



Charting a Course

A CHILD AND FAMILY POLICY WEB CONFERENCE SERIES

Ready to Work? Partners in Youth Workforce Development

June 20, 2007

Audience Q&A Session

Marcus Castain - 12:13 pm

Q: Have these skills been defined as academic standards?

Steve Trippe - 12:17 pm

A: Typically, academic standards (basic skills in math, reading and writing) are embedded and included in workplace skill standards sets.

Marcus Castain - 12:18 pm

Q: I'm looking for a comprehensive list of standards (the academic ones are well-defined in California) that we could send to employers to prioritize. Has 21st Century Skills done that?

Steve Trippe - 12:19 pm

A: Yes, as has the Equipped for the Future Work Readiness Skills. Google National Work Readiness Credential or visit <http://www.workreadiness.com/>.

Daniel Bassill - 12:19 pm

Q: How does this level of preparation differ in areas with high poverty, moderate poverty, no poverty, high affluence, etc.? Are these across the board statistics?

Elizabeth Gaines

A: Gambone research tells us 6 in 10 are not ready. This means with a high school diploma or less, unemployed or on welfare; have poor health habits and unsupportive relationships; and or commit an illegal activity about once a month. Her research was longitudinal and looked at 3 studies. No, they did not have the resources to do anything on sub populations.

Also, we didn't really talk about this on the call but youth employment statistics themselves are quite different depending on family income, race and educational attainment. Across the board, youth from low income households are the least likely to be employed. White males are more than twice as likely as African-American males to be employed. Hispanic males fall somewhere in between. And only 50% of those without a high school diploma or GED are employed, compared with 76% of those with some further education.

Children's Aid and Family Services - 12:21 pm

Q: Jan: Can you give examples for your first bullet - "Employers" on your Implications for Stakeholders slide?

Jan DeCoursey

A: Examples of alternatives to employment should include employer involvement in speaking with youth--whether on workplace visits, or at youth programs or schools, internships, apprenticeships, transitional jobs programs, career education, job shadowing, etc. Since these types of involvement are well documented, the key point here is the value that is placed on this type of involvement. Employer engagement in these experiences is important.

Bethany Priebe - 12:23 pm

Q: Are there currently curriculums available to utilize with our current youth development programs?

Jan DeCoursey

A: There are several curricula about job readiness and career exposure, and connecting these to youth development is very important. One place to look to the National Youth Employment Coalition.

Mark McHugh - 12:23 pm

Q: How does the Oregon program take advantage of the autonomy they have in developing their program?

Elizabeth Gaines - 12:38 pm

A: To learn more about the Oregon example, look at the Jobs for The Future Report: "Profiles of Partnerships, Programs and Practices to Illustrate the US Employment and Training Admin. New Vision for Youth Services."

Martha Ross - 12:26 pm

Q: What are your suggestions for how community-based organizations and government can create more effective communication and partnerships with employers?

Jan DeCoursey

A: Government can play a very strong role in getting small employers involved. Involving local leadership to engage small and mid-size business creates multiple benefits for all parties. Communication is important, and youth programs play an important role on the ground.

Elizabeth Gaines

A: Working collaboratively to create workforce readiness credentials, and assessments, or like in the five states mentioned in Ready for Work; bringing in the diverse players to go through an alignment process to ensure high school standards and curriculum reflect workforce skills and demands; and encouraging the collaboration with community organizations in providing the other skills needed based on employer demands.

Steve Trippe

A. Visit our website at www.newwaystowork.org and go to the library for tools on employer engagement strategies.

Cynthia E. Jones - 12:24 pm

Q: A big part of the problem seems to be the youth's concept of work and its importance. How do we change that?

Elizabeth Gaines

A: Purely my opinion but, youth need to see the value in work and the potential to have work be exciting and inspiring. Exposing them to a variety of work settings and professions through internships and apprenticeships that show them a path to attaining those careers can help do this.

Steve Trippe

A. Provide a sequence of developmental experiences that provide for career awareness, exploration and preparation activities over time (in both classroom and training environments as well as through quality work-based learning).

Shonda McLaughlin - 12:24 pm

Q: Are students with disabilities included in "Youth Workforce Development?" In other words, are their needs addressed in terms of work readiness?

Jan DeCoursey

A: Based on my knowledge, engaging youth with disabilities in workforce development often happens at the local level through programs for people with disabilities, rather than an integrated system.

Christina Graff - 12:25 pm

Q: I am interested in the NYC example re: employer surveys done by the NYC Conference Board. How was this information disseminated to educators, who were they and what was done with the info (i.e. definitive examples of changes in curricula)?

Elizabeth Gaines

A: Here is an article that touches on it:

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2006/05/24/38work.h25.html>

Garrett Myers - 12:26 pm

Q: Renee Desjardins, YWCA. Are there any programs that focused on engaging the parents in preparing the youth?

