated with the depletion of DOL funds. The youth completed their court assignments as scheduled, but no new youth were enrolled. As of the last evaluation visit, 6-8 youth remained from the program.

The outreach to middle schools, high schools, and housing projects is the formal anti-gang effort by FOIA. Youth members, who have gang affiliations, view the FOIA location as neutral space. Staff work to keep youth from coming to the location with gang colors or other insignia. Anti-gang messages are part of the staff interaction with members, and Thursday night sessions may involve an activity to surface the danger and futility of gang membership. The warm and supportive atmosphere of FOIA is considered the best antidote to gang membership and a substitute for the sense of belonging that the gang provides.

Community service is primarily through the presentations made to schools and public housing youth audiences. Five to six youth at a time are trained to make these, and additional members become part of the group as youth leave the program. They have made 54 presentations across the City.

Education Services

FOIA staff had not initially planned to develop the education program to the extent that it has. When the staff reflected on their observation that educational deficits were likely to be the major barrier to employment it redeployed its resources to emphasize it.

Table 1. Educational Services Offered by FOIA

Literacy	Reading, Mathematics, Writing Skills	9:00 to 1:00 with Tutor	Daily for 6 Months on average
Basic	Mathematics, Social Studies, English, Science, Writing	9:00 to 1:00 class sessions with Teacher	Daily; 4th to 6th grade level work
Pre-GED	Pre-GED texts and supporting materials	3:30 to 6:30 Monday - Thursday	Math teacher M-W; Language T-Th; youth at grade level.
GED	Same materials as Pre-GED; work on testing skills	Same days and Teachers as Pre-GED	Monthly Predictor Test until high enough to try.
Vocational	Some had training on Rikers Island; If age-eligible for school, can be referred for barbering or electronics. Older youth referred to Asbestos or Lead Abatement, Building Maintenance or Plumbing.	9:00 to 5:00 five days a week.	FOIA gives funds to take tests or apply for certificates

FOIA has received supplemental funding from DOL for additional academic skills enhancement. It has hired a doctoral student in mathematics to teach and a coordinator of education programs, who will also strengthen computer classes. The mathematics portion of the GED test has proved more difficult for students to pass than the earlier version.

Support Services

Youth receive mental health and substance abuse support at FOIA. A psychiatrist oversees medications, and the project would like to hire a psychiatrist with foundation funds. FOIA has no facilities itself for homeless youth, but it refers youth to one of those facilities willing to take youth: Covenant House, Street Works, and the Fortune Society. Serious mental health and substance abuse are referred out; the substance abuse agency, Day Top is three blocks from FOIA's new quarters.

The staff plans weekly outings for project participants, such as bowling and skating get-togethers. The staff also organizes college tours and visits to amusement parks.

Successful Service Delivery Strategies

FOIA uses several mechanisms to coordinate and deliver services: individual progress plans, route counseling, co-location of services, parental involvement, and maintenance of a transformational culture.

Like many projects, FOIA works with the youth to translate assessments into individual plans to guide the delivery of services. At FOIA it is called a progress plan. With the reorganization, there is now a route counselor for each youth to monitor and track his/her pathway through the service delivery plan.

The services are offered in new, welcoming space. The Robin Hood Foundation helped FOIA to locate and refurbish office space on 8th Avenue in Manhattan. Classes, counseling, work readiness, and job search efforts are all located here. The Thursday night meetings and Parent meetings are held here. Most staff know most youth by name, and there is an effort to greet each by name when encountered.

Parents/family are encouraged to be part of the progress plan development. Meetings are held every month for interested parents to know what is available for their children and how the project is faring with its fundraising, organization, etc. Parents are contacted when a youth is looking for a job to engage them in helping the youth with punctuality and consistency. Some parents/family are not involved with their children, but those who are, are a part of the plan.

FOIA has created an atmosphere that is transformational in nature, a kind of holding environment where youth can work out their negative behavioral patterns, angers and traumas safely. No violence is allowed, but youth who have angry outbursts are helped to calm down and learn how to redirect their feelings. There are few rules yet there is a

structure in place to focus youthful energies. Snacks and a place to "hang out" are part of the new space.

Public Management Model

From the beginning of the grant, FOIA has demonstrated most of the attributes and qualities of the Public Management Model (PMM). The project had a plan designed around the attributes of good management from the PMM, and it had previous experience with the justice system and with providing educational and workforce services.

FOIA has made exceptional efforts to develop a community face and community support. It was featured on the program 20/20, and it currently is the subject of a film. Over the years it has developed a devoted following of foundation supporter and advocates.

FOIA has good connections with the health care system, and it has brought services to its youth. The New York City Alternative, Adult and Continuing Education Schools and Programs office provides a special education teacher to the program. The WIA One-Stop system has been slow to develop in New York City, but two youth have been referred to a One-Stop in Brooklyn and another to the One-Stop in Queens.

While FOIA had strong foundational and state support before the DOL grant, it has now begun to forge broader partnerships that leverage resources for it. Part of this shift, means that FOIA has made some efforts to share information and leadership.

While it has been slow in developing its own MIS, FOIA has had an in-kind gift from Philliber and Associates for an annual report based on a data collection instrument and process designed by FOIA staff. These reports have led to several changes in strategy over the years of the grant.

One change in strategy was reorganizing its internal operations: Staffing, chart of accounts, and departments. A tighter, leaner way of providing services is both a mark of continuous improvement and a sustainability strategy. From other aspects of the report, one can realize how many aspects of FOIA have been considered and changed to meet its mission more effectively: Education programs, partnership strategies, employment programs, and the ATI component as examples.

Outcomes

The DOL funding ended on June 30; yet as described in this report, the work continues. The final data report from New York was for June 30, 2003. At that time, FOIA had made presentations to 868 youth with its anti-violence, anti-gang message. The project enrolled as members 641 youth. Of these, 186 received federally –funded work readiness services and 70 received work readiness services from other sources. One hundred, sixty-nine received other services from transportation support to health care and temporary shelter. Three hundred fifty-four youth received some kind of educational services: Tutoring, literacy classes, basic education, Pre-GED, GED, or college. Twenty-

nine youth offered community service, and 123 found employment. Twenty-four youth were convicted of a crime and 30 were incarcerated.

The real outcomes will not be known for some time as youth gain more experience in the work force. Nevertheless, such low numbers of convictions and incarcerations is an indication that youth were not turning or returning to crime while they were engaged with FOIA.

Barriers and Challenges

The challenges to FOIA's success are clear from the report. It is difficult to keep enrolled youth engaged long enough to change their life patterns and to overcome the educational and other deficits with which they enter the program. It remains a challenge to prepare youth for employment who do not show the capacity to complete high school-level study, and it is a challenge to help youth find work when their need for work occurs before their readiness for it. An on-going challenge for the project is working with youth who have as many issues to work through before they will be able to live and work independently without support.

The barrier that the project is dealing with primarily is finding effective ways to remain sustainable and true to its mission. FOIA leadership has been resourceful and flexible in finding resources and in positioning itself for the future. One staff member concluded that the next year or two are crucial. If FOIA can garner the support it needs to continue its core services through some stable funding streams, all will be well. They are working to make that possible, and budget relief at the local and state levels would help.

Youth Offender Demonstration Project
Process Evaluation
Final Report Summary for
Pittsburgh, PA

Project Description

Context

Pittsburgh's Category I Youth Offender Demonstration Project, which is called BluePrint, targets adjudicated youth within the city's Community Development Block Grant area. The majority of the youth, ages 14-24, who are involved in the juvenile justice system live within the target area.

The city has faced a growing gang problem since 1991 when the mayor and chief of police for the public schools declared the city had no gang problem at all. In 1997, 52 gang members were prosecuted and convicted under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act. Since many of them have been released from prison, beginning in 2002, the community has seen a resurgence of drug- and gang-related violence. In the month of August 2003 alone, there were 18 homicides in the city—most of them involving youth or young adults in the target area. Youth already participating in BluePrint, as well as others the project has tried to recruit, have been directly and indirectly affected by the climate of violence: one BluePrint participant was murdered in August and others came to the project after their friends were killed.

Pittsburgh is a city of distinct neighborhoods separated by natural and constructed barriers that often isolate the communities from each other. Mixed among and situated next to several affluent neighborhoods are other communities that are quite poor and populated mainly by members of minority groups. During the past decade, several older and generally poorer neighborhoods near the downtown have been gentrified and have become trendy places for more affluent residents to live. Frequently, there are gang and drug activities less than a block away from restored homes.

The employment situation in the community, especially within the target area, creates a challenge for the project. Area unemployment rates tend to be about the same or below the nationwide rate: in August 2003 Pittsburgh had a 5.3 percent unemployment rate, and the rate in Allegheny County was 5.1, compared with a nationwide rate of 6.1 percent. However, state labor officials warned that jobs continue to be lost, and the unemployment rates are pulled down by the large numbers of people who have stopped looking for work. The unemployment rates and numbers of discouraged workers who are not counted in the unemployment equation are undoubtedly higher among BluePrint's target population. Employment opportunities for BluePrint youth are also limited by the relatively large pool of older and more skilled workers--without criminal records--who are available for employment.

The geographical isolation of some communities creates related transportation challenges, which affect employment opportunities. Many of Pittsburgh's neighborhoods are situated on steep hills and divided by barriers--tunnels and rivers, for example--that make the neighborhoods difficult to reach without some form of personal transportation. Bus routes are often inadequate to connect inner city youth with employment opportunities outside the city.

The city, like many other metropolitan areas in the Northeast and Midwest, has experienced -- and continues to face -- problems associated with growing poverty as members of the middle and working classes, both white and black, move to the more affluent suburbs. As a result, Pittsburgh's schools are under pressure because of their high failure rates and the poor performance of students on standardized tests, which further exacerbates troubles within the inner city.

The city government similarly faces difficulties providing adequate services. Project staff pointed out that officials in the more prosperous county have been more supportive of efforts, such as the PROJECT, than have city officials. This, perhaps, is because the county has more available funds to support these kinds of programs.

Organization

YouthWorks, Inc. is the grantee for BluePrint, the project that was created with the Department of Labor project funds. YouthWorks, founded in 1994, is a nonprofit organization that plays a key role in the region's youth workforce development. The YouthWorks, Inc. board of directors forms the core of the Youth Policy Council, which provides direction to the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board (TRWIB) on youth job training and employment issues. The project's application was submitted in conjunction with TRWIB.

Although the TRWIB is technically a partner with BluePrint, youth receive few services from the one-stop workforce development center, which is called CareerLink. Youth, and to some extent the BluePrint staff, perceive the CareerLink sites to be unwelcoming, with a focus on retraining middle-aged adults rather than training young adults or youth in this population. BluePrint participants register with CareerLink at the BluePrint office and use CareerLink's electronic tools from there. If case managers find specific workshops or other activities that CareerLink is offering that would meet their clients' needs, they may refer the client for those services. With those exceptions, workforce services are generally provided either by BluePrint or by YouthWorks.

BluePrint delivers most of the project's services directly through its own staff at one central location, which is also the site of the YouthWorks administration office and several other related services. For several months during the life of the project, route counseling, project coordination, and many other services were subcontracted to Life'sWork of Western Pennsylvania and the project was located in Life'sWork's building. When BluePrint returned organizationally and physically to YouthWorks, all the staff transferred as well. Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic (WPIC) and

Addison Behavioral Care, Inc. (ABC) have continued to provide mental health and substance abuse services, respectively, under contracts with BluePrint. At one time there was a community justice liaison, who was funded by the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, working full-time with BluePrint to provide a link with the juvenile justice system. That position has since been abolished as unnecessary, given the project's close ties directly with probation officers.

Recruitment and Retention in the Program

The project targets adjudicated youth within the city's Community Development Block Grant Area (CDBGA) but also accepts some youth who are at risk of court involvement. The youth come from an estimated population of 6,000 for whom traditional intervention and support services have not functioned well, according to project officials. These are youth who generally have grown up living in poverty and are primarily African-American.

Both the number of youth served and their demographic profile are consistent with project plans. As of June 2003, BluePrint had enrolled 118 youth out of the 181 recruited. Of those enrolled, 76 percent were male, 84 percent were African-American, 49 percent were under age 18, and 90 percent were offenders. BluePrint considers itself to be a project for which youth must volunteer, but a small number of those enrolled (fewer than 10 percent) have been court-ordered to participate as part of an alternative sentencing approach.

Two key sources of new youth for the project are the justice system and word of mouth. Probation officers and judges are increasingly aware of BluePrint as a resource and make formal or informal referrals to the project. In addition, a correctional facility in a nearby state has several times asked BluePrint to meet with youth before they are released and return to Pittsburgh so that the youth can transition directly into the project. BluePrint has also found that an increasing number of youth are coming to the project because they have a sibling in it or know someone else who is in the project. Some referrals also come from the schools or other agencies or neighborhood contacts.

The project coordinator believes the main factor keeping youth in the project is the time and energy of the case managers. The project also encourages retention by fostering youths' sense of identification with the project by bringing them in to a central project space for most services and providing t-shirts and other items with the BluePrint logo. Weekend trips and in-town events are also used as incentives for active, continued participation.

Until recently, BluePrint did not have a termination policy for youth, which meant that they continued to be enrolled regardless of how many of their goals they had reached or whether they were actively participating. In the last few months, the project has established a mechanism for categorizing some youth as "inactive" and others as "retired" (i.e., terminated). As of September 2003, 31 of the 151 youth for which the project could provide data were counted as retired and another 39 were inactive; 81 (54

percent) were active. The project did not have data to readily determine which of those who were retired had left for positive reasons, such as achieving satisfactory employment, and which had left because of refusal to participate or comply with policies. The project coordinator thought that more of them had left for negative than for positive reasons.

Project Planning and Sustainability

BluePrint and its partners had a shared vision to create a model community-based route counseling system for youth offenders that would pair YouthWorks, Inc.'s job training and readiness expertise with the commitment of the Allegheny County Juvenile Court to the concept of Balanced and Restorative Justice in order to have a significant impact on youth offender recidivism and youth violence prevention. That vision has not changed. Nor has the overall approach of the project fundamentally changed since its creation, though it has been "fine-tuned" continuously. For example, youth are now required to come to a group orientation session to make sure mutual expectations are clear, and more activities are planned for groups of youth in order to strengthen the peer support role. What is different in practice from what was proposed in the grant application is the relationship with the Three Rivers Investment Board's CareerLink. Although the grant application envisioned BluePrint's achieving "a higher level of inclusion of youth offenders in the TRWIB's CareerLink," BluePrint has, as it developed, substituted for inclusion of youth offenders within CareerLink rather than facilitated greater inclusion. The older youth in BluePrint register with CareerLink so that they can access its resources electronically, but otherwise they generally receive few if any services from CareerLink. As a result, sustainability of services for this population is expected to depend, not on the one-stop workforce development system, but on the continued role of YouthWorks in planning for this population and obtaining funding from sources such as Allegheny County, foundations, and perhaps other federal funding streams.

YouthWorks, the grantee, continues to play a vital leadership and visionary role. YouthWorks is an organization whose mission is to develop, pilot and implement initiatives involving workforce issues for youth. Since it was started in 1994, it has effectively leveraged its resources, including millions of dollars it controls, to get other organizations and systems to fill gaps in services provided youth. Some of these services, for example, include part-time and year-round employment and career exploration opportunities. It is well-positioned to take the leadership in providing services for this target population after the project funds end.

The collaboration that was formed for BluePrint is expected to continue working with BluePrint during its 1 year no-cost extension under the project and later, if sufficient funds can be obtained. Partners include representatives from Allegheny County Department of Human Services, Allegheny County Juvenile Court, Pittsburgh Public Schools, Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board, Youth Places, Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, Addison Behavioral Care, and other organizations involved in youth workforce development issues. Quarterly meetings with these partners are described as important forums for discussing changes to project plans. Groups that appear to be not

involved in project planning in any significant way are youth, parents, employers, and front-line BluePrint workers. Planning is generally informed by first-hand, qualitative, anecdotal knowledge about youth's participation in the project rather than by analysis of quantitative data.

