Appendix

The Master Plan for Little Rock's Children, Youth and Families 2017–2019

Appendix

Overview

Between February 2015 and June 2016, the City of Little Rock's DCP and the consultant team (Advocacy & Communication Solutions, LLC; Dr. Joseph Jones, formerly of Philander Smith College's Social Justice Institute; and the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation) engaged in a multi-pronged approach to develop the Master Plan. Background information included in this appendix includes the following:

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ROSTER

SiKia Brown, *Out-of-School Programs Director*
Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance

- Areas of expertise: hunger relief, community partnerships
- Member of the Commission on Children, Youth & Families

Tammie Cloyes, *Public School Program Coordinator*
Arkansas Department of Education

- Areas of Expertise: afterschool education, teaching, educational leadership, school districts

Ron Copeland, *University District Director*
University of Arkansas at Little Rock-University District Partnership

- Areas of Expertise: community development, non-profit management, county government, promise neighborhoods
- Member of the Pulaski County Planning Board

Mark DeYmaz, *Pastor & Author*
Mosaic Church of Central Arkansas

- Areas of Expertise: faith-based work, cultural competency

Beth Echols, *Attorney*
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- Areas of Expertise: family law
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Scott Gordon, *President*
Gordon Consulting Group

- Areas of Expertise: community health, social work, reentry
- Former executive vice-president of the Arkansas Children's Hospital
- Member of the City of Little Rock Ambulance Authority

Paul Kelly, *Senior Policy Analyst*
Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families

- Areas of Expertise: early care and education, juvenile justice, child welfare, out-of-school programs, family self-sufficiency
- Member of the Youth Justice Reform Board

Dr. James Lagrone, *Retired Pastor*

- Areas of Expertise: counseling, domestic violence
- Member of the Commission on Children, Youth & Families

Kareem Moody, *Director-North Little Rock Campus*
Pulaski Tech Network for Student Success

- Areas of Expertise: student success and enrollment retention, afterschool programming, disconnected youth

Jo Thompson, *Director of Children's Systems of Care*
Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services

- Areas of Expertise: child welfare, research, data analysis
- Chair, Commission on Children, Youth & Families

Laveta Wills-Hale, *Network Coordinator*
Arkansas Out-of-School Network / Arkansas State University

- Area of Expertise: out-of-school time programming, and youth development policy and research

Youth Data

The following 2014 data was provided from the Little Rock School District (LRSD), New Futures for Youth, Little Rock Police Department, and Department of Community Programs, and other public data sources to provide baseline information for the development of the the Master Plan.

Little Rock School District (LRSD):

- Total Enrollment: 23,676
- Attendance Rate: 92.1%
- Graduation Rate: 78.3%
- Free/Reduced Lunch Rate: 62.7%

Tutoring: All schools with the exception of Baseline Academy offer tutoring options after school. Several tutoring sites offer 21st Century Community Learning Center programs: Bale, Carver, Franklin, Mabelvale, Rockefeller, and Washington elementary schools, Cloverdale Middle School, and Hall High School.

**Extended Day:** Baseline offers an extended day for students, with afternoon dismissal at 4:05 pm.

Literacy: The LRSD coordinates literacy programming at all schools as part of a district-wide curricular emphasis.

Select Demographics:

Population:

- The city's total youth population ages 0–17 is approximately 47,000.
- Across five of the seven areas of the city, youth population has remained fairly stable. The number of youth in 2010 in the West, Northwest, Southwest, Central and East areas are similar to the number of youth in those areas in 1990. Youth population growth has occurred from 1990 to 2010 in the Far West Area of Little Rock. More of Little Rock's youth live in the Far West area than in any other area of the city. The Midtown area, which accounted for one fifth of the city's youth population in 1990, saw its youth population as a percent of the city's total population cut nearly in half.
- Approximately 43.4 percent of children live in single-parent households.

Youth Population 2010

Ages 0–4	Ages 5–9	Ages 10–14	Ages 15–17
13,462	13,047	12,688	7,491
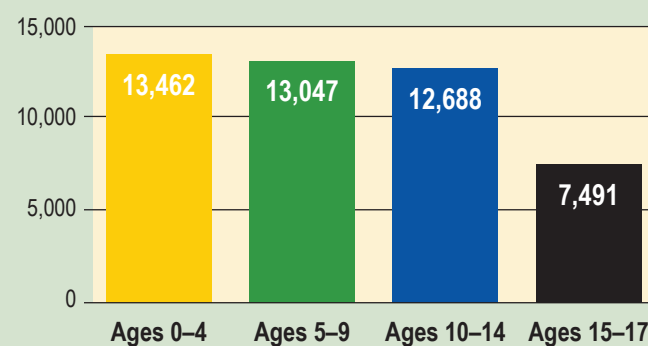
Poverty:

- In 2010, 23% of youth were living in poverty city-wide. The areas in which poverty exists has changed between 1990 and 2010. In some areas the change has been drastic. In 1990, 54% of youth in the East area lived in poverty. That was reduced to 20% in 2010. During the same period, the percentage of youth in Southwest who live in poverty doubled from 19% to 40%. According to Federal guidelines, poverty above 40% in an area is extreme. Southwest, Midtown and Central are high poverty areas.
- In 2014, 75% of Little Rock's students received free or reduced price lunch.
- There were 341 homeless youth in Little Rock School District at the start of the 2014 school year.