Steve Trippe

A. The role of parents, families and caregivers/guardians is critical to youth success. Good programs provide opportunities for engagement and have an intentional communications strategy to keep them informed.

Alberto Ortega - 12:27 pm

Q: The Alternative Schools Network. With regards to racial/cultural differences, how do you effectively get across to youth the importance of conveying a clean cut image? For example, youth may have hairstyles that may look cool to their peers, but may not appeal to employers.

Jan DeCoursey - 1:01 pm

A: Employers need to have the discussion with an involved program provider/educator that youth are still developing adolescents. At the same time, there needs to be someone (often a

teacher or program provider) connecting with youth about what is appropriate and what is not. Depending on the type of business, some employers are more tolerant of this adolescent concern.

Steve Trippe

A. Programs and schools focused on career preparation should provide opportunities for youth to practice appropriate dress, and to identify norms of dress and behaviors for different types of occupations.

Ryan Bowers - 12:28 pm

Q: Hi Steve, can you say a bit more around why early employment exposure and experiences disproportionately benefit young men of color?

Steve Trippe

A. Data sources include:

Christopher Ruhm, "The Extent and Consequences of High School Employment," *Journal of Labor Research*, Summer 1995, pp. 293-303.

Lynn C. Burbidge, Joseph Pleck, Freya Somenstein, and Leighton Yu, "Early Employment and Its Effect on Education and Wages," Paper Presented to the Eighteenth Annual Research Conference, Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Pittsburgh, November 1, 1996.

Numerous studies by the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University.

Steve Lynch - 12:28 pm

Q: Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. What can professionals in the juvenile justice arena do to decrease the anxiety and reluctance of employers to hire youth who have been adjudicated delinquent?

Elizabeth Gaines

A: In Missouri and in Washington, D.C., I believe the juvenile justice systems have effectively made partnerships with businesses so that young people coming out of the system are receiving jobs while the employers are receiving assurance that the system is taking some responsibility for preparing them. I would also encourage you to visit the following link on the Forum's website to hear directly about the approach that is being used in these two states to prepare young people connected to the juvenile justice system:

http://www.forumfyi.org/docdisp_page.cfm?LID=3F6B750C-10B6-4336-AC99D2CEF5D7E688

Steve Trippe

A. Focus on assets and provide services, supports and assurances of a positive skills match. Consider job try-outs and employer of record services to initially engage employers and provide the opportunity to experience the working relationship.

Jean Vilmenay - 12:34 pm

Q: How do we find out if we have these collaborations in our community or begin such collaboration?

Elizabeth Gaines

A: If you would like to email me and let me know where you are, I could see if we know of anything. Elizabeth@forumfyi.org

Steve Trippe

A. The places to look are within city government, workforce programs, schools (especially career technical education and school-to-career programs). You also might want to check out www.intermediarynetwork.org for a listing of members and tools to help build local collaborations.

Krista Wieder - 12:31 pm

Q: What specific skills will youth need to compete in a growing global economy? Is anyone addressing these skills in their training or youth workforce development?

Elizabeth Gaines

A: Also check out Partnership for 21st Century Skills for answers regarding who is trying to get these skills embedded in school curriculums and other places.

Kim Kuchenbrod - 12:22 pm

Q: Did you say the Michigan employer receives a 50% tax credit for offering youth employment or job training?

Elizabeth Gaines - 12:30 pm

A: Yes you can read about it in a report by the Finance Project: "Finding Resources to Support Workforce Development Services for Youth."

Amy Conrick - 12:38 pm

Q: This may be a question for Jan DeCoursey. In your survey of employers, did many of them mention that lack of reliable transportation was a problem in keeping youth workers engaged in jobs? Did you find any model programs that support youth transportation?

Jan DeCoursey - 12:33 pm

A: In our research, we found that employers had very little tolerance for understanding transportation issues, assuming that if youth were ready to work, they were ready to get to work. Youth programs are key in helping youth develop a plan for transportation.

Timothy McCarty - 12:31 pm

Q: Are you aware of any coalitions, groups or projects in South Carolina?

Steve Trippe

A. The Charleston Chamber of Commerce used to be in the lead seat on employer connections for schools; I'm not sure what they are up to today.

Joanne Benham - 12:32 pm

Q: With the emphasis on high stakes testing and education budget cuts at the local level, what are some ways we can convince educators to take the time and energy to work with community partners?

Steve Trippe

A. Support them in addressing the achievement gap. In other words, good community programs support both career and academic development. Find the common ground.

Elizabeth Gaines

A: You can check out a New Day for Learning and Partnership for 21st Century Skills.