Services Offered by Project

The heart of BluePrint's integrated service delivery approach is its use of Community Based Teams. The individualized service strategy (ISS) for each participant is developed jointly by a team that includes the youth; the executive director of YouthWorks; the route counselor and supervisory case manager/project coordinator; and representatives from WPIC and ABC and the justice system. The strategy identifies specific actions to be taken in education, employment, and personal/social areas and the community organizations—both ongoing BluePrint partners and others—that need to be involved to achieve goals for that youth. The case manager and client are jointly responsible for follow up to ensure that appropriate actions are taken, to document progress, and to revise goals and planned actions as needed.

In the early stages of the project, it was considered important for members of the Community Based Team to meet jointly to develop the ISS for each youth, but by the time of the evaluator's third visit, that approach had changed in two significant ways. First, as part of a shift to put more responsibility on the individual youth, the process starts by asking the youth to self-identify personal short-term and long-term goals and steps to achieving them. The ISS that emerges builds upon that starting point. Second, team members no long meet together to discuss each youth. Instead—to increase the efficiency of the process—other team members, such as representatives from WPIC, ABC, and the justice system, provide input orally or in writing that is incorporated into the ISS by BluePrint staff and the youth.

BluePrint provides, in one way or another, most of the range of services envisioned for the project. As previously mentioned, alternative sentencing is rarely involved because the project's preference is to have youth participate as volunteers. Health needs would be addressed by referral to the county. Because of the case managers' knowledge about applicable waivers, they have helped some youth qualify for health care coverage that they had been unable to get previously. Housing needs would be addressed by referral to the city or county housing authority. Now that they are co-located with YouthWorks, it is easier for youth to learn about recreation opportunities at Youth Places (another YouthWorks activity), which has its administrative offices in the same building. Mentoring largely occurs informally between youth and case managers—either their own case manager or others in the project—but there is also a co-located mentoring project that might be accessed through referral. Community service is not a specific expectation for all youth. Some youth, however, are involved in court-imposed community service that is supervised by the court. A new project in collaboration with the University of Pittsburgh's School of Social Work also involves about 10 BluePrint youth in work with a community agency for a school semester. Other services are discussed in more detail below.

The main gap between services the youth need and services they receive continues to be in the areas of substance abuse and, to lesser extent, mental health. According to the substance abuse service provider, over 90% of the BluePrint youth they assess need some substance abuse education or treatment, yet few actually receive structured education or treatment. Of the 110 enrolled youth for whom data were available, a specific recommendation for substance abuse services is in the individualized services strategy for 71 (65 percent) and 20 of those 71 (28 percent) have received services. The only education or treatment option the project offers is individual sessions—they have no drug and alcohol group programs for this population—and youth are reluctant to accept individual counseling sessions offered at the contractor's office. Regarding mental health services, the project believes it is getting more successful in having youth accept treatment because of the emphasis placed on its importance in the initial orientation sessions. Also, case managers can provide some of this support, and BluePrint has started offering small group sessions on mental health topics.

Assessments

All youth participating in YouthWorks receive comprehensive assessments for needs that cover substance abuse, mental health, education, employment, and personal/social issues. Substance abuse and mental health assessments are provided through subcontracts with Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic (WPIC) and Addison Behavioral Center (ABC); assessment in other areas is done by the youth's case manager in partnership with the youth. Youth are not considered enrolled in BluePrint until these assessments are completed, which is intended to happen within 30 days of a youth's coming to the project. Information obtained in the case manager's part of the assessment is updated as he/she works with the youth and needs change.

Route Counseling (Case Management)

Route counseling is considered the heart of the BluePrint project. Each youth is assigned to a case manager, who generally works with the same youth for the duration of his/her time in BluePrint. Each case manager has about 15 clients. Case managers typically have contact with the client in person or by telephone, or with someone else about the youth, 8 to 12 times a month. They will meet with the youth at the BluePrint office, at school, or whether they are needed. Clients have their case manager's mobile phone numbers and can call in the evenings or on weekends if they need assistance or support outside of office hours. It is the joint responsibility of the case manager and the youth to monitor progress toward the goals set in the youth's Individualized Service Strategy.

Workforce Development Services

Workforce development services include work readiness, job placement, job retention efforts, academic and vocational/occupational education and supportive services, such as substance abuse and mental health education and treatment. In general, the nature of these services depends upon the age and status of youth participating in the project. The

focus for younger youth is to keep them in school and working toward a high school diploma. The focus for older youth is to help them prepare for and enter employment, including getting a GED if they lack a high school degree.

Basic training in work readiness is provided for all youth by YouthWorks using a curriculum developed by YouthWorks; case managers follow up to reinforce the concepts covered in those formal sessions. Some youth receive additional job readiness training in projects such as the Community Builders Catalyst for Change collaboration with the University of Pittsburgh's School of Social Work, which involves about 10 youth, and the new BluePrint-AmeriCorps project, which will involve about 40 youth across a year.

According to the project coordinator, "for out of school youth, everything we do is focused on job placement." Case managers are responsible to help the youth find appropriate jobs in the community on a case-by-case basis. There is no cadre of employers ready and willing to offer jobs to BluePrint youth. Once they have jobs, BluePrint tries to encourage job retention through the case managers' follow up with youth and with their employers. They also provide services to help them succeed, such as a transportation subsidy for the first 2 weeks they are on a job (until they get a paycheck).

For youth without a high school degree, case managers work with youth and the schools to keep them in their academic, alternative, or vocational technical school placements, if possible. If that is not appropriate (for example, because of their age or other circumstances), then youth are referred to one of several locations where they can study for the GED test. On-line GED preparation is available at BluePrint, but they have had more success with youth preparing in a classroom setting.

BluePrint attempts to meet youth's substance abuse and mental health needs that limit their employment success largely by referral to the two subcontractors, Addison Behavioral Care and Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic. More recently, case managers have started presenting group sessions at the BluePrint office on mental health topics such as self esteem.

Reentry Services

BluePrint works with the justice system and the community to facilitate reentry for specific youth who have been incarcerated and to develop and maintain a community conducive to reductions in crime and violence. As members of the Gang-free Schools and Community Partnership's intervention team, staff of BluePrint and the grantee, YouthWorks, are playing an active, direct role in attempting to de-fuse the growing violence involving the target population. (See previous discussion about context.) They are spending time "on the street" meeting with youth and young adults to try to resolve specific disputes peacefully and to help them learn more productive conflict resolution techniques. Other BluePrint staff are on the Partnership's Advisory and Assessment Teams. In addition to these anti-gang activities, "the whole program is an anti-gang activity," as the project coordinator put it. Involvement in BluePrint is intended to create a sense of "family" that can replace their connection with gangs: they participate with

their peers in BluePrint, have clothing with the BluePrint logo, and have a BluePrint ID card with their photo that they have been encouraged to carry at all times in case they are stopped by police.

For specific youth leaving correctional facilities, BluePrint sometimes gets involved before they leave the facility in order to move them seamlessly into the project. For example, Bowling Brook correctional facility in Frederick, MD, sometimes lets BluePrint know when youth are about to return to Pittsburgh so that case managers can meet with them before their release. Some other youth are involved in court-mandated aftercare programs that are run by the Juvenile Court. The role of BluePrint case managers for those youth is to follow up periodically to check on their status.

Although BluePrint does not encourage it, some judges have mandated BluePrint participation as an alternative to incarceration. The BluePrint project treats them the same as any other youth, once they are referred to the project.

Public Management Model

Organizational Attributes

The BluePrint project manifests to a large extent the organizational attributes considered important in the public management model, which it appears to have done as a natural part of its management approach rather than as a conscious articulation of the model presented by the Department of Labor. It is especially characterized by active involvement of the grantee both in the vision for the project and in its ongoing implementation and coordination. The project had a clear and well-conceived plan, and, while the overall strategy has been unchanged, tactical changes have been made as there has been a perceived need. Community partners from other organizations—but not, to any significant extent, employers or family representatives--have been consulted in quarterly partners meetings, at which they have been given information about the project. Nevertheless, the impetus for and direction of changes appears to come primarily from YouthWorks itself. The grantee had previous experience with the juvenile justice and behavioral health care systems and developed further partnerships and relationships in those sectors as the project developed. BluePrint appears to have strong support from community organizations and effectively leverages its resources through collaborations and partnerships.

Workforce Development Services and Reentry Services

BluePrint has been able to make a full range of services available to youth through a combination of

- direct delivery of core services, such as route counseling;

- contracts with service providers for services, such as substance abuse and mental health assessment and treatment;

- partnerships with other projects offered by the grantee, such as work readiness workshops; and

- partnerships with other organizations in the community, such as the Pittsburgh Board of Education and the justice system.

Services generally available to youth are described in more detail in the previous section.

The project has actively developed innovative partnerships to deliver workforce services to selected youth, such as the collaboration with University of Pittsburgh and the supplemental grant from the Department of Labor for a project with AmeriCorps. The Knowledge to Empower Youths to Success (KEYS) Service Corps—an AmeriCorps program operated by the Allegheny County Department of Human Services/Office of Community Services—will partner with BluePrint to provide training for about 40 BluePrint participants who are 17 to 22 years old. At the end of the 17-week program, youth are expected to get a job, further their education, enter AmeriCorps, or enter Job Corps.

Data Collection and Analysis

BluePrint has collected data on most of the youth in the project, but the project has not significantly used quantitative data analysis to monitor project implementation or document its achievements. For example, judgments about whether a change in practice has had the desired result--such as requiring an orientation session when a youth comes to the project in part to increase youth's willingness to accept recommended services-- would be made on the basis of informal observations and anecdotes rather than analysis of data on participation. And in making the case for the project's success, the approach has been to rely on anecdotes about individual youth rather than analysis of employment outcomes such as the quality of jobs youth have received.

BluePrint's computerized management information system (MIS) provides a way for case managers to enter descriptive data about youth, including their individual goals, and record notes about their contacts with and about individual youth. As a result, substantial information is available in the MIS that could be reviewed by the case manager, supervisor, or others. Entries are primarily narrative rather than coded quantitatively. For example, by reading all the notes for a youth, it would be possible to know what services were needed and which were received, but the data format limits its usefulness for analysis purposes. In addition, data in the MIS cannot be used to automatically generate the quarterly reports required by DOL.

In order to meet the DOL requirement for quarterly summary reports and an end-of-project data base on individual youth, BluePrint manually produced the quarterly reports and created a spreadsheet of readily available data for the end-of-project requirement. As a result of the limited data available without reading through all the case notes, the final data base contains little information about the intensity and duration of services youth received and the extent to which youth achieved the goals they set.

Continuous Improvement Loop

The leadership of BluePrint and YouthWorks clearly shows a commitment to meeting the needs of the target population and a desire to improve their project as needed to do so. They obviously reflect on what they believe is working well or not so well and make changes in response to perceived problems with the project. For example, the process of developing youths' individualized service strategies was changed, personnel changes were made, more responsibility was placed on youth to develop goals and carry out actions to achieve them, and the office location and organizational placement of staff were changed.

At the same time, the project's continuous improvement process could be improved by better collection and analysis of data. Given the way data are being collected, organized, and analyzed, the project does not have information that would be useful to improve the project, such as what kinds of youth are being more or less successful, who is dropping out and why, and what kinds of jobs youth are getting and staying with.

Outcomes

Individual Client Level

BluePrint describes its youth outcomes in terms of individual "success stories," of which there are many. These narratives describe youth who have overcome significant obstacles to finish school or get a GED, improve their attitudes, stay out of trouble, and get jobs. Statistically, the project can demonstrate that 19 of the 181 youth who entered the project have earned their GED and 7 have graduated from high school, but there is no information about how many youth had GED or high school graduation as a need or goal when they entered the project. Over 50 youth have entered subsidized or unsubsidized employment, but the project can provide no information about whether the work was part-time or full-time, how long they stayed in the jobs, or what salaries and benefits they earned while employed. According to the project coordinator, the jobs youth have entered have been almost entirely in the retail sector—grocery store, fast food, car wash, etc.—which are largely low paying jobs with little career potential.

Project/System Level

At the project level, it would be fair to say that those involved with BluePrint have gained experience in setting up a project such as this. The project is expected to continue essentially unchanged—even after PROJECT funds are gone—because of the organizational and community support that exists for it. As it continues, they should be able to use the experience developed to continue to improve service delivery.

As previously mentioned, YouthWorks and BluePrint staff are actively involved in trying to reduce violence in the community that is caused by and affects this youth population. To the extent they are successful in their efforts, the community will clearly benefit, as

will the credibility of the two organizations--which should have a positive effect on sustainability of the project. Other than through their direct violence-prevention activities, project leadership believes that the presence of BluePrint has led to little or no change in the larger community system for serving these youth.

Barriers and Challenges

Barriers to the success of BluePrint are both external and internal. One primary external factor is the bleak economic and employment environment. Another is the resurgence of crime and violence in the community. As the director of YouthWorks put it, "You can't carry out an effective employment and training program with people getting killed in broad daylight." The primary internal barrier to success is project leadership's lack of commitment to using data to monitor project implementation and analyze project success. Making better use of data would increase their understanding of ways to improve the project and enhance their argument for continuation of the project.

BluePrint still faces challenges in delivering the service they would like to provide. They realize the importance of addressing youths' substance abuse and mental health needs that limit their employability but have not yet found ways to do so effectively. In addition, they are still struggling in the area of job development: finding employers and jobs for which their youth are qualified that have the potential of adequate wages to keep them out of poverty and away from criminal activities.

Youth Offender Demonstration Project
Process Evaluation
Final Report Summary for
West Palm Beach, FL

Project Description

Context

The service area for the project encompasses the Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Communities of Palm Beach County. The western, rural part of the county includes a large migrant population and the eastern, urban part has a diverse population with an increasing number of immigrants. The population experiences unemployment rates at double-digit levels, low-incomes, and high crime rates. The adult population has an illiteracy rate of approximately 35%, almost 50% are below 9th grade in reading and writing, and 60% lack a high school diploma.

The grant application cited rapidly growing juvenile crime and gang problems, noting that citizens have identified juvenile crime as their number one concern. Further, "schools are struggling with rampant poverty, illiteracy, severe gaps in basic skills, ESOL and assimilation problems as well as escalating crime and gang activity." Police reports of school incidents dramatically increased from 1999 to 2000. Schools in the target area have a very high proportion of students in the free lunch program, over 90% minority composition, over 60% are below the median for reading, math, language, and more than 40% missed 11 or more days.

At the time of the first visit in November 2001, tourism (a major component of the local economy) was experiencing a significant decline. Other industries were also experiencing contraction, while construction and health care were relatively stable. By the time of the third site visit in September 2003, employment opportunities had still not improved and in fact had become more competitive as adults with work experience were increasingly willing to accept lower-wage jobs for which youth might have otherwise been hired.

In the view of the project director, local government recognizes the problems facing the community the project seeks to serve and community leaders have shown a level of commitment to improving conditions in the economically depressed areas.

The grantee noted in its application that existing systems lacked a number of features that need to be addressed through a more integrated network. Existing systems, such as Workforce Investment Board (WIB) youth programs, did not target youth offenders or at-risk youth for special assistance. Further, existing programs did not provide long-term follow-up services nor did they address strategies for preventing recidivism. The existing WIB system did not have a strong employer linkage for ex-offenders, gang members, or at-risk youth. Existing case management lacked coordination to uniformly assess needs

and link services. In addition, programs for truancy, gang prevention, and alternative sentencing needed expansion and coordination. At the first site visit, WIB staff noted that while the county school system has three career academies for occupational and vocational training, individual schools offer little in the way of vocational training. Plans were currently underway to create "vocational schools within schools" in high schools throughout the district, but implementation would take a considerable period of time.

