

Disconnected Youth in MARYLAND

Promising Program Models

The most successful program models for reconnecting young people to work and school usually address four elements: flexible pathways to educational attainment, multiple pathways to work, soft skills and mentoring, and community engagement.

“Second Chance” programs for reengaging high school dropouts

Job Corps¹

- Evidence-based practice.
- Students live in dormitories with other participants while working toward education and/or vocational certification. Students are paid for their work, with the stipend increasing the longer the student remains employed. Students receive mentoring and career guidance for 12 months following placement.
- *Industries represented:* Varies by location.
- *Good for:* Youth who are able to live in a full-time residential program for one year.

National Guard Youth ChalleNGe²

- 17-month “quasi-military” program, typically located on a military base. Includes 2-week orientation and assessment, 20-week residential component with job skills training, and 12-month mentoring period.
- *Industries represented:* Culinary arts, horticulture, barbering, and automotive.
- *Good for:* Youth able to live in short-term residential program.

YouthBuild³

- Each of its 275 locations is different but all offer educational attainment, vocational training/certification, transition services, youth engagement, and youth leadership with a strong emphasis on mental toughness. Some locations partner with community and government organizations to offer child care and housing.

¹ Peter Z. Scholet, “National Job Corps Study: The Short Term Impacts of Job Corps on Participants’ Employment and Related Outcomes.” U.S. Department of Labor. February 9, 2000. http://wdr.doleta.gov/opr/fulltext/00-JC_outcomes.pdf

² Megan Millenky, et al, “Staying on Course: Results of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Evaluation.” MDRC. June 2011. http://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/full_510.pdf

³ Andrew Wiegand, et al, “Adapting to Local Context: Findings from the YouthBuild Evaluation Implementation study.” MDRC. February 2015. http://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/Adapting_to_Local_Context.pdf

Promising Program Models for Reconnecting Youth

- Open to disconnected youth who are also from low-income or migrant families, currently or were formerly in foster care, have disabilities, have histories with the criminal justice system, or are children of incarcerated parents.
- *Industries represented:* Construction.
- *Good for:* Youth who are able to live in a full-time residential program for one year.

Living Classrooms (Fresh Start Program)⁴

- Considered a “best practice” by the U.S. Department of Labor.
- A 40-week job training program for males ages 16-19 who are out of school. Students learn carpentry and boatbuilding, receive educational instruction and one-on-one tutoring, and learn life skills.
- *Industries represented:* Carpentry.
- *Good for:* Young men with a criminal history.

“Promising” Program Models

YearUp⁵

- Each YearUp cohort receives 6 months of vocational and soft skills training at a local community college and then is placed in a paid 6-month internship with a well-known company. Youth receive one-to-one and peer mentoring throughout. The companies fund student stipends with the expectation that if the student performs satisfactorily, they will be offered a permanent staff position.
- *Industries represented:* Tech, finance.
- *Good for:* Youth who are ready to work full-time, permanent positions; high school graduates.

Urban Alliance (Young Adult Internship Program)⁶

- The traditional Urban Alliance program model is adapted for transitioning foster youth ages 18-20. Youth participate in a 2-week boot camp before being placed in year-round work experiences. Youth receive daily mentoring, coaching on life skills, financial literacy.
- *Industries represented:* Primarily corporate, with potential for upward mobility.
- *Good for:* Mothers with reliable child care.

⁴ Amy Kaslow, “In Baltimore, a fight to give juvenile offenders an economic lifeline.” FORTUNE. December 18, 2014. <http://fortune.com/2014/12/18/baltimore-juvenile-offenders-employment/>

⁵ Anne Roder & Mark Elliott, “A Promising Start: Year Up’s Initial Impacts on Low-Income Young Adults’ Careers.” Economic Mobility Corporation. April 2011. http://www.yearup.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/emc_study.pdf

⁶ Brett Theodos, et al, “Preparing Youth for College and Career: A Process Evaluation of Urban Alliance.” Urban Institute. September 16, 2014. http://www.urban.org/research/publication/preparing-youth-college-and-career/view/full_report