Lorilei Sanders - 12:38 pm

Q: We want to transition youth at 18 years old to the U.S. Department of Labor Job Corps Centers for 2 years of training. How do we get DOL Policy, Job Corps Centers, private contractors and all parties to allow this transition?

Elizabeth Gaines

A: I would encourage you to find out if your state is one of the 16 that is involved with the DOL-led Youth Vision Teams. There may also be some info on the DOL youth vision site that would be helpful.

Alice Hunnicutt - 12:35 pm

Q: Schools are rated on academics, such as honors and AP. How can community-based learning become as important?

Elizabeth

A: Community-based groups can build partnerships with businesses and with schools to get some combination of the skills employers want embedded in schools and then get community-based organizations recognized as good providers of these skills, and therefore partners.

Steve Trippe

A. Schools need to be brought to the table as partners and community-based programs need to assist in supporting what happens in schools (and vice-versa). Many honors classes and grad requirements stress community involvement, require a community service learning experience or senior project for graduation.

Kathleen O'Donnell - 12:35 pm

Q: I would like to hear more specifics about efforts with youth in the juvenile justice system and youth with disabilities.

Steve Trippe

A. Visit <http://www.ncset.org/>.

Christy Stuart - 12:43 pm

A: The National Collaborative for Workforce and Disability for Youth: Guideposts for Success is another great resource

Rachel Dorman - 12:40 pm

A. The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability is a great resource as well. They have the lead for the Office of Disability Employment Policy on the issue of transition for youth with disabilities. <http://www.ncwd-youth.info>. NCSET is a partner.

David Disabato - 12:29 pm

Q: Heartland Human Care Services, Chicago. Have any of you researched transitional jobs for youth as a move into part-time employment and leading to full-time employment?

Jan DeCoursey

A: We did not include transitional jobs programs at the time we completed our research, although such a program design may address many of the recommendations made for helping young people who are particularly challenged in connecting to work access support and connect to the workforce.

Steve Trippe

A. Visit <http://www.transitionaljobs.net/>.

[The National Transitional Jobs Network is a coalition of more than 200 transitional jobs programs, policy organizations, and sponsoring organizations. The Network is managed by Heartland Alliance in Chicago.]

Emily Bennette - 12:36 pm

Q: Are there successful models for preparing youth in foster care for the workforce?

Elizabeth Gaines

A: I recommend checking the Youth Transitions Funders Group web site for resources: <http://www.ytfg.org/>

Steve Trippe

A. The Achieving Independence Center in Philadelphia; Youth Transitions Funders Group Connected by 25 programs; Youth Transition Action Team Initiative – see www.newwaystowork.org for many promising practices; USDOL Foster Youth Pilots, supported by Casey Family Programs.

Melissa Wasilewski - 12:35 pm

Q: Branch Librarian-Albany Public Library. I have the funding to create a program to connect EOP youth to a program that could provide information, literacy training and paid work in our library. Can anyone help find best practices for YWD program development?

Jan DeCoursey

A: Chapin Hall wrote a report funded by the Wallace Foundation called, “New on the Shelf: Public Libraries as Partners in Youth Development,” which may be helpful in connecting with other libraries who are doing this work. Available at: http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1380

Elizabeth Gaines

A: On the Forum's website you can find a publication we did on libraries as critical partners in youth development. There is a bit in there about preparing youth for entering work. <http://www.forumfyi.org/Files/PLPYDreport.pdf>

Steve Trippe

A. You might want to connect with folks in the schools or organizations in your community that support work-based learning. Or visit www.newwaystowork.org and review the quality work-based learning tools posted there.

Darryl Clayton - 12:37 pm

Q: Are there any work programs in Chicago like the ones in Pennsylvania, Minnesota and Iowa?

Steve Trippe

A. The Chicago Dept, of Children and Youth Services is connecting a number of initiatives (WIA Youth, Summer Jobs, After School Matters and others).

Rosenny Fenton - 12:38 pm

Q: Mayor's Office in NYC. How does one create engaging work experiences for the youth that are beneficial for the employer when working with youth that have limited literacy and work skills? Particular younger youth that are juvenile-justice involved.

Jan DeCoursey

A. Our research participants really wanted youth who had practiced these skills before taking on employment. Based on these findings, involvement in programs that lead to greater readiness (i.e. job shadow, career development programs, leading to internship) may be more appropriate for this population, until they are ready for employment.

Steve Trippe

A. JobsFirst NYC is starting to address this issue, as are the schools through the Learn and Earn Initiative.

Sheila Williams - 12:39 pm

Q: How do you feel the WIA programs are doing in preparing youth that are in foster care for the world of work?

Steve Trippe

A. It depends on the program. Many WIA providers are just beginning to address the particular issues foster youth face. Many of our sites in California are working well with CYS and ILP to provide work and learning opportunities for current and former foster youth.