Project Organization

The grantee, the Academy for Practical Nursing and Health Occupations (APNHO), works with its primary partners, Probationer's Educational Growth and Palm Beach County Workforce Development Board, to identify youth for the program and then to coordinate service delivery. APNHO has a coordinator for case management, instructor/case managers at the four area high schools where the program is operated, and at APNHO itself, where a case manager works with students from training through placement and the initial stage of employment.

The focal point of the case management process is the Youth Goals and Individual Service Strategy form, which is completed by the case manager with the youth as they enter the program and then updated as services are received and as other needs are identified.

Though all clients go through the process of setting goals and the service strategy, older youth who are enrolled in APNHO occupational programs receive more intensive services because they are getting prepared to directly enter the workforce.

The project has all youth qualify with the One-Stop system, which enables the project to obtain funding for not only tuition but a range of other WIA-supported services such as child care and bus passes. In effect, PROJECT youth are getting the same services as youth and adults as specified under WIA regulations. APNHO, as an approved contractor for the local One-Stops, is expected to do its own recruitment, work readiness, placement, and follow-up.

Recruitment and Retention in the Program

Recruitment for the health occupations program began in July 2001. Methods of recruitment of the out-of-school population included: distribution of advertisements and flyers; health professionals from the target area who also have a connection to APNHO went directly to the target neighborhoods (e.g., churches, housing facilities); and APNHO participated in community events, as well as gained clients through word-of-mouth (e.g., bring a "buddy"). In the four target high schools, students were recruited by teachers and mentors from the community. Clients for the PEG program were mostly referred by probation officers, and PEG also works with two work release facilities in Palm Beach County to identify potential clients.

By November 2001, the goal of 80 clients had already been exceeded, as the project reached an enrollment of 103 youth. Of the 103 youth, 55 are classified as at-risk and 48 are offenders. Fifty-two of the youth were between the ages of 14 and 17 at the time of enrollment, with 51 in the 18-24 age range. Sixty-one were in-school youth and 42 were out-of-school at the time of enrollment. Ninety-two percent of the youth are female.

The project's approach to keeping youth engaged in the program is a reflection of the central focus on training for specific jobs in the health care field. The project director believes that many youth in this target population do not want to be in a traditional academic program where there is no proven connection to a job. This is especially true for older youth who did not graduate from high school; in her experience, these youth are not interested in GED programs where it is not clear that completion will lead to a job or a career. In fact, typically many of these youth did not succeed in a traditional educational setting to begin with and don't want more of the same. She has found that the youth significantly improve their math and reading competencies by virtue of having to learn and use these skills in practice-oriented classes. This also builds their personal sense of success in education, thus making it more likely they will later go on to a GED and further education once they enter a career. APNHO staff found that the length of time youth had to spend in a GED program (due to relatively low grade levels in math and reading) was too discouraging. Of the health occupations for which APNHO offers training, only the LPN requires a GED or high school diploma. Project staff have also found that youth in both high schools and at APNHO really need jobs, which in turn helps to keep them engaged in the occupational program because of the high likelihood of getting a job in the health care field.

As of July 2003, the project had been able to achieve a very high rate of completion of education and training goals for in-school and out-of-school youth, approaching 95%. Virtually all of the in-school youth stayed in high school through the length of the program until receipt of a high school diploma or equivalent. Of the 103 enrolled youth, 94 had obtained employment, primarily unsubsidized. One area that the project has recognized needs further improvement is retention. Of the 77 youth who had at least one unsubsidized employment record, 65% were still employed as of July 2003. Interestingly, while only 50% of younger youth offenders were still employed, 78% of older youth offenders were in jobs. The proportions for younger at-risk youth were 63% and older at-risk youth was 58%. In order to address the challenges of retention for this target population, the project obtained separate grant funds to begin a program called "Linking People with Careers" (LPC). This initiative is led by a project coordinator who provides assistance and guidance throughout the stages of training, placement, and employment. The first cohort consisted of approximately 25 participants; as of September 2003, all but two of the participants were still employed. The project also received a supplemental grant from DOL in July 2003 to further enhance employment retention through monetary incentives and additional employment support services.

Project Planning and Sustainability

The grantee, APNHO, together with its principal partners, Probationers Educational Growth and the Workforce Investment Board, have jointly planned for continuation of the program for the target population. These three partners have been involved in planning for sustainability from the inception of the project, and West Palm Beach has become a model for planning among the projects in Round Two of the Demonstration, featured in a Fact Sheet on sustainability prepared by Research and Evaluation Associates for DOL.

From the beginning of the grant process, APNHO pursued a collaborative approach to service delivery through partnerships and alliances. The PROJECT grant funds were used for capacity-building that was intended to develop a strong community infrastructure capable of being self-sustained after grant termination. As a means to that end, APNHO incorporated careful planning, measurable performance goals and outcomes, ongoing program evaluations and improvements, and careful collaborations with a consortium of local representatives from various service fields. The consortium has already committed to continue its efforts for at least two years beyond the federal funding period.

APNHO and the consortium recognized that they shared interests in preventing crime and delinquency and in filling the gaps in service areas for youth offenders and at-risk youth. The consortium sought to identify funding opportunities that assist new or existing initiatives in the target area and assisted in writing grant proposals to procure those funds. The consortium also identified the best partner to meet grant requirements and be a strong fiscal agent. The consortium identified any additional stakeholders who are essential for the project's success and determined how grant funds should be dispersed. In the case of the project grant, funds are shared with APNHO, the local WIB, the school district, probation department, and community-based organizations, all of which were deemed necessary for community capacity-enhancement efforts to succeed. As of the time of the second site visit in December 2002, the project had largely stopped applying for further grant funds in order to most effectively make use of the funds awarded to date. As of September 2003, 17 separate projects had been funded, often because one project was able to build on the success of another.

This leads to another factor in sustainability – the documentation of the project's experience and success through the presentation of data and case studies. The project has included an evaluation coordinator since the beginning of the project, assisting in the design of the database and identification of additional data needs as the staff gained more experience with the youth being served. A coordinated staff effort enabled the project to collect and analyze a substantial amount of data on youth characteristics and outcomes, which in turn provided the information that could be presented to community stakeholders and potential funders.

As for the continuation of services to the target population, Probationers Educational Growth will become the central point. While the PEG case manager position was originally funded in part by the project, it is now supported by the WIB, the school

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district, and the justice system; additional PEG staff are supported by these and other grant sources. PEG is already serving a youth population well beyond that of the original 103 project-funded clients and thus has built the capacity to serve larger numbers and over a period beyond the grant. It has been noted by PEG staff that even more of the targeted youth could be served, with a greater degree of support toward the goal of employment, if a larger portion of funds awarded by the local Youth Council were directed to work readiness, life skills, and basic skills.

Services Offered by Project

As discussed earlier, the focal point of the case management process is the Youth Goals and Individual Service Strategy form, which is completed by the case manager with the youth as they enter the program and then updated as services are received and as other needs are identified. The form reflects a comprehensive assessment of such factors as education level, risk, and mental health as well as other factors that project staff have found to be especially relevant for their vocation-based program. The process also enables the youth to identify personal and professional goals, and revise their goals as they progress through the program. While the services are not "integrated in a single provider," case managers have small case loads and they can take the time to match clients to providers and then monitor the services received.

Assessments

The project conducts comprehensive assessments of project participants. These determine each youth's need for education, risk/family interventions, substance abuse, and mental health services. Project participants also are assessed for physical health and career suitability. Assessments are done by using testing instruments, such as those that evaluate reading and math skills and learning styles. There is also an on-going assessment of "barriers and challenges" including physical and mental health and personal situations, any of which may have an effect on individual success in the program.

Route Counseling (Case Management)

At the beginning of the demonstration, the decision was made to incorporate those services into the program that directly relate to occupational training and obtain other services through community agencies. APNHO is responsible for case management, work readiness, occupational education, mentoring, job placement, and job retention. The case manager contacts community agencies for other services as indicated by the individual service strategy, including: health, housing, mental health, and substance abuse treatment. Probationer's Educational Growth works with youth offenders in the areas of alternative sentencing and aftercare.

Though all clients go through the process of setting goals and establishing an individual service strategy, older youth who are enrolled in APNHO occupational programs receive more intensive services because they are getting prepared to directly enter the workforce.

In general, however, services provided to youth offenders and those youth who are at risk of court involvement are the same services.

West Palm Beach benefits from having a full range of service providers in the county. Case managers use a large resource tool "Where to Turn 2002-2003" that lists virtually all services available in the community. The county also recently added the "211" central phone resource service. They have not experienced problems where local agencies do not have the capacity to meet requests for service.

Workforce Development Services

Preparation for the workforce actually begins with education, for both younger and older youth. The project partners with the Palm Beach school system to offer special health occupation classes at two high schools and two alternative schools, for two hours daily for academic credit. Generally students begin the program in their junior year, participate in summer internships in the health care field, and then continue through to graduation. Students receive additional academic support as determined by their assessments. Older youth are enrolled in the APNHO occupational training programs, and also receive additional academic support such as remedial work and tutoring as needed. Students receive substantial on-the-job training through the required clinical experience.

Overall, APNHO offers services related to work readiness, occupational education job placement, and job retention. In effect, "work readiness" is incorporated throughout the regular occupational training program at APNHO. Not only does the clinical experience provide a high intensity to prepare students for the workplace, but a 90-hour work readiness curriculum has become part of the overall coursework.

The domain of services the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) covers includes workforce, employer development and project MIS. The WIB has undertaken an initiative to recruit more employers outside the health care industry that would provide employment to youth offenders. The staff has developed informational materials on employer tax credits and the Federal Bonding Program.

The WIB provides monetary funding for the demonstration and for a new non-demonstration cohort, as well as in-kind support such as office space, computers, grant writing, supplies and work readiness curriculum. Employers in the health care field provide the in-kind support in terms of providing the supervision for students to gain clinical experience through education. The Palm Beach School District provides in-kind support for education that includes class space, use of buses, and grant writing.

PEG's offices are in a local One-Stop center. The One-Stop qualifies youth for WIA, specifically for funding for enrollment in APHNO's nursing and health occupations programs. Because APNHO has its own placement office for graduates of its programs, it does not generally need further assistance from the One-Stop. As the program expands beyond youth enrolled in the health occupations, however, the One-Stops will be directly involved in further job training and placement for these youth.

Reentry Services

Generally the project is not designed to work with the justice system at the time of sentencing, but after the youth are already in a correctional facility. PEG has begun offering services to youth prior to release, using non-project funds. Aftercare services are determined in coordination with PEG staff. APNHO instructors and the Dean at APNHO monitor the completion of requirements of probation and parole (which must be satisfied in order to be licensed by the state for health care jobs) and request additional support services as needed. Youth may be placed on academic leave until any problems are corrected, but this has not been needed for any project youth to date.

All students in the APNHO occupational programs, not just project youth, are required to participate in community service projects. Students see this as a group activity and thus have a positive attitude toward the concept of community service, rather than a punitive activity. Project staff believe that the community service projects, along with the health occupations club, serve to provide an opportunity to develop a sense of belonging to a positive group, as an alternative to gang association. This positive association is reinforced as both high school and APNHO students wear their health uniforms while in school and when they return to the community, increasing their sense of attachment to a profession and a career.

With regard to services for substance abuse, APNHO first requires any youth identified with a substance abuse problem to complete a rehabilitation program prior to enrollment. If problems are identified after enrollment, the actions taken depend on the nature of the problem. Instructors are the first to notice signs of problems; they discuss the situation with the Dean, who obtains information from the appropriate service agency to ensure the youth is following any agreed-upon treatment program. Similarly for mental health, instructors are very experienced in detecting signs of problems and in fact, some project youth have had some problems such as attempted suicide, so the staff are very aware of the potential for problems and then work with the Dean to make appropriate referrals for treatment services.

While the areas of health and housing may not strictly fall under the category of "reentry" services, the project makes a special effort to conduct comprehensive health assessments of each youth and also obtain information on family health histories. Instructors also incorporate health information into the classes, especially on reproductive health. Instructors watch for signs of health problems, and due to the familiarity of staff and the Dean with local, state, and federal programs, they are able to assist youth in obtaining health coverage and services, making sure the youth (and in some cases their families) qualify and get the needed care.

Housing has posed more of a challenge for the project. While the project does work with community agencies that are able to provide emergency funds, there are not enough housing facilities in the community for women with children nor for female offenders.

The project is able to access WIA support services for housing to the extent permitted under WIA regulations.

Public Management Model

Organizational Attributes

The project made a concerted effort from the beginning to incorporate the organizational attributes presented at the Post-Award Conference in September 2001 into its planning and implementation. The project rates very highly against all seven attributes, with notable success, as discussed previously, in building partnerships and collaboration among a range of community organizations. By focusing on the DOL goal of capacity-building from receipt of the grant, the project has had great success in leveraging resources, being especially effective in identifying potential funders for a range of initiatives. As to planning and managing the project, the grantee is the lead agency and has not only actively provided direction and coordination for the project, but has also make a conscious effort to approach the project as a "team effort" where the grantee is as much a partner as it is the lead agency. It should also be recognized that for this project, "grantee involvement" may only begin to describe the nature of the approach to managing the project. Though "leadership" is a difficult concept to measure, it is clearly evident, starting with the project director and other senior managers, at both APNHO and at the primary partners. There seems to be a strong sense of a common vision and a commitment to working with youth who face the greatest challenges in the workplace.

Workforce Development Services and Reentry Services

West Palm Beach has been able to provide a full range of workforce development services through its close partnership with the local WIB, as discussed in the previous section. A full array of services has been made available to youth through service providers in the community, which have been very supportive of the project's efforts.

Data Collection and Analysis

This component of the Public Management Model was originally one of the organizational attributes, and as such, the project made a concerted effort to develop a system for collecting program information that could be used to not only monitor youths' progress but also document their success. The evaluation coordinator began with a plan for using data to strengthen the program through careful analysis, and then the project subsequently added more data elements as it recognized the need for other information beyond that required by DOL.

The project maintains an extensive database on youth, including: math and reading skills, health and substance abuse status of youth and family, mental health, victim of domestic violence or sexual abuse, completion of GED/high school diploma/certification while enrolled in the program, completion of work readiness and basic skills program, completion of work experience, and wage at first, second, and third jobs. APNHO

routinely produces individual, client-level data to monitor progress and to catch potential problems with academic performance as early as possible.

Data obtained from these sources is also used to present their "case" to community agencies and funders to build support for their approach to helping the youth population. The profile information on clients enables the project to present summary information on characteristics of the population being served (e.g., percent who are youthful offenders, percent who have been victims of abuse, family situation, etc.) The project can clearly demonstrate successful outcomes for both in-school and out-of-school youth across a number of dimensions, including retention in school, improvement in reading and math (based on pre- and post-tests), and placement.

Through an agreement with the local One-Stop system, APNHO enters basic data directly into the WIA data system, which produces timely processing of WIA eligibility.

Continuous Improvement Loop

By virtue of using its implementation plan to monitor progress toward objectives, the project made a commitment to continuous improvement from the beginning. They devised a comprehensive database system for developing a thorough profile of clients and then track individual progress through all components of the program, from basic skills to occupational training to placement.

The project included a position for an evaluation coordinator at the beginning of the grant, which has provided a continual focus on objectives and outcomes. The project in essence has its own evaluation plan apart from the DOL evaluation process, which includes not only record keeping, but also information obtained from focus groups of clients and parents, formal and informal reports from APNHO faculty, instructors and guidance counselors at the high schools, and case managers, as well as employers during the clinical work experiences of the clients. They also get regular reports and hold meetings with staff from juvenile justice, the corrections department, gang unit, and probation officers.

Probably the best example of organizational learning is reflected in the experience with employers outside the health care industry. Originally, the youth offenders with whom PEG was working were expected to go through a work readiness and training process that would enable them to be placed in a range of jobs. When the project recognized that many employers were reluctant to hire youth offenders, project staff began to work with youth coming out of the justice system whom they felt could be encouraged to consider occupational training in health care. This approach has proved to be very successful as these youth have made substantial progress in completing the APNHO programs and gaining jobs in the health care industry.

Outcomes

Individual/Client level

As discussed previously, a very high percentage (approaching 100%) of in-school youth stayed in school for the duration of their participation in the program and received a high school diploma. Approximately 38 of 42 older youth have completed their training program at APHNO in the following occupations:

- Patient Care Assistant – 11;

- Patient Care Technician – 5;

- Medical Assistant – 9;

- Medical Assistant/Nurse Assistant – 4;

- Pharmacy Technician – 6;

- Nurse Assistant – 2; and

- Home Health Aide – 2.

One area of concern for the project is the wage levels and retention rates for students completing the program. Many health occupations have relatively low starting wages, which in itself can have an adverse effect on retention. On the other hand, the project already has evidence of a significant proportion of graduates who have experienced gains in wages over time. Further, a number of graduates have gone from initial wages of $6-$7 per hour to wages of $9, $10, and $11 an hour or more.

While retention rates are not as high as project staff would like, the experience with the "Linking People with Careers" initiative indicates that retention can be substantially improved if there is sufficient support available to a population that faces numerous challenges in the workplace, including the high cost of child care, the cost and availability of transportation from home to work, and a lack of experience in meeting employer's and supervisor's expectations in a full-time job.

Project/System Level

In many ways, West Palm Beach has been a "model" demonstration. While it is difficult to generalize from a single project, there is substantial evidence that the project has had a major impact on the way in which the community responds to the needs of youth offenders and youth at-risk. A number of accomplishments have been identified by the project, as follows, which are consistent with the findings of the evaluator:

- Development of an infrastructure that builds new and enhances the existing community services and capacity of the Workforce Investment Board, Youth Council, and One-Stop Centers so as to prepare youth for high quality employment with career ladder opportunities.

- Prevention of recidivism and promotion of recovery by building strong partnerships that promote and enhance year-round youth training for employment, school-to-work programs and academic enrichment.

- Development of strong linkages with employers, criminal justice and law enforcement agencies, Workforce Investment Board services, and grass roots community-based services.

- Maximization of cost sharing, leveraging of funds and investments of public and private educational agencies, employment organizations, businesses, Workforce Investment Board, and other community partners committed to community improvement and investment in youth beyond the period of the project grant.

- Continuation of services to project youth and new youth as a means for measuring the ongoing effectiveness of the infrastructure, and making adjustments as needed over time.

Barriers and Challenges

Though this project has reached a relatively mature stage, there remain barriers and challenges that may affect the ability of the project to sustain the integrated delivery of services to the target population over time.

One challenge identified during the second visit that project staff agreed might merit further attention is the fact that a very high percent of clients is female. This issue raises some question as to the extent to which the project might be replicable in other communities, since the project clearly focuses on helping youth with an interest in health occupations. While the project had originally hoped to serve a broad population of youth, difficulties experienced in obtaining buy-in from employers outside the health care industry caused the project to focus on what it did best – occupational training for health care – which happens to be predominantly female.

The project also remains concerned about how to better identify employers who will actually hire the target youth, especially outside of the health care industry. The target population is essentially competing for jobs against adults who have more work experience and no record of problems with the justice system. This has made it very difficult for project staff to identify employers that not only have job openings, but are also willing to hire from this population when they have a large pool of applicants from which to choose.

The project staff suggest that there may need to be more of a focus on a few employers who are expected to have regular job openings over time, rather than trying to match individual clients to current job openings. In their experience, employers who have had success with several graduates of APNHO are more likely to hire more graduates in the future. These employers have learned what to expect of the youth and also what they need to do to help the youth be successful employees. Otherwise, if you are placing one client at one employer at a time, each employer has a steep learning curve, and in fact, many employers recognize the extent of the challenge and decide it is simply easier not to hire such youth. In addition, training organizations such as APNHO will be better able to work with a smaller number of employers to provide the necessary support – it is certainly easier to provide support to five clients at one employer than five clients at five different employers.

Another challenge that APNHO has experienced concerns problems getting some of their health occupations on the locally approved WIA list of Targeted Occupations. This is required for receiving WIA funding for training for these jobs. Some of the health occupations have either too low a starting wage or too low an average paid rate to make the list, despite having a large number of vacancies for those jobs in the community. This seems to reflect a lack of understanding of the importance of getting youth in training programs that will lead to actual jobs. For this target population, just getting a job is extremely important; once they get a job, even at a low wage, they can build a resume and a positive job history. Even if the specific occupation does not appear to have a good average paid rate, individual jobs vary and you would also expect that there will be upward movement by going on to other jobs within the health care field that do pay higher wages, assuming the individual can get the training for the first job. Thus, the restrictive nature of the Targeted Occupations list has the perverse consequence of preventing opportunities for the population having the most challenges to get training and employment. As an example, the job of Nursing Aide was dropped from the list after March 2003 because the average paid wage was too low – despite some 3,000 openings for this job in the region.

One suggestion from West Palm Beach staff is for communities that are trying to serve the youth offender and at-risk populations to start with the Targeted Occupations list in their community and identify the jobs that have the largest number of openings. Then identify local training and education providers that are willing to work with this population; in their experience, there are always training providers willing to come forward if they know there will be WIA training funds available. Clearly, if there are a large number of openings, employers will be more receptive to hiring graduates of these training programs regardless of their troubled personal histories. Another advantage of focusing on training providers is that they already have linkages with employers in the community who are trying to fill openings. Such providers have placement services and an incentive to make connections with employers to place graduates of their programs. This might be more efficient than trying to target a range of employers in a community, since the training providers already have a system in place to provide both training and placement into high-demand jobs.

APPENDIX E

Description of Services Offered by Each Project

Assessments – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Domains	Organization	Timing	Instruments	Repeated?	Other Information
Chicago	Education; counseling needs (drug, individual, group, family);health; criminal history; and financial	Screening is done by CMs at Latino Youth and Scholarship & Guidance based upon youth's Zip code; referrals are made to partner agencies for services	Upon initial entry into project	In-person interviews by trained CMs; (Test of Adult Basic Education and other Youth Assessment Tests)	CMs determine whether additional assessment is needed: psychiatric, psychological, educational, vocational	
			Some services are mandated by courts, such as substance abuse treatment.	CMs visit families with POs		
Cincinnati	Basic skills, job readiness, occupational skills training, living situation ,mental/physical health. supportive services, e.g., transportation	Service Navigator Unit; service providers also may do additional assessments before they refer youth; WIA eligibility determined ("reverse referral") after SNU refers youth them for services	Goal is to assess and determine eligibility in two meetings within two weeks; but determining eligibility so youth can be enrolled frequently takes longer than two weeks, sometimes it takes months	WRAT3 (Wide Range Achievement Test), TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education), interviews; no substance abuse/mental health screening instruments, but referral may provide some info in these areas	Revisited in 90-day reviews with Service Navigator Unit	
Colorado	Health, substance abuse, mental health, education, and risk	Division of Youth Corrections	Orientation			
	Education	Metro College Academy; school	While in orientation	Woodcock-Johnson for both pre and post test		
	ISS Tri-county, IEP Days	Each workforce center	While at LMSYC - at intake (90 days) before release			
	IEP	Vocational rehabilitation	At first meeting		Tri-county start and end	
Des Moines	Health, substance abuse, mental health	Polk County Primary Health Care	Case managers make a referral for assessment based on the ISP and information gained through interaction with youth			Project had requested and received TA regarding acquisition of an assessment tool for interest survey and aptitude assessment designed for youth exploring career and educational options. The project did not purchase the software due to lack of resources.

Assessments – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Domains	Organization	Timing	Instruments	Repeated?	Other Information
Erie	Medical, drug and alcohol, education, employment history, criminal history, family background, workforce preparation, mental health	Perseus House	At enrollment	BroadReach assessment	No, but monitored for 12 months	
	WIA core elements	Perseus House	At enrollment	Core elements & needs assessment	No, but monitored for 12 months	
Hartford		Hartford Youth Access Program (Grantee) and City of Hartford's Health and Human Services Department	As soon as possible after enrollment	Mostly self-reported or through the school system or from HHS		
New York City	Education WIT/WAT. TABE, employment, mental health and risk, health	Education Dept. Beryl David and Dr. Perry	Given at beginning; periodically to move up; GED standard	Self-designed TABE; Part screening		
Pittsburgh	Employment history	Addison Behavioral Lab (ABC)	Goal is to assess all youth within 30 days of coming to program; takes about 1½ hours	ABC-designed questionnaire; psycho-social eval; medical log; registration form; family med history; no urinalysis	Usually assess only once but would occasionally do again	
	Criminal history	Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic (WPIC)	Goal to assess within 30 days; takes about 1¼ hours	Drug Use Seriousness Inventory; Beck Depression Inventory; SCARED; Connor's (for ADHD)	Usually assess only once	
	Family background	BluePrint	At Intake	Intake interview & assessment forms used by YouthWorks; self-administered screening instrument for AOD abuse	Information updated as case manager works with client and needs change	
West Palm Beach	Workforce preparation; mental health	APNHO	At enrollment; assessments of "barriers and challenge" is ongoing, including physical and mental health and personal situations		Reading and math to assess improvements	

Individual Service Plan – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Which Domains?	Which Organization Prepares?	Do Youth Participate?	Does Family Participate?	Do Partners Participate?
Chicago	Part of route counseling services provided by Latino Youth and Scholarship and Guidance	Youth in North Lawndale and Austin are handled by S&GA; youth in South Lawndale are handled by Latino Youth	Youth goals are considered when ISP is developed	Yes	POs; CMs; and service providers during transitional meetings, when youth is assigned to service providers
Cincinnati	Identify needs in the areas of: tutoring, alternative secondary education, paid/unpaid work, leadership development, mentoring, comprehensive guidance and counseling, summer employment, occupational skills training	Service Navigator Unit, which operates under a subcontract	Answering questions; youth discuss goals and preferences with CMs	Sometimes; families must give permission for enrollment of youth under age 18	If referred by an agency, that agency may review the plan. Usually, it is only the Service Navigator Unit.
Colorado	Health, mental health, substance abuse, education, employment and housing	Division of Youth Corrections after adjudication			Meeting – mental health, vocational rehabilitation, workforce, client managers etc.
	Employment	Workforce centers	Yes	Ideal; not always	
Des Moines	Employment, education, training, barriers (requirements ref. probation/parole), driver's license, health care	ICHS and Spectrum	Completes the "Career Awareness and Navigation" ISP with case manager		Other agencies, as appropriate, participate in wrap around
Erie	WIA core elements	Primarily Perseus House and Bayfront Center; other services are provided by public schools or appropriate community-based organizations	Jointly developed by CMs and youth	Developed with CMS and youth	None
Hartford	Education (PLCP is actually more personal and family information than a plan for services at the current time)	Hartford Youth Access	With case manager		HHS, Hartford Public Schools
New York City	Employment, education, counseling, youth leadership, health insurance, child health plus leadership, mentoring	Team puts together	Part of team	If to be had	

Individual Service Plan – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Which Domains?	Which Organization Prepares?	Do Youth Participate?	Does Family Participate?	Do Partners Participate?
Pittsburgh	Education, employment, personal/social assets and deficits	BluePrint	Youth provides information and helps decide on goals and plans	Families usually do not participate, although they may	ABC and WPIC provide written input after assessment. In the past, team meetings would involve them along with justice representative and BluePrint staff to discuss ISS. WPIC has concern now that they don't know how mental health recommendations are reflected in ISS. ABC gets feedback in separate meetings with BluePrint coordinator.
West Palm Beach	Full range of services covered in ISP; also includes youth's goals, which can change over time	APNHO	With case manager	Sometimes	Generally this is APNHO and PEG staff member who works with each youth as needed

Route Counseling – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Which agency provides?	Ratio of CMs to youth	Frequency Of Contact	Service Team	Location	Family Involvement
Chicago	Latino Youth	Two case managers handle 15 active youth, plus inactive youth	Goal is weekly; often every two weeks	CMs are required to maintain contact with services providers who are assigned youth	Both in the office and at home visits	Parenting for young moms who need help; CMs meet with families; Home visits are conducted with POs who refer youth to the project; CMs also help family members find jobs when possible
	Scholarship and Guidance	Three case managers (includes one case manager supervisor) handle 16 active youth, plus inactive youth	Goal is at least every two weeks	CMs are required to maintain contact with services providers who are assigned youth. CM's are trained counselors	Both in the office and at home visits	
Cincinnati	Service Navigator Unit provides "comprehensive guidance and counseling" for all youth	Average of 80 youth per Navigator CM; project aims for 40-50 youth per CM in future	Once every 90 days unless special issues come up; CMs attempt to have contact in person. One counselor has contact with youth at least once a month		Varies	As needed; parents often call CMs to discuss youth problems and progress
Colorado	Division of Youth Corrections	25:1			On grounds	
	Tri-county, Arapahoe-Doug, Adams, Denver		One time per month minimum	On grounds - Client Managers and case team meet; after release Client manager calls if not doing well	Depending upon youth needs	Client manager meeting, family meetings, informal - almost always. Families know that youth can still get help after release from parole.
Des Moines	ICHS and Spectrum	Approx. 25 clients per case manager though not all youth are "active" to same degree.	Older youth: Daily	Two CMs as a team		
Erie	Perseus House	1:60 maximum for each CM	During Bayfront experience: every week.	Aftercare counselor	Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies serves as meeting place for some youth	Initially, at completion of program, and as needed during the year
			After Bayfront experience: once per month or more often if needed	Aftercare counselor	Location depends on youth and needs. May be at Perseus House, school attending, home, work site, etc.	

Route Counseling – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Which agency provides?	Ratio of CMs to youth	Frequency Of Contact	Service Team	Location	Family Involvement
Hartford	Hartford Youth Access	Two case managers have 138 youth - HYA is trying to get more agencies' staff trained as case managers	Mostly at enrollment		Eventually, at each participating agency.	
New York City	Just forming a formal route counseling system within FOIA. Youth in GED are supposed to be there everyday. There are 4 case managers - each with 50 youth. Youth are always welcome to come back for personal or employment help. Families are invited for evening events about FOIA for their youth.					
Pittsburgh	BluePrint	Each CM is responsible for about 15 youth	8-12 times a month: either in-person with youth or with others involved with the youth	Route counseling supervisor and route counselor; executive director of YouthWorks sometimes becomes directly involved with youth	As needed - at the BluePrint office or at locations within the community	Usually none. Most youth do not have parents who are willing to be involved. Project is considering starting a parent support group to see if that will help get more families involved.
West Palm Beach	APNHO	Small case loads; about 15 per CM/instructor		Case managers	At the local agency providing the service	

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Work Readiness – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Curriculum	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Subsidized Experience
Chicago	Latino Youth, a subcontractor of Goodwill that primarily provides route counseling services	Agency holds workshops for youth, including mock interviews; resume completion for younger youth	Career development, career exploration, job shadowing and subsidized work experience	These are held as a one-session workshop	Offered periodically (Project focuses on younger youth, so this is not a priority)	Provides some in-house work experience at the alternative school for those youth who are enrolled
	Youth Employment Services, a subcontractor of Goodwill	Y.E.S. has formal program for older youth, which includes job interviewing skills, mock interviews, and resume completion	Career development, career exploration, internships, job placement, job retention, follow-up services and referrals to help youth further their educations	While youth is assigned to the agency; Y.E.S. offers a 2-week job search enhancement class	Offered to youth who are assigned to Y.E.S.	Internships last 4-8 weeks; 20-30 hours a week
Cincinnati	Six providers with WIA contracts: ICS (14-20, in school); JCG (14-20, in school); LCW (19-21 males, out of school); YEDI (14-21, in or out of school); YMCA (14-19, in school); YWCA (16-21, females, out of school; parent/parenting only) Project can also use providers without WIA contracts if necessary	Depends on provider	Varies	Varies	ICS has stipends	
Colorado	Metro Core Services	All youth –part of school curriculum	Employers speak about what employers look for - occasional relationships	Two times per month for 1/2 hour each time		
	LMYSC	YEARS-STEPS, Interactive Be Real Games	STEPS: Career assessment, dress, interviews, job search, resume, practice games	STEPS: 6-8 weeks	STEPS: 5.5 hours per day; 1 hour/3 days a week	
	Tricounty Workforce	Refresher-through the center or with workforce specialist. One on one				Metro - work crew, horse trailers
	Arapahoe-Douglas, Adams, Denver		YEARS only redesigned after experience by workforce specialists		STEPS: 5.5 hours for 5 days	