See profiles at www.newwaystowork.org.

Donna Stiglmeier - 12:39 pm

Q: What are typical funding streams for these initiatives...and how do we bring different streams together?

Steve Trippe

A. Workforce, Career Technical Education, pieces of Independent Living Skills programs, private foundation dollars, local youth services allocations, special education programs, and targeted initiatives. The Finance Project (<http://www.financeproject.org/>) has some good resources in this area.

Dan Templin - 12:39 pm

Q: We are looking to enhance soft skills training and preparation for youth in our county ages 11-14. Can you comment on the wisdom/futility of focusing on soft skills within this age group and any existing smart practices in this area?

Elizabeth Gaines - 12:43 pm

A: If you look at the Corporate Voices Business Leadership report on their web site, there is a good write up on CVS Pharmacy's Pathways to Pharmacy program.

Karen Wike - 12:42 pm

Q: New York. Are there any successful strategies that have connected community services for youth with the actual educational school system?

Steve Trippe

A. This is a primary focus of the intermediary network members, as well as programs and initiatives stemming from the school-to-work movement and career academies.

Jean Berry - 12:45 pm

Q: Any recommendations from the panel about dealing with racism with employers? Here in South Dakota, there is a large Native American population and there are ongoing issues with local employers discriminating Native American youth.

Jan DeCoursey

A: The topic of race is very important to this work. Developing youth who are actively forming their identity must have the opportunity to have discussions about race with adults who care about them. Program providers and employers should also discuss race and its influence on the youth and employer experience.

Jenny Taylor - 12:43 pm

Q: Are there any programs of note in KY? There seems to be a lack of resource knowledge with those I've spoken with.

Elizabeth Gaines

A: I would recommend calling TJ Delehanty at Kentucky Child Now.

Yaridis Garcia - 12:43 pm

Q: Juvenile Welfare Board, Pinellas County Florida. Has anybody or job-related programs taken into account or consulted youth about what is meaningful job experience for them?

Jan DeCoursey

A: The Chapin Hall paper, "Preparing Youth for the Workforce: Exploring Employer Engagement in the Chicago Region" written in 2003 by Samuel Whalen included 3 focus groups with youth. Available at:

http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1374

Steve Trippe

A. Good programs regular engage youth in planning and decision-making. They are explicit in considering youth need when shaping programs and placements.

Darryl Clayton - 12:48 pm

Q: I am an adolescent services coordinator for a private agency in Chicago. Tomorrow we are taking the youth (age 14 - 18) job hunting at a local mall. We have provided the basic job preparation training. The best age to start workforce training is...?

Jan DeCoursey

A: Developmentally appropriate career education is important at all ages. Workforce preparation takes place in many ways, at many different ages and stages. Developing a sense of responsibility and accountability starts very early.

Steve Trippe

A. The earlier the better in terms of awareness and exploration activity – no later than 12 or 13.

Sandi McLeod - 12:49 pm

Q: Child Welfare Information Gateway. Steve, why aren't minority youth taking advantage of career-focused instruction offered in high schools? And, what strategies are being used to engage them in this type of instruction?

Steve Trippe

A. Most special school programs in Career Tech or the small schools movement require applications coming out of middle school or in high school. Many youth (particularly those facing challenges in their home life) have no advocates or counseling to apply to those programs. Successful programs targeting these youth provide information, support and encouragement for youth to take advantage of the opportunities.

Stacy Jackson - 12:52 pm

Q: I'm with Chicago Lights and currently have 34 high school students engaged in 8-week internships. In your experience, are there particular industries that are open to having youth work at their workplace?

Jan DeCoursey - 12:54 pm

A: The healthcare field is interested in engaging young people. The Workforce Board in Chicago has done a lot of work in this area.

Kelly Broadway - 12:57 pm

Q: To assist in answering Stacy's question: We have had success with town departments, hospitals, and childcare in providing teens with internship opportunities.

Daniel Bassill - 12:57 pm

Q: Hi Stacy. Have you surveyed your volunteers or church members to see if any of them would host youth in companies where they work, or lead?

Evy Kay Ritzen - 12:59 pm

Q: Where can we get a copy of the pyramid of work readiness skills chart?

Steve Trippe

A. On the Equipped for the Future web site (<http://eff.cls.utk.edu/default.htm>). I also have a version I can email if you contact me.

Sarah Oldmixon - 12:59 pm

Q: For folks interested in learning more about best practices for youth aging out of foster care, the NGA Center for Best Practices recently released an issue brief:
<http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0701YOUTH.PDF>

Kim Kuchenbrod - 1:01 pm

Q: Vermilion Advantage in Vermilion County, Illinois has created a seamless workforce cluster training programs funded through the local business industries. We would be happy to talk to anyone about the program's success.