Work Readiness – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Curriculum	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Subsidized Experience
Des Moines	ICHS and Spectrum	Life skills class		One hour	Daily	Yes -One hour at minimum wage
	YouthBuild		Work experience with learning component	Afternoons	Daily	Yes
	Other Work Experience		Emphasis on work expectations (e.g., on time, dressed appropriately)	Afternoons	Daily	Yes
Erie	Bayfront Center for Maritime Studies	Basic employee skills; boat building as a work experience	Prescribed hands-on experience; includes video tapes, and workbooks	Eight weeks	Saturdays for 6-7 hours each	$3.25/hour
	Perseus House	Workplace essential skills	Level 1: works within the eyesight of the supervisor. Level 2: works inside out of sight of supervisor	Eight weeks; varies depending on the progress of the youth and their needs and responsibilities	Saturdays for 1-2 hours; varies depending on the progress of the youth and their needs and responsibilities	Part of Bayfront experience at $3.25/hour
		Supervised structured work experience	Level 3: Works outside out of sight of supervisor.			
	French Creek Council of the Boy Scouts of America	Learning for life	Curriculum activities plus seminars about particular professions by local community members	School year	Monthly meetings	Subsidized at $3.25/hour
Hartford	Capital Region Workforce Development Board	This is just being developed; the main activity is the summer youth Employment and Learning Program (50 project youth in 2003) which combines summer jobs and employability skills training.				
	Workforce Training Associates – WIA Contractor		So far has not provided any services to project youth			
	Coaltion Employment Services (CES)		Provides assistance with transportation, documents needed for employment, job preparation skills and other work readiness			
New York City	FOIA	Art of War: Way to solve problems. Kemenec leads	Six- hour. job readiness. 1 hour computer classs	1 week to 4 weeks class + tutoring can extend for 2 months	In Sept. 10-12 and 1-3	
	Workforce 1	Changed focus on applications. Lots of 1:1 with less developed elements; seems better; those more ready, complete class	Job coach. Preparation for jobs - what to expect; intro. Prep. Takes to interviews where staff's had previous contact; waits with them.	Job coach. Usually two days/week		

Work Readiness – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Curriculum	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Subsidized Experience
Pittsburgh	YouthWorks (grantee) provides classes, with follow up by BluePrint case manager	Basic training for all youth: YouthWorks curriculum - commitment to succeed, workplace etiquette, communication skills, interviewing, resumes, letters, applications, employment forms, money matters, job searching tips, who's in your corner. Also, some additional training such as U. of Pittsburgh project and pre-Job Corps project with supplemental grant.	Instruction, role playing, discussion, workbook exercises, practice, etc.	Varies: multiple sessions: one 7-hour workshop; one-on-one; follow up with case managers	As needed	Usually not. There are exceptions: as U. of Pittsburgh project gives youth stipend for time spent with community organizations; in pre-Job Corps project, youth will get stipend
West Palm Beach	APNHO, local WIB	Work readiness curriculum is comprehensive; focus on health related occupational program	Major component. Work readiness is integrated into regular occupational training program at APNHO. Staff were trained in a program sponsored by the WDB whereby if APNHO instructors conduct 90 hours of the required work readiness curriculum and client passes the test, then client receives a Work Readiness Certificate.	90 hours; ongoing	Built in to clinical experience, which has high levels of intensity	Clinical experience during training

Job Placement – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Job Types	Youth Employer Network
Chicago	Both Latino Youth and Scholarship and Guidance refer older youth to Y.E.S., which provides soft skills training and job placement services			CMs at Y.E.S. act as coaches, assisting youth with developing and implementing their job search plan. Plan is reviewed every 30 days.	Entry level positions in groceries, Deutsche Post; Youth placed mainly in unskilled positions	Does not exist, although project has had some success with individual employers, such as Deutsche Post
Cincinnati	Same providers that handle work readiness; Can refer to the One-Stop if youth is age 22-24			Depends on the provider selected; the agencies are not the responsibility of the SNU, and CMs have limited information about their nature.(CMs only refer to the agencies.)		
Colorado	LMYSC	Some workforce specialists help youth to have job at release				
	Tri County, Adams, Denver counties; Arapahoe-Douglas, Vocational rehabilitation; Vocational rehabilitation has network of employers	Workforce specialists aid at One-Stops; each agency tries to locate where the jobs are and tries to connect the youth	As long as it takes; vocational rehabilitation has a 90-day clock but if youth loses a job it starts again	1 contact per week for 90 days is workforce specialists norm; after that once a week in case of crisis	Vocational rehabilitation. aims at jobs at $10 per hour; mostly public works; warehousing	No. Just forming at each workforce center and among the four; center for youth employment has been disbanded
Des Moines	ICHS and Spectrum	Uses contacts in the construction industry; also gives assistance in getting short-term entry-level jobs of any type (fast-food etc.)				None developed to date; One-Stop does not have a network of employers hiring youth offenders
Erie	BroadReach aftercare coordinator	Aftercare coordinator takes youth to potential employers based on youth interests and needs	12 months	As appropriate	Entry-level positions, e.g., fast food, food service, grocery stores, etc.	Had one at the beginning but found that youth were not ready for the level of position employers needed
Hartford	Coalition Employment Services (CES)	Just getting started; a few placements to-date				CES develops relationship with employers to overcome concerns about hiring offenders
New York City	FOIA	Takes youth to industry of interest; job coach sets up a time at place in industry of interest; takes 3-4 at a time; usually fewer; some find jobs on their own	Two days per week	Until job placement - apply, feedback, try again		Three major employers: Old Navy, Duane Reed (drug store), and Hale and Hearty (restaurant chain)
						Security firm $6 per hour Holiday season - lots of openings at UPS

Job Placement – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Job Types	Youth Employer Network
Pittsburgh	BluePrint	For out-of-school youth, project focuses on job placement. Project coordinator believes BluePrint needs a job developer, as DOL has recommended. YouthWorks executive director believes there are other organizations that can do this and that BluePrint needs to link better with them. One Stop (CareerLink) intends to open additional mini-centers. YouthWorks hopes to put some staff there, which would make the centers a better resources for job development and placement of youth.			Almost exclusively retail-grocery stores, car wash, fast food. Youth do not have skills even for construction jobs.	None exists. Closest thing is the YouthWorks Business Cabinet, a consortium of mostly retail businesses, which provide some help to youth in finding jobs. But they have traditionally been oriented toward YouthWorks' regular clients.
West Palm Beach	APNHO	Uses its own placement process for all graduates			Health occupations	

Job Retention – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Frequency of Follow Up	Employer Contact?
Chicago	Y.E.S. provides for older youth who get jobs		CMs maintain contact with youth who are working	CMs help youth transition to new job; on the job meetings held with youth	Cob coaching continues 90 days after placement; gradually phased out as youth progresses	As needed
Cincinnati	Service Navigator Unit and providers	Depends on organization	12 months. Which organization follows up depends on which one was working with the youth when he/she got a job			Some providers may have employer networks and relationships that allow them to do this. SNU does not contact employer. They would need a release of information form from youth for employer to provide information Plus, CMs say employers don't want to be bothered with inquiries about employees.
Colorado	Tri-county, Arapahoe-Douglas, Adams, Denver Counties regular contacts;	Workforce specialist at each agency tries to connect the youth through regular contacts	On-going through grant	One time per week at first; One time per month after unless a problem	Minimum: one time per month	Yes; but does not seem to be systematic or regular. Federal bonding offered but not used.
Des Moines	ICHS and Spectrum	Case managers do periodic follow-up (there is not a structured system for retention). There has also been experience that youth will contact their case manager if they need help with transportation, child care, etc.			Periodic	
Erie	BroadReach aftercare coordinator	Follow-up with employers, schools, and parents	12 months	Once a month or more if needed		Yes
Hartford	One-Stop center recently hired a (youth) job retention specialist	Retention specialist works out of the One-Stop for months after placement, working through barriers to persistence on a job - whether family, personal or job-related				
	Community Partners in Action (CES)					

Job Retention – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Frequency of Follow Up	Employer Contact?
New York City	FOIA	Start date - call home to get family support; talk to family; ask to come to FOIA. P-T job incentives get metro tickets. F-T - movie tickets once a week. First week is crucial; if problem, job coach works with youth and employer	Talk to supervisor. Employer has phone number; first two weeks check often; once a week after	90 days		Biggest problem - pushed to work when not ready. Push for funds, will take to street
Pittsburgh	BluePrint	CMs query youth about how things are going on the job and whether they are still there; some services provided to help youth succeed, such as transportation subsidy for first two weeks on a new job	As needed	As needed	CMs follows up weekly with all youth	CMs regularly contact employer to see how things are going. They want to make sure they are pleased with the clients BluePrint sends to them.
West Palm Beach	"Linking People with Careers;" using non-DOL funds	Assistance and guidance for approx. 30 clients	Starting while in training program at APNHO through placement	As needed	Regular meetings with project coordinator, throughout training and early employment period	Morse Geriatrc Center is employer working with LPC
	APNHO	Some follow-up after placement	APNHO provides some retention effort for youth after placement as for its other graduates; project did not have enough funds for staff to provide any regular follow-up support for DOL youth			

Alternative Sentencing – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Court Partners Contact?
Chicago	The project is not an alternative sentencing program, although the goal is to make it one; youth volunteer for the project after adjudication				POs are the driving force behind efforts to establish the project as an alternative sentencing program
Cincinnati	No formal program; sometimes a judge will assign a youth to the project as a condition of parole This is not tracked in the SNU's MIS; informal arrangement	Nothing different from usual services	Varies	Court involved in designating project as alternative	No report back to the court; if there is any follow up, it is done by parole officer
Colorado	NA				
Des Moines	ICHS and Spectrum	Get referrals from the juvenile court; go with youth to court to demonstrate the youth is meeting conditions of probation			Juvenile Court
Erie	Not part of the program per se; happens with judges and district magistrates before involvement in the program				
Hartford		Just getting started; state is starting to look at approaches to alternative sentencing because the high rate of recidivism seems to indicate that current approach to corrections is not working. One approach would be route counseling at an early stage of interaction of a youth with the justice system, to bring together a broader range of services and interventions in a more holistic way - e.g. get every youth into an education and/or employability program.			
New York City	Six to eight cases remain; folded into route counseling; all from Judge Corriero	Most were in school. Youth come to FOIA afterward for educational activities; discontinued	Depended upon the court assignment	Daily	Yes; Judge Michael Corriero

Alternative Sentencing – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Court Partners Contact?
Pittsburgh	BluePrint and judge	Participation in BluePrint as an alternative to incarceration. (About 10 youth have come to BluePrint this way, although it's not project's preference.) Judge contacts BP, including some judges from neighboring towns; if youth have a connection to the city, project will take them.	Varies	Same experience as others in BluePrint	Yes
West Palm Beach	PEG	Generally project is not designed to work with the justice system at the time of sentencing, but after the youth already are in correctional facility. PEG has been offering services to youth prior to release, using non-DOL funds.			

Aftercare – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Follow-Up	Partners Contact?	Graduated Sanctions?
Chicago	Project does not have IAC program, although its original design had Project C.I.T.Y. doing this						
Cincinnati	Not being tracked by SNU; youth may or may not be in aftercare program, but they wouldn't know						
Colorado	Division of Youth Corrections (not part of DOL grant)	Coordinated CBOs, YouthBiz, Arts Street, do follow up, Job coaching etc.	Six months; formerly nine months			Workforce specialists and client managers (parole officers) contacted each other regularly	NA
Des Moines	ICHS and Spectrum	Information is collected on requirements of probation or parole during intake. As part of the daily LifeSkills class, youth indicate goals they need to meet to satisfy conditions of probation or parole - e.g. , get a job to pay restitution. Then this becomes a part of regular goal-setting and weekly review process.					
Erie	Not part of the program per se; happens with probation officers or case worker when youth is in Children's Services						

Aftercare – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Follow-Up	Partners Contact?	Graduated Sanctions?
Hartford		Just getting started - only some of the agencies with MOUs, such as Health and Human Services, are actually in a position to provide services.					
New York City	Sent by Probation Deartment office a few blocks away; Department is grateful; wants FOIA to train its Probation officers	NA	NA	NA	NA	Parole officers now visit youth at FOIA	NA
Pittsburgh	Juvenile Court	Court-mandated programs usually at The Academy (run by Juvenile Court). After school programs, anger management, curfews, etc.	As mandated	As mandated	BluePrint case manager follows up to check on status		Unknown
	Project also has relationship with Bowling Brook correctional facility for youth in Frederick, MD	Facility has called them to come meet with youth before they are released to get them transitioned to BluePrint immediately	NA	NA	NA	Yes	Only if part of court supervision; not a BluePrint function
West Palm Beach	PEG and APNHO	Monitor youth to ensure they are meeting requirements of parole and probation	Instructors at APNHO monitor behavior of youth and request support services as needed. If a youth does not meet requirements, this will be found at time of application for license for health care jobs in Florida.				Youth may be placed on academic leave until problem is corrected (no youth has done this to date)

Community Service – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	Paid/Restitution	Other Information
Chicago	Latino Youth can provide this, but no project youth are participating at this time						
Cincinnati	Not a project service. Some of the providers may have this as part of their programs; SNU doesn't know						
Colorado		Restitution usually completed while at LMYSC; not part of YEARS plan					
Des Moines	ICHS and Spectrum	Occasional; examples: Built and installed benches at a home; painted GED classroom					These are not court ordered but part of the activities of the group of out-of-school youth with whom staff meets daily
Erie	Not a formal part of the program. For some youth with required community service hours, the Bayfront experience meets the obligation.						
	For others, the supervised work experience may count toward their required community service hours.	Supervised work experience: janitorial, grounds maintenance, painting, etc.	Varies	Varies		If owed, part of the $3.25 paid for participation may apply	
Hartford							

Community Service – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	Paid/Restitution	Other Information
New York City	FOIA	GIIFT PAK makes presentations in schools and public housing projects; group has offered 54 workshops; core group of 5-6 each year do all presentations	One hour	By invitation	Connected to schools and public housing		800 youth have attended presentations
Pittsburgh	No specific community service expectation for youth						
	However, some youth participate with Project with University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work (about 10 youth: Community Builders Catalyst for Change)	Youth work with a community agency on a project. At weekly meetings, they report on the work. They also prepare to apply for college, financial aid, etc.	Meets at University of Pittsburgh as a group 1-4:30 p.m. once a week for a semester	Time spent as a group and also on individual project with their community agency	Yes	Stipend for work done at community agency	
	Some youth in court-imposed community service; that would be supervised by court						
West Palm Beach		Each cohort at APNHO participates in community service projects, so youth see it as a group activity, not a court ordered requirement					

Anti-Gang Activity – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	Police Contact?
Chicago	YMCA street intervention unit works out of Latino Youth offices (also covers youth managed through Scholarship and Guidance). According to unit manager, his team of seven deals with about 70 youth in target neighborhoods.	CMs identify gang members; street intervention unit staff meets with them, gradually gaining their confidence. If youth indicates an interest in extracting himself from gang, staff helps with the process. Staff maintains contact with family; will meet with gang leaders to effect the process	Extracting youth from gang can take a year or more. Staff members help with the process.	Staff interacts weekly, sometimes daily, with young gang members	Case managers and YMCA staff work closely together	Very low key effort; building trust of youth takes time, and unit members are cautious about taking actions that might jeopardize this effort
Cincinnati	SNU has no specific activities labeled as anti-gang. They feel that anything that re-channels youth's identification and improves their manners and behavior would be related to this. They are careful not to mix youth from different neighborhoods or schools in services they provide.					
	At systems level, the project helped develop a Youth Offender and Gang Prevention Advisory Board to discuss innovative diversion and gang prevention strategies.	Meet and discuss			Yes	Yes
Colorado	YEARS	Counseling; some assigned to GRASP	20 weeks at LMYSC	Every Friday 3-5 p.m.	CBO	No
Des Moines	ICHS and Spectrum	Especially for out-of-school youth, the full day of activities (life skills, GED class, afternoon work experience) seems to be the best "anti-gang" strategy; youth have less time to interact with neighborhood friends in gangs				
Erie	Not formally part of BroadReach but integral part of Perseus House. All youth participate in Aggression Replacement Training (ART). Youth not part of Perseus House programs may not receive this training.					
Hartford						

E-20

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	Police Contact?
	Anti-Gang Activity – Provided by Round Two Projects					
New York City	FOIA	Outreach GIFT PAK is gang and violence prevention; members all in gangs; rules - no flags, colors at FOIA; in same classroom - O.K. with each other; try to replace what gang offers - move away; sense of belonging is main anti-gang effort				
Pittsburgh	BluePrint	Staff considers the project an anti-gang activity. Project strives to create a sense of "family" to replace lure of gangs. BluePrint and YouthWorks are represented on Gang-free Schools and Community Partnership's Advisory and Assessment Teams. One CM and YouthWorks executive director are on intervention team. Executive director works within the community to try to reduce tension and resolve conflicts in nonviolent way. Project offers youth BluePrint Clothing for new identity.				
West Palm Beach		All students join a health occupation club, which is active for the duration of their training program. This provides a strong sense of belonging to a positive group, as an alternative to gang association. This positive association is reinforced as both high school and APNHO students wear their health uniforms while in school, increasing their sense of attachment to a profession.				

Academic Education – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Levels	Partners Contact?	Schools Contact?
Chicago	Latino Youth and other alternative schools in the community.	Screening and assessments by CMs at intake. Most youth in the YouthLink program attend alternative schools, rather than the public schools. Graduates of the alternative schools receive a Chicago Public Schools diploma. Out of school youth often enroll in GED program.	Varies. Youth assigned to Latino Youth alternative school can be in program for years.	Varies, depending upon skill levels and needs of youth	Youth who cannot perform at the fifth grade level are assigned to a self-paced computer course. Once they attain this level they can be assigned to Latino Youth's alternative school.	Instituto del Progresso Latino makes available its charter high school for Latino youth, a family literacy program and ESL classes; also provides hand-on office skills training.	CMs work with Chicago Public Schools to place youth, usually in alternative school. CPS serves in an advisory role.
Cincinnati	If youth is deficient in basic skills, Service Navigator Unit identifies a provider to support youth in improving basic skills by one grade level in 6-12 months.	Agency can provide ESL courses, if youth needs them					
Colorado	Division of Youth Corrections	On grounds, Metro Academy	Some still working on GED. Few return to high school or community college				
	Workforce centers	YEARS - YEARS usually school and job; few want more schooling					Some - not often; meet with school person and parents; not always a good fit
Des Moines	YMCA	GED class	Daily until completed	Two hours daily			
	ICHS	Summer program	One-on-one tutoring (no longer funded)				

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Academic Education – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Levels	Partners Contact?	Schools Contact?
Erie	Academic component will be added through a DOL supplemental grant to Perseus House	Use of three software packages: A+nywhere Learning Systems, Academy of Reading, and UltraKey	Varies; depends on placement in type of program	Depends on the educational needs of the student as determined by the teacher	6th-12th grades		
Hartford	Hartford Public Schools	There are not enough staff or service providers to meet needs of youth - school system received a $9 million grant over three years to strengthen support programs.					
New York City	Literacy	Read, Math, Writing	Mon-Thurs. All year. Sept. - Dec. Advance tests, report cards, monthly progress report, English for sixs months	9-1 p.m.	1-3 grade level in reading, writing and math	Certified teacher	
	Basic Ed	Math, social studies, science, English, writing	Mon-Fri. All year. Sept. - Dec. Advance tests, report cards, monthly progress report; English for six months	9-1 p.m.	4-6 grade level	Certified teacher	
	Pre GED	Pre-GED texts; additional support material	Mon-Thurs. All year. Sept. - Dec. Advance tests, report cards, monthly progress report, English for 6 months	3:30 to 6:30 p.m.	7 grade - post-high school	Certified teacher	
	GED	Focus on GED test taking	Until youth can pass predictor test	3:30-6:30 p.m.	Ready for test	Certified teacher	

Academic Education – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Levels	Partners Contact?	Schools Contact?
Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh Board of Public Education	Serves youth at "regular" public schools, alternative schools, vocational schools				Represented at partners meetings	Regularly, with respect to individual youth
	Allegheny Intermediate Unit	Operates facility-based education programs				Interacts with the project in specific facilities, not as part of partners' meetings	On client level
West Palm Beach	APNHO and Palm Beach School System	Special health occupations class conducted at the school	Two hours daily for academic credit				Two high schools; Two alternative schools

Vocational Education – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	OJT	Partners Contact?	Schools Contact?
Chicago	Latino Youth has a graphic arts component, which is an elective for those enrolled in the school	Screening by CMs. School offers: Web design 1 and graphic arts 1, 2, and 3.	This is an elective for those enrolled in Latino Youth alternative school			Free Spirit Media, a subcontractor, exposes youth to film/video making and production	
Cincinnati	No standing contracts to provide these services. Staff says this is a difficult need to meet because there is limited vocational education in school system. Cost of services would have to be covered under "supportive services." Hard to get funds released to purchase these services for youth. With the county, they would have to get competitive bids from providers. More flexibility with city but still difficult.						
Colorado	Division of Youth Corrections	Silk screen printing, furniture construction, computer construction, culinary arts, horse trailer refurbishing					
Des Moines	Spectrum and YouthBuild and ICHS	Mostly subsidized work experience; some WIA supported training but not much. Some youth are now going on to Des Moines Community College.	Daily until GED completed		YouthBuild and Spectrum for experience in construction - though not actual training as such.		
Erie	Bayfront	Boat building	Eight weeks	6-7 hours on Saturday	No		

Vocational Education – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	OJT	Partners Contact?	Schools Contact?
Hartford		Just beginning to develop a plan to permit youth to have larger selection of WIA - funded training opportunities					
New York City	Vocational education available from the NYC Board of Education; not part of DOL grant	1) HVAC; 2) electronics; 3) computers certification; 4) asbestos and lead abatement 5); building material; 5) plumbing					
Pittsburgh	Board of Education	Voc. Tech School	As needed	As needed	No	Yes	Yes
	Connelley Vocational Letsche Alternative School	Used especially as referral for GED prep					
	Manufacturers 2000 and others	Pre-employment training for non-stipend apprenticeship					
West Palm Beach	APNHO	Postsecondary training programs in health occupations; substantial OJT through required clinical experience	Duration depends on the specific occupational program				

Substance Abuse – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	S.A. Agency Contact?
Chicago	Case managers provide some counseling services, but often refer to Roseboro and Associates during intake	Roseborough and Associates provides youth assistance in substance abuse, domestic violence: some individual counseling; reduction of risk factors; family involvement; group sessions; motivation support; assessments; prevention and education interventions; peer mentoring	Varies, depending upon needs of youth	Varies, depending upon needs of youth		
Cincinnati	Talbert House provides if needed; funding is not an issue; no formal assessment for these needs; informally, perhaps five to ten of project youth have needed some help					
	Staff was not sure how many, if any, of youth have been referred for service or have gone					
Colorado	Division of Youth Corrections at LMYSC	Well-organized groups at LMYSC. Tracked by client managers. Funded partially now by YEARS	Parole – five to six months	Depends on youth	Arranged through DYC; paid for by DOL grant	Primarily DYC; depends on client managers
Des Moines	Polk County Primary Health Care (PCPHC)	On-going assessment of out-of-school youth during the daily life skills class; then contact PCPHC for assessments; PCPHC works out a referral to a service provider for actual treatment as needed in each case				

Substance Abuse – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	S.A. Agency Contact?
Erie	Referred to Greater Erie Community Action Committee counselor at Perseus House or to school counselor as appropriate; youth is referred to community agency if not in a Perseus House program					
Hartford	Health and Human Services	Each youth gets an individualized treatment plan				
New York City	Refer out services to Day Top - 3 blocks away or to Educational Alliance for residential care				Medicaid or SSI, Child Health. Project Stay - will help get funds - Medicaid (Dr. Cohall)	
Pittsburgh	Addison Behavioral Care (ABC)	Assessment of all youth; treatment sessions at ABC	Treatment sessions: One hour per week	ABC does not offer individual sessions		
West Palm Beach	APNHO	Youth is required to complete rehabilitation prior to enrollment if there is a record of a problem	Depends on the nature of the problem - instructors are the first to notice signs of problem; they discuss the situation with the dean, who obtains information from the service agency to ensure the youth is following the treatment program			

Mental Health – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	Health Agency Contact?
Chicago	Youth enrolled at Latino Youth are referred to Scholarship & Guidance, which has trained mental health counselors	Individual, family and group counseling is available. Services on social skills building, anger management, conflict resolution and violence prevention.	As needed			Scholarship & Guidance makes available psychological evaluations and psychiatric consultations as needed by youth.
Cincinnati	Same situation as with substance abuse.					
Colorado	Division of Youth Corrections	Counseling/medications				
	Vocational rehabilitation	Work readiness and job placement	Some caps but rare; many youth don't complete plans after parole; stop using medications			Occasionally. Usually purchased through CBO.
Des Moines	ICHS and Spectrum and Polk County Primary Health Care (PCPHC)	On-going assessment of out-of-school youth during the daily life skills class; Contact PCPHC for assessments and PCPHC works out a referral to a service provider for actual treatment as needed in each case				
Erie	Referred to Office of Mental Health and Mental Retardation; if youth is assigned to Perseus House, referred to an in-house mental health professional					
Hartford	Health and Human Services	Each youth gets an individualized treatment plan				
New York City	Informal help in-house, formal referral out for serious illness; has psychiatrist to monitor medications	Services at FOIA	As needed: psychologist at FOIA four days a week	As needed	Referral out for more serious situations	

Mental Health – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	Health Agency Contact?
Pittsburgh	Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic	WPIC assesses all youth--youth can receive mental health treatment sessions that are paid for by BluePrint. So far, ten youth have received treatment.	10-12 individual sessions	Started with one-hour sessions but change made to handle caseload to 30-minute sessions		
West Palm Beach	APNHO	Similar to substance abuse; health instructors are experienced in detecting signs of mental health problem; students have had some problems such as attempts suicide, so the staff are really watching for signs of problems, and then work with the Dean to get treatment services				

Health – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	Health Agency Contact?
Chicago	Sinai Community Institute provides health and dental services to project youth	Youth are assessed for immediate health needs by CMs; referrals if needed				
Cincinnati	In the eligibility process, CMs may determine a youth has needs. Would be handled through informal referrals to other agencies					
	Biggest obstacles is getting the parents to apply for help and/or to cooperate					
Colorado	Division of Youth Corrections and YEARS	Actively involved in getting Insurance connection for youth whose families lack insurance; not many health issues				Workforce centers; local health care
Des Moines	Polk County Primary Health Care (PCPHC)	Provides direct services for health care	As needed	As needed		
Erie	Perseus House has nurses at all facilities; other youth referred based on insurance (family doctor or free clinic)					
Hartford	Health and Human Services	Assists youth and families to obtain access to public health care system as needed				
New York City	Real Men	Assessment, education and referrals				
	Project Stay	Hard to connect; case managers needed to go with them				
		Women more in need and care more about health				

Health – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	Health Agency Contact?
Pittsburgh	Referrals by BluePrint staff	Not a direct service; staff has helped some youth qualify for health care coverage that they had been unable to get (e.g. CMs are aware that youth can get a waiver to be eligible for health care if they have a mental health diagnosis that qualifies them)				
West Palm Beach		1) Assessment; 2) teaching about health, especially reproductive health; 3) instructors watch for signs of health problems; 4) instructors and Deans are familiar with local/state/federal requirements for obtaining health coverage and care, and ensure youth qualify and get the needed health care				

Housing – Provided by Round Two Projects

	Organization	Activities	Duration	Intensity	Partners Contact?	Public Housing Contact?
Chicago	Latino Youth can provide short-term housing to youth		Latino Youth can provide housing for up to 21 days			
	YMCA offers single youth housing		Varies			
	This is a component of the project that MOWD and Goodwill hope to more fully develop to meet needs of youth					MOWD and Goodwill seeking partnership with agency that can provide housing for youth
Cincinnati	Lighthouse can provide for homeless young people			As needed		
Colorado	YEARS	Arranged if needed				
Des Moines	None available in the community	YMCA no longer accepts youth offenders. Youth under age 18 cannot obtain housing on their own under Iowa law, but CMs believe many should not be living at home because family environment is not protective/supportive				
Erie	Referred to H.A.N.D.S. as needed					
Hartford						
New York City	Street Works	Very few beds				
	Fortune Society	Very few beds; mainly adult offenders	Couch hopping - months			
	Covenant House	Emergency shelters - supported housing				
Pittsburgh	County Housing Authority	Not a direct service; housing is not readily available; project can refer youth to city or county housing authority				

Housing – Provided by Round Two Projects						
	Organization	**Activities**	**Duration**	**Intensity**	**Partners Contact?**	**Public Housing Contact?**
West Palm Beach	APNHO	Works with community agencies that are able to provide emergency funds, but there are not enough housing facilities in the community, especially for women with children and even more of a problem for offenders. Youth can also access WIA services as appropriate.				

APPENDIX F

Fact Sheet on Job Retention

FACT SHEET

Introduction

In an effort to break the cycle of crime and dependency that often affect youth between the ages of 14 and 24 who are offenders, gang members, or at-risk of court involvement, the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration funded 14 communities as part of the Youth Offender Demonstration Project in June 1999. These projects were funded for a period of 24 months to provide services to assist youth to gain employment at livable wage levels. In June 2001, an additional nine communities received awards, this time for 30 months.

As the Demonstration projects got underway, it became clear that it was difficult to connect the youth with employment. In many instances, employers were reluctant to hire youth with criminal and juvenile justice histories. To address this issue, some projects developed an Employer Network, a strategy that identified and engaged employers willing to hire at-risk or adjudicated youth. This fact sheet provides a combination of actions and recommendations that may be useful for organizations interested in developing an Employer Network, including a step-by-step guide to developing an Employer Network. Although some of the recommendations may appear routine or easily executed, dedication and persistence are essential. Engaging employers, preparing youth for employment, and generating employment opportunities for the youth served can be daunting tasks; however, the benefits for the employer and your organization make the effort well worthwhile. Potential benefits for employers include:

1. Gaining access to a pool of potential employees who have been pre-screened and whose qualifications conform to the hiring criteria for the position(s) available;

3. Participating in a network with other employers for the purpose of sharing ideas and strategies to address employment needs; and

4. Establishing a direct connection to the community and consumers while providing the company an opportunity to have a presence and play a role in community and civic affairs.

Potential benefits for your organization to establish an Employer Network include:

1. Establishing a group of potential employers who possess an understanding of how they can assist with the development of at-risk youth; and

2. Preparing youth to transition properly to the world of work

What is an Employer Network?

Employer Networks are comprised of employers and business partners who share common interests and goals in the area of workforce development and come together to meet the employment demands of their respective companies or organizations while working to solve challenges associated with connecting youth to employment.

Employers participating in an Employer Network are primarily seeking to recruit potential employees. On the other hand, a business partner may be involved with the Employer Network to participate in the development of skills training and/or job readiness training. One example of a project's business partner was with the Federal Reserve Bank. The Federal Reserve Bank's participation in the Demonstration project's Employer Network was in an educational capacity. It was not in a position to extend employment opportunities. However, it provided assistance in the leadership development and job readiness process by identifying volunteers who worked with youth on mock interviews and other job search activities. In addition, it made presentations to the youth on how the banking and financial system works. It also provided youth with guided tours of the Federal Reserve Bank.

Employer Networks play a significant role in the successful employment of youth offenders or youth at risk of court or gang involvement. The extent of the Network and the types of employers and business partners that participate will shape a youth's current and future access to jobs and career opportunities. Establishing direct links with employers is a key component of any effort to assist youth to transition to employment.

Why is an Employer Network Important?

An Employer Network provides an opportunity to directly involve and connect employers and business partners to potential employees. A participant's legal history, spotty work record, or limited training often serve as barriers to employment. However, several demonstration projects provided support and training that, in effect, overcame these barriers so that youth obtain and retain employment. An Employer Network is a way to build relationships that may open doors for internships and other career opportunities for youth with workplace barriers.

As part of the networking process, employers should be invited to play a role in the development of your organization's plan to help the youth obtain and retain employment. The employer's perspective can prove valuable to ensure that your organization's job preparation, job placement, and job retention approach is compatible with local labor market demands. By participating in the planning process, the Employer Network members will have buy-in and support for your organization's employment goals. Your organization may ultimately benefit from employer participation in planning by receiving information regarding job openings that result in opportunities for the youth to pursue.

Employers Concerns Regarding Youth Offenders and Youth at Risk of Gang or Court Involvement in the Workplace

Employers often have a number of concerns regarding hiring youth offenders or youth at risk of gang or court involvement and these fears may include:

- Violence;
- Theft;
- Inappropriate behavior in the workplace; and
- A lack of work ethic.

Contrary to these fears, the majority of youth participants want to work and try very hard to be good employees. It's important to address employer concerns by demonstrating that this commonly un-tapped pool of workers is capable of being productive and contributing to the employers' bottom line.

Responsibility for building an Employer Network should be assigned to staff (sometimes called employment specialist or employment solutions specialist) that has the ability to work and communicate effectively within the employer community. Staff also need to be empowered to make decisions and commitments on behalf of your organization while understanding the business culture and the needs of employers. Once members for the Network have been selected, staff should engage in an open and frank discussion regarding some of the challenges employers might encounter.

As a result of these discussions, many employers will learn that their fears are exaggerated or unsupported.

To establish a positive working relationship with employers, two key strategies include:

1. **Know how to market the youth participant** – Focus on the youth's skills and abilities. Share any efforts to assist youth with job preparation, such as the use of an established curriculum on job search enhancement or pre-employment training, to help employers understand the level of preparation the young person has completed.

2. **Connect the youth population with the employer** – Often, employers have misconceptions about youth and even more misconceptions about at-risk youth. It is incumbent upon your organization to show the employer that your program is designed to address the potential pitfalls related to hiring youth. For instance, a Demonstration project emphasized some of the following specific areas in its effort to prepare youth for the world-of-work: a.) Developed time-management skills so youth had a clear understanding of how and why it is important to be punctual; and b.) Provided money management training that included promoting the importance of purchasing bus-passes with each paycheck so the youngster had transportation each month. Your organization can emphasize the positive assets that youth with limited experience can bring to an organization, such as the opportunity for employers to train the young worker to execute tasks according to the company's guidelines.

Share specific examples with the employer on how participants are motivated and how they have demonstrated responsibility. Also stress with the employer that your organization will serve as an ongoing support system for both the youth and employer.

To support your organization's efforts to connect youth with the employer, there are a variety of training tools that can be used to work with both the young person and the employer. An example is the Piton Foundation's *Workin' It Out* series. The Piton Foundation, of Denver, Colorado, collaborated with experts in workforce development training to create a series of materials for both the new worker and the employer. "*Workin' It Out*" is an interactive training designed to help entry-level job seekers succeed in today's workplace. The companion program, "*Managing to Work It Out*" is designed to help supervisors better understand and manage entry-level workers. For more information on these products and to receive a sample copy, please contact Patricia Veasley at pveasley@piton.org or phone at (303) 825-6246.

How to Build an Effective Employer Network

Now that you've considered the value of developing an Employer Network, you're ready to develop the network. The following seven steps include strategies and recommendations that can be used by a variety of organizations dedicated to helping at-risk youth find gainful employment.

Step 1 – Recruitment Strategies

A comprehensive Employer Network often includes a diverse membership. Various levels of management are involved, ranging from company executives to front line supervisors. The key to establishing a strong Employer Network is to include members who are the "decision makers" for their organization. When identifying potential members for the Employer Network, consider the question, **"***Who decides when and what employment opportunities will become available?***"** In some instances, this will be a corporate decision that is delegated to the Human Resource (HR) manager or it may be a request submitted to the employment office by a front line supervisor for additional employees. In either case, the focus should be to develop and build a connection with selected members of the local business community.

Consider the following when assembling an Employer Network:

- It would be beneficial if the composition of the Employer Network includes at least some employers and partners that reflect the racial and ethnic make-up of the youth who are served;
- Ensure that the membership includes a variety of industries and both large and small businesses;
- Think creatively and recruit those employers that may be a good match for program participants; and
- Set boundaries based on the location of the employer's jobs and the youth's ability to travel to and from that location. Often a good match can be found within the community where the youth reside.

Be Prepared:
"It is better to be prepared and not have the opportunity than to have the opportunity and not be prepared."

In addition to employers and business representatives, the Employer Network partnership may also extend to other partners that include but are not limited to:

"Never visit an employer unannounced or without an appointment."

- **Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs)** – The network will be stronger if it engages the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB). The WIB is often a clearinghouse of contacts and employment information and includes the Youth Council. It may even have a "youth development" component that focuses on training, education and employment targeted to youth. Projects may access the National Association of Workforce Board's (NAWB's) website at www.nawb.org for information about local WIBs.

- **Local One-Stop Centers** – One-Stop Centers are another source that may be included when developing an Employer Network. The local One-Stop Center can offer youth employment

assistance, training and job placement services. One-Stop Centers often provide a full array of services including computerized job listings, information on employment insurance, and workshops on topics ranging from resume writing to job search and interview skills. Some One-Stop Centers offer access to resource rooms that have state-of-the-art technology for jobseekers. In addition these One-Stop Centers may offer direct access to employers through Job Fairs, Career Exploration, Education and Health seminars. Some youth may be interested in exploring employment and career opportunities through the specialized services offered exclusively by the One-Stop Center such as Job Corps. Contact information for the local One-Stop Center may be found in the telephone or community directory.

Step 2 – Develop a Plan

An Employer Network can begin with as few as two Employers. Employer Networks should start with Establishing goals and timelines. For example, an initial goal for Employer Network members may be to develop a working list of all potential job openings to which your organization's youth may be able to apply. Start the list by getting job opening information from Network members and analyze the job description, qualifications, and hiring criteria to determine if there are potential matches among your organization's youth. The Network members may also want to participate in the design of a resume and interviewing clinic to assist youth with the application and interviewing process. Other initial goals might be: 1.) Hosting a career fair; 2.) Identifying hiring trends and 3.) Establishing customized training for jobs in a demand occupational field; and 4.) Researching summer youth employment opportunities for the youth

offender population and begin to work on connecting your organization's youth to those jobs. Whenever goals are established and agreed upon by the Network members, timelines should also be established. Perhaps the Network decides it wants to offer the first resume and interviewing clinic by a specific date. It should be determined who will be responsible to ensure that the goal is met within the agreed upon timeframe.

Once the Network members have determined the goal(s) and timeline(s), start developing strategies to build membership:

1. *Membership Drive* – Send out informational mailings, flyers, e-mails and call local businesses. Let businesses know about the work of your organization. Mention the current Network members and use them as references. Remember: word of mouth is the best advertisement.

2. *Seasonal or Quarterly "Open House" Activities* – Invite employers to your organization to meet with staff and participants. Offer a brief and polished presentation that has been developed and prepared by the youth participants. Use this opportunity to show-case the youth and their abilities.

3. *Develop a Website for Network Members and Youth Participants* – An on-line service is a great medium to communicate job openings and review resumes. Consider developing a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page for both the employers and the youth participants.

4. *Local Cable Access Network* – Use the local network to advertise the Employer Network and the services and benefits it offers to local employers.

5. *Develop a Video or Brochure* – Videos and brochures can be used to describe the Employer Network and highlight its members. These are particularly useful when staff is in the field conducting cold calls and knocking on employers' doors.

Seize the Opportunity:
"When recruiting employers for the network you may find yourself communicating with many levels of management in several different industries. It's imperative that you consider each occasion an opportunity and each person a potential Network member."

Step 3 - Engage the Employer
Prepare for any opportunity to recruit a new network member. Keep business cards handy and develop a 30-second pitch that is interesting and inviting but above all is informative and describes the benefits of being a Network member. Recruitment opportunities may present themselves during an elevator ride to the next floor or while attending a lunch meeting. Once the initial contact is made and the employer has shown interest, it is time to move to the next step. Keep in mind, engaging an employer may require repeated outreach attempts before the employer shows interest. Be prepared for employers to reject or ignore the opportunity to join the Employer Network. Do not be discouraged. As with marketing and sales, persistence is an essential quality to engage employers.

When discussing the employer's needs, be careful not to over exaggerate your participant's skills and/ or experience. Promise only what you can deliver! If an employer needs 5 workers tomorrow and you only have 3 who qualify for the job, say so.

Step 4 - Schedule a Meeting
Schedule an appointment to visit an employer when it is convenient for him or her. A brief meeting should not exceed 30 minutes. The meeting is an opportunity to discuss in detail the Network's goals and the

benefits to its members. Prepare an oral presentation that outlines monthly meetings, the website, and a list of other Employer Network members as references.

Pre-Meeting Activities

- *Research the Employer* – Research the employer or the industry and find out as much as possible. Learn basic statistics about the company and use its website to learn about the product(s) they manufacture or the services they offer. Establish a connection between the employer and the youth being served. For example, if your organization offers training in the food service area, work with your Network members that hire food service workers. Consider developing a customized training component for that employer(s) for the purpose of enhancing the skill proficiency and job readiness of the youth. This may ultimately result in youth being trained specifically for particular employers and increase job placement opportunities.

- *Learn the language* – As youth serving professionals, social service workers sometimes communicate using terms like "case manager", "client", "participant", or "intake" that are foreign to employers instead of terms like "supervisor", "employee", "orientation", or "interview". Avoid using terms unfamiliar to employers. Learn to speak the language of the employer and use terminology that is "businesslike". One project had an experience where a participant was extremely interested in mortuary science. The organization did considerable research on what was required to work in a funeral home. Not only did the organization become familiar with the qualification and certification requirements for various mortuary related positions, they also became knowledgeable about the terminology germane to the industry. In addition, they were able to help the participant meet other requirements such as obtaining a TB test prior to working in a funeral home. As a result, the organization was able to develop an internship at the participant's neighborhood funeral home. While

the funeral home agreed to offer the internship, there were a number of stipulations that included encouraging the participant to complete her GED and enroll in the city college mortuary science program. The organization was able to work hand-in-hand with both the participant and employer throughout the internship to help the participant achieve the goals recommended by the employer.

- *Create an Employer Data Sheet (EDS)* – Develop an employer data sheet (EDS) that is a one-page description of the employer. Include pertinent information such as the employer contact's name, address, phone number, fax and e-mail address. If the information is available for this initial meeting or subsequent meetings, include a brief description of any job openings along with the qualifications required, salary and benefits. If there are youth who meet the qualifications, bring those resumes to the meeting. Make a note on the EDS of any project youth that have previously interviewed with the employer and specify the position and the outcome of the interview. The EDS can be updated as needed and referred to when meeting with the employer.

- *Seize an Opportunity* - Remember, the primary goal of an initial meeting is to recruit the employer to become a member of the Network. However, if the opportunity presents itself, be prepared to offer immediate assistance to help fill available positions by taking a few resumes of participants that are suitable matches for that particular employer.

Step 5 - The Initial Meeting

When meeting an employer for the first time it is important that you listen and take mental notes. Did the employer mention that the firm was having difficulty getting workers for the late shift? Did the employer suggest it was difficult to find adequate help for the holidays? Here is an opportunity - grab it! These can be opportunities to fill the immediate needs of the employer.

This meeting affords an opportunity to discuss the advantages of being a member of the Network. In addition, the meeting can lend itself to discussing project participants that may be potential job matches for the employer. Always describe any employer-related services your organization provides such as pre-screening or training for specific positions.

If an employer mentions there will not be any hiring until the spring, seize the opportunity. Let the employer know that a Network benefit includes assistance with coordinating pre-screening and interviewing sessions tailored to the employer's specifications and needs. These events may be planned collaboratively with the employer in advance of the anticipated hiring period. This offer may include the use of your organization's staff and space.

Step 6 - Maintain the Employer Network
Maintaining the Network is less difficult if goals are established and a foundation for growth has been developed. However, there are areas that require consistent attention and your organization must take the initiative to maintain communications with Employer Network members. These include:

- **Follow-Through and Follow-up** - The Employer Network requires on-going follow-up and communication. Once established, your organization and the Network may consider organizing members by industry so that follow-up and communication may be targeted and members receive more relevant information and less non-relevant information. Regardless of the types of groups or committees, it is necessary to develop methods to communicate and update each other on a regular basis. Consider developing a monthly newsletter designed to inform members of the Employer Network. The newsletter can be in an electronic or paper format and should list updates such as a monthly calendar of meeting dates, job fairs and regular application and interviewing hours of Network members. A nice feature to include is a monthly spotlight on an Employer Network Member and/or a project participant. Another

strategy to keep Network members active is to ask Network members to host the monthly meetings at their worksites.

- **Maintain the Relationships -** This can prove to be a challenge at times, but maintaining contact with Network members is essential. This may be done via e-mails, hand written notes or a visit if appropriate. Encourage all new members and help share information on member's activities among the Network. For instance, if a member is hosting a special event, let the other members know. Be supportive and assist whenever possible with community drives or other activities initiated by Network members. Use these opportunities to increase membership while maintaining relationships. Your organization can assume responsibility for initiating and maintaining these communications in an effort to ensure that the communication system among Employer Network members is informative and consistent.

Step 7 - How to Troubleshoot When Things Go Wrong
As with most groups, difficult situations may arise. In order to sustain effective partnerships, you will want to initiate strategies to smooth the waters. Whether the problem is an error in communication, a poor job match, or bad timing, you will need to assess the damage, determine what caused the problem and try to resolve the situation. An employer may become dissatisfied with a situation and working to resolve the issue can be challenging. For instance, there may be problem with an employee referred through the Employer Network and the employee doesn't work out, you might offer to mediate the situation or replace the person. Whatever happens, **do not** ignore the problem. Remember to face it, resolve it and move on. Here are 5-simple steps to follow when handling tough situations:

1. Acknowledge the Problem;
2. Apologize for the Inconvenience;
3. Offer a Solution;
4. Follow-Through; and
5. Follow-up.

Conclusion

Developing an effective Employer Network for the youth offender or youth at risk of court or gang involvement will offer an array of challenges and opportunities. A professional approach and well planned strategy will support this effort. Many youth want to work and are seeking opportunities to demonstrate this. The Employer Network can identify areas of the strategy that need to be improved to facilitate a stronger connection between your organization's youth and the labor market. Members of the Employer Network can meet their employment needs while assisting youth by offering employment opportunities. At the same time, the employer may benefit by having access to an organization that can provide ongoing support and encouragement to both the youth and the employer. This may include but is not limited to: 1.) Providing conflict mediation; 2.) Ensuring the youth receives necessary support services such as mental health and substance abuse counseling; 3.) Averting transportation and housing crises; and 4.) Working with the youth's family or other individuals who have significant influence on the youth. Investing in the youth's future through an Employer Network insures a better quality of life for not only the youth, but also the community at large.

APPENDIX G

Fact Sheet On Sustainability

Sustaining Access To The Workforce For Youth Offenders and Youth At Risk of Court Involvement: The West Palm Beach, FL Experience

April 2003

FACT SHEET

Introduction

In June 1999, the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration funded 14 communities as part of the Youth Offender Demonstration Project. In June 2001, an additional nine communities received awards. These projects were funded for a period of 30 months to provide services to assist youthful offenders, gang members and youth at risk of court involvement, between the ages of 14 and 24, gain employment at liveable wage levels that would help break the cycle of crime and prevent future dependency.

Planning for Sustainability

Since the federal funding for these demonstration projects is for a limited period, the issue of sustaining access to the workforce for these targeted youth is a significant one. How these projects will continue to provide access to the workforce system depends largely on their ability to develop and implement a plan to sustain some or all of their current services beyond the federal funding. Traditionally, financial sustainability has been the cornerstone of a projects' continued success. We now recognize that project sustainability can be demonstrated in ways other than those based solely on financial means.

According to the Institute For Educational Leadership[1], a project is sustained if: All or part of the project is "institutionalized" into the larger service system; it is the catalyst that leads to reform across the larger service system or, it leads to the development of new policy and practices that become an accepted way of "doing business" in that field. Regardless of how sustainability is defined, all projects should develop and implement a plan to ensure that changes in policies and practices as a result of the demonstration become permanent. In accomplishing this, there are several challenges that will impact a project's ability to effectively implement a sustainability plan:

- Federal funding for the demonstration is for a limited period, usually 24-30 months;
- There may be a lack of natural support from local leaders and the community for the youth being served by the demonstration;
- There are limited resources in the community, and the youth serving agencies may find themselves competing to access these funds;
- There may be a lack of effective, long-term partnerships; and
- There may be reluctance among prospective employers to readily employ youth who have been involved in the justice system.

The following section will highlight the experience of one project's efforts to overcome these

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challenges and put into place a viable plan that will sustain the changes in services delivered to the targeted youth in the community.

The West Palm Beach, FL Experience

In June 2001, the Academy for Practical Nursing and Health Occupations (APNHO), located in West Palm Beach, FL, was one of nine sites awarded a demonstration grant. For a number of years, APNHO has been a provider of healthcare related training, education and employment assistance, serving underprivileged residents of West Palm Beach. APNHO led the creation of a group of community leaders who organized and was successful in its pursuit of the grant. The Youth Council was engaged as an advisory body which approved the project and continues to serve in that role. The Council is a part of the local Workforce Investment Board with representatives from various disciplines including: public and private businesses (including local employers), community-based service organizations, faith-based organizations, public and private school educators, justice, probation and corrections systems, law enforcement agencies, mental health advocates and individual citizens.

As the lead applicant and grantee, APNHO, under the direction of Lois Gackenheimer, RN, NHA, is accountable for the overall management and oversight of this Youth Offender Demonstration Project.

This capacity building project, **P**reventing **R**ecidivism with **O**pportunities, **M**andates and **I**nitiatives for **S**uccessful **E**mployment (**P.R.O.M.I.S.E.**), was seen as a way to further strengthen an already effective, broad base of community partners that existed in West Palm Beach. In particular, it sought to provide

"The YODP grant funds are used to put in place a system of service delivery that, once created, would likely result in a strong community infrastructure capable of being self-sustained upon grant termination."

- David Balducchi
U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration

access to meaningful employment and training opportunities for the traditionally hard to serve group of youth targeted by the Youth Offender Demonstration Project.

From the beginning of the grant process, APNHO pursued a collaborative approach to service delivery through community partnerships and alliances. The Youth Offender Demonstration Project grant funds are used to develop a system of service delivery that leads to a strong community infrastructure capable of being self-sustained upon grant termination. As a means to that end, APNHO incorporated careful planning, measurable performance goals and outcomes, ongoing program evaluations and improvements and most importantly, careful collaboration with a consortium of local representatives from various service fields. The consortium has already committed to continue its efforts for at least two years beyond the federal funding period.

The Consortium

After being awarded the grant, APNHO kept intact the consortium that was organized to apply for the grant and continues to lead and coordinate its activities as the project continues its implementation. Despite its leadership status, APNHO functions more as a partner within the consortium. The consortium is composed of representatives from various organizations and agencies in the community including community based service providers, juvenile and criminal justice, social services, workforce and local schools.

From the outset, APNHO and the consortium recognized that they share interests in crime and delinquency. They

agreed to focus their efforts on a target area, identified by zip codes, that has particularly high rates of crime, unemployment, gang involvement and school dropouts. The Consortium identified a number of specific areas where there were gaps in the services provided to youth, such as substance abuse, mental health, teen parenting, domestic violence and transportation. They also targeted specific industries in the area, such as health services, which were in need of qualified employees. Once its focus had been defined, the consortium set out to identify additional resources within its local, regional and statewide community with which it could partner to provide the necessary services, skills, training and employment opportunities that would help to reduce crime and delinquency.

With a common goal and a vision of how meaningful employment can help to reduce crime, the consortium, acting as a cohesive group, plays an important role in resolving this problem. It seeks to identify funding opportunities that will assist new or existing initiatives in the target area and assists in writing grant proposals to procure those funds. The consortium also identifies the best partner to meet grant requirements and be a strong fiscal agent. The consortium identifies any additional stakeholders who are essential for the project's success. It determines how grant funds should be dispersed. As is the case with the Youth Offender Demonstration Project grant, in addition to APNHO, grant funds are shared with

the local Workforce Investment Board, the school districts, probation department and community-based organizations, all of which were deemed necessary for community capacity enhancement efforts to succeed.

The role of the Youth Council has enhanced the consortium's capacity to serve the targeted youth and build and maintain support among the community and its leaders. The Council serves as an advisory board to the consortium, offering assistance with planning, development, implementation, evaluation, data collection and other areas of importance. The Youth Council has emerged as a catalyst for a united, collaborative approach to addressing youth offender issues. Much like faith-based organizations have done for centuries, the West Palm Beach Youth Council employs a community stewardship approach to its efforts: getting people, organizations, businesses and other community entities to volunteer their time, talent and finances to support the work of their consortium.

Benefits of Their Efforts

This collaborative approach to community planning and problem solving, while not without challenges, has proven to be very beneficial for the West Palm Beach project and other initiatives in that area. The consortium of partners, working as a team, helps clear some of the hurdles that all programs must overcome. This approach allows for an open, honest dialogue among all of the partners about any issues that arise. Such dialogue leads to consensus building among the partners, which in turn promotes a true commitment or "buy-in" to the community as a whole and "ownership" of the out-

With a common goal and a vision of how meaningful employment can help to reduce crime, the Youth Council, acting as a cohesive group, plays an important role in resolving this problem.

"This collaborative approach to community planning and problem solving, while not without challenges, has proven to be very beneficial for the West Palm Beach project and other initiatives in that area."

- Lois Gackenheimer
Academy for Practical Nursing and Health Occupations

comes of their decisions. All partners have an equal voice in the decisions being made – there is no single leader.

The consortium's approach to pooling resources among the partners benefits both the projects and the community as a whole. From a financial perspective, this team approach to collaboration avoids competition among local agencies for the same funds. Further, a single consortium seeking grant funds for a jurisdiction may be more attractive to the granting agencies. This approach shows a community's true commitment to resolving its problems through cooperation, compromise and flexibility among all of the providers. Pooling of other resources such as staff and available services helps to build a truly integrated system of delivery that ensures the multi-faceted needs of the youth are being met. Sharing these resources avoids duplication and fragmentation of services.

Results of Their Efforts

The West Palm Beach Youth Offender Demonstration Project has done an outstanding job of enhancing and building the community network of partners who have joined the effort to provide education, training and employment opportunities to youth at risk of gang involvement and youth offenders in that community.

The success of its efforts can be seen in the youth served. Since 2001, 103 people have been enrolled in APNHO's healthcare related training program with no re-arrests to report among them. In addition, almost 95% of those who have completed the program have secured meaningful employment at liveable wages.

The service delivery system is now organized across the community in such a way that it provides coordinated access to the targeted youth, and by extension, other youth in need of similar services. The consortium has also been successful in securing an additional two million dollars in new resources to support the expanded capacity of the community to serve its youth.

[1] Martin Blank, Kwesi Rollins, and Carlo Ignatio. "Building Sustainability in Demonstration Projects for Children, Youth and Families." Institute for Educational Leadership, 2000.

Appendix H

Linkages For Coordination of Services Within the Workforce System:
The Case of West Palm Beach

Linkages for Coordination of Services within the Workforce System:
The Case of West Palm Beach

In its internal review of project accomplishments and outcomes at the end of the grant period, the West Palm Beach project prepared a summary of the linkages developed for the coordination of services within the local workforce system. This summary is presented here:

- **Employers** – Employers met regularly with project staff to advise on current requirements, occupational and skill shortages and training needs. Employers also had representation on the Youth Advisory Board and WIB, linking youth and careers. They were committed to participating in education, work experiences and providing jobs with a career path for youth.

- **WIB Survey 2001, 2002, & 2003** – This is an extensive survey of all employers in the region which provided a computerized source of job requirements, specifications, and skill sets. It is updated annually and was available in One-Stops for youth, counselors, case managers, and educators. Reports were available for the project team and Youth Council's use and guidance as they proceeded with initiatives. All WIB funded education was for jobs shown to be in demand.

- **One-Stop Centers** – Intake, assessment, and route counseling was linked directly to this project, as this was the entry point for all youth services. It was also the link with the Probationers Educational Growth (PEG) project which was housed at the One-Stop. MIS was shared and was instrumental in recording route counseling, risk assessments, interventions, and outcomes.

- **Youth Council** - The Advisory Board for the project was the entire Youth Council of community leaders and the Youth Council provided funds for year-round occupational and academic enrichment education.

- **Workforce Investment Board Staff Liaison** – A knowledgeable Workforce Investment staff member was appointed as Youth Manager who served as staff support for both this project and the Youth Council. In August 2003 he was appointed to the post of Director of the Probationer's Educational Growth Program.

- **Year-round Youth Training Services** – The WIB funded the training programs of participants which was useful in testing the infrastructure and linkages of this project. All services provided and programs funded included mentoring, academic enrichment, life skills, work experience, and were linked to both district schools and grass roots community-based youth programs.

- **Pregnancy and Addiction, Boys and Girls Club** – HIV Prevention and Teen Pregnancy Prevention – These community-based programs and services worked with this project's youth throughout the duration of the project.

- **Children's Services Council and Quantum Foundation** – These community organizations were committed to crime and gang prevention and provided funding for services, programs, and needs not otherwise covered. They were active members of the Youth Council and WIB.

- **Law Enforcement and Judicial System** – These agencies worked closely with the school district, to offer programs aimed at preventing truancy, educating against violence and chemical abuse. In addition, they linked closely with this project for alternate sentencing programs, creative probation conditions, community service options and monitoring, progressive sanctions and served as Youth Council/Advisory Board members, thereby linking to the WIB for coordination of services, programs, route counseling, mentoring and measuring outcomes.

APPENDIX I

DOL Common Data Elements

ROUND TWO
YOUTH OFFENDER DEMONSTRATION - DATA ELEMENTS AND THEIR DEFINITIONS
US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Employment and Training Administration
Youth Offender Demonstration Grants

No.	Name	Description	Operational Definition
	Youth Offenders	(See operational definition)	Youth who have been adjudicated for committing delinquent acts, such as crimes against persons, crimes against property, and crimes related to substance abuse. Note: Participant's status is determined upon entry into the program and does not change during the program.
	At-risk Youth	(See operational definition)	Youth who have not been adjudicated for committing illegal acts but who have risk factors associated with the potential for delinquent behaviors. Note: Participant's status is determined upon entry into the program and does not change during the program.
1	Recruited	Number recruited	Number of youth for which project staff have name and contact information.
2a	Enrolled (Total)	Number enrolled	Number of participants who have completed the entire application process for the demonstration, for example: 1) required documents, 2) parent/guardian release, 3) diagnostic assessments.
2b	Enrolled (Gender: Male)	Number of male participants	
2c	Enrolled (Gender: Female)	Number of female participants	
2d	Enrolled (Race: White)	Number of White participants	Number of participants having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.
2e	Enrolled (Race: Black)	Number of Black participants	Number of participants having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa or the West Indies.
2f	Enrolled (Race: Hispanic)	Number of Hispanic/Latino participants	Number of participants of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture in origin, regardless of race.
2g	Enrolled (Race: Native American)	Number of Native American participants	Number of participants having origins in any of the original people of North America and South America (including Central America), and who maintain cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

No.	Name	Description	Operational Definition
2h	Enrolled (Race: Asian)	Number of Asian participants	Number of participants having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian Subcontinent (e.g., India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan). This area includes, for example, Cambodia, China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
2i	Enrolled (Race: Multiracial)	Number of Multiracial participants	Number of participants who self-report having origins in more than one of the aforementioned categories.
2j	Enrolled (Race: Other race)	Number of participants not in aforementioned categories	The number who do list their race or list their race as something other than provided in these categories.
3	In Federally-Funded Job Training	Number who entered federally-funded training	Number in Federally Funded work readiness training, other work preparation programs, for example, vocational certification programs, leadership development classes, and job shadowing.
4	In Other Job Training	Number who entered other job training programs (i.e., not Federally Funded)	Number entered into private industry, faith-based, and community-based employment training programs not directly supported by any Federal funds.
5	Entered Apprenticeship	Number actually in apprenticeship programs	The number of participants who have begun training in a registered apprenticeship occupation, through Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training (BAT) or a State Apprenticeship Council (SAC).
6a	Total In-school	Number of in-school youth served	Sum of categories 6b, 6c, 6d, and 6e
6b	In High School	Number who entered or reentered secondary school	Number of participants who have not received a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and are attending a high school institution (traditional or alternative) or are between school terms and intend to return to school.
6c	In College	Number who entered or reentered post-secondary school	Number of participants who are attending a program at an accredited degree-granting institution that leads to an academic degree (e.g., AA, AS, BA, BS).
6d	GED preparation	Number who are preparing for the GED	Number of participants preparing for the GED exam, either self-directed or in groups.
6e	Other	Number of participants enrolled in basic skills, elementary, middle school, literacy, pre-GED or Internet classes	Number of participants enrolled in basic skills, elementary, middle school, literacy, pre-GED or Internet classes

No.	Name	Description	Operational Definition
7	Total Out-of-School	Number of out-of-school youth served	1) The number of participants who are no longer attending any school and have not received a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent. 2) The number of participants who are not attending any school, but have either graduated from high school or hold a GED.
8	Entered Subsidized Employment	Number who entered subsidized employment	The number of participants working in employment subsidized by demonstration, WIA, other public or private funds (e.g., foundations).
9a	Entered Unsubsidized Employment	Number who entered unsubsidized employment	The number of participants working in employment not subsidized by demonstration, WIA, or by other direct wage subsidies.
9b	No. that had Subsidized Job Before	Participants who were working full time or part time with a wage provided partially or entirely by demonstration funds before receiving employment provided entirely by an employer.	The number of participants who worked in employment subsidized by demonstration, WIA, or by other direct wage subsidies before they received unsubsidized employment.
10	Enlisted in Military	Number who entered the military	The number of participants who have enlisted in the military.
11	In Aftercare Programs	Number served by aftercare programs	The number of participants under court supervision and treatment designed to reintegrate formerly incarcerated youth.
12	Entered in Community Service	Number who entered national and community services	The number of participants who are in court-defined, program-defined assignment or made a voluntary choice of employment for a stipend rather than a market wage.
13	Receiving Other Services	Number receiving other services such as drug rehabilitation, mental health and substance abuse treatment	Number of participants in treatment services (i.e., drug/alcohol, and anger management or other mental health services) and other miscellaneous, job-searching/employment related services (e.g., transportation, tattoo removal, assistance to obtain driver's license, and work clothing).
14	Convicted of a Crime	Number of participants who are convicted of a crime during program	The number of participants who are arrested AND convicted of a crime during the program.
15	Incarcerated	Number of participants who are incarcerated for committing a crime during the program	The number of participants who are arrested, convicted and incarcerated for a crime committed after enrolling in the program.