2014 Little Rock Graduation Rate

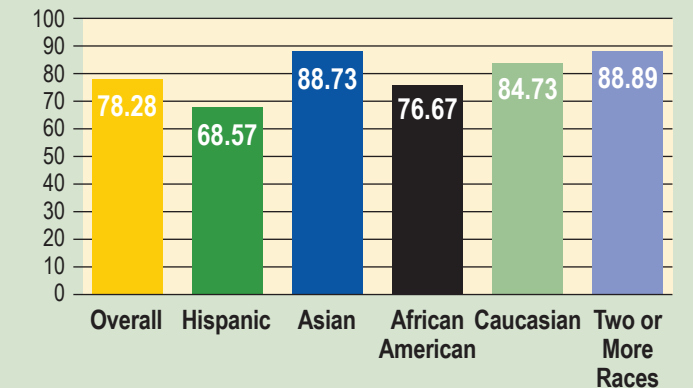| Overall	Hispanic	Asian	African American	Caucasian	Two or More Races
78.28	68.57	88.73	76.67	84.73	88.89

Transportation:

- The areas with highest poverty (above 40%) are also the areas with more households without reliable transportation. In the Central area, only 78 out of every 100 households have at least one vehicle.

Education:

- In areas of Little Rock with high poverty rates (above 40%) between one in five and one in three young adults have not completed high school.
- The 2014 graduation rate in the Little Rock School District is nearly 85% for Caucasian students, while Hispanic and African-American graduation rates are lower, 68.6% and 76.7%, respectively.
- Out-of-school suspensions in the Little Rock School District have slightly increased in the last five years. Nearly 9,000 students received suspensions in the 2013–2014 school year.
- Although nearly one-fourth of all 18 to 24 year olds living in the Far West and North West areas have obtained a bachelor's degree, fewer than one in 20 have a college degree in the West, Southwest and East areas; 10% and 21% of individuals living in the Midtown and Central areas, respectively, hold a bachelor's degree.
- Math proficiency drops significantly between 3rd and 8th grades. Approximately 75% of Little Rock's 3rd graders are proficient in math, while only 45% of the district's 8th graders are proficient.
- Reading proficiency does not experience the same drop, with approximately 62–63% of the city's 3rd and 8th graders considered proficient.

Math and Reading Proficiency

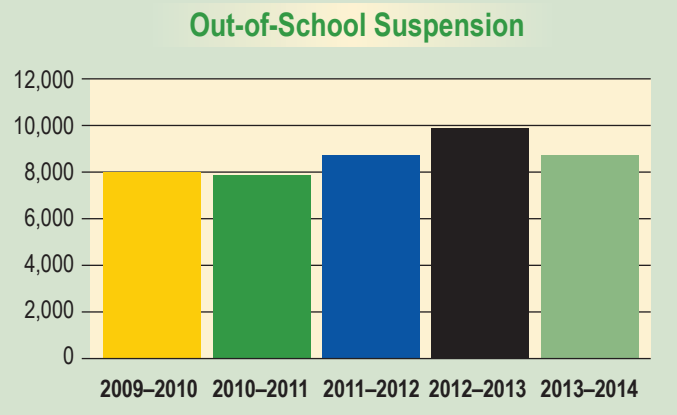| 3rd grade math	8th grade math	3rd grade literacy	8th grade literacy
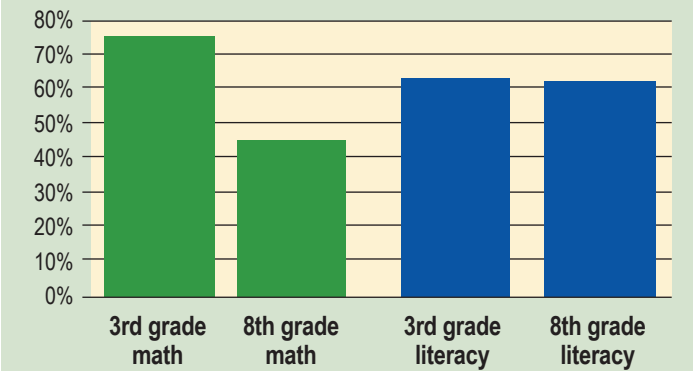
Juvenile crime:

- Though the rate of juvenile crime has been decreasing since 1991, the City of Little Rock experienced a spike in juvenile crime in 2011. Between 2011 and 2014 there was a 9% decrease in charges filed against youth (2,636 in 2011, compared to 2,392 in 2014); however there was a 40% decline in youth arrests (1,777 in 2011, compared to 1,064 in 2014).
   - More than 2,000 arrests were made in schools in years 2010–2012. Most juvenile arrests occur between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., and most are on or around school grounds.
    - School arrests are higher in Pulaski County than other counties in the state. From 2012–2013, approximately 44 out of every 1,000 students had an encounter that resulted in an arrest by an officer in Pulaski County.[1] Offense records provided by ACIC data; enrollment population data provided by the ADE Data Center.

Out-of-School Suspension

Health:

- There were 645 teen births in 2010 in Pulaski County. This equates to approximately 55.3 teen births out of 1,000 live births, or 5%.

Employment:

- Unemployment rates for all of Little Rock have stabilized to pre-recession levels and hover around 5%, after highs in 2010.
- According the Arkansas Economist, youth unemployment—16-19 years and 20–24 years—was higher in Arkansas than the national average, with the state ranking 11th highest in both specific age groups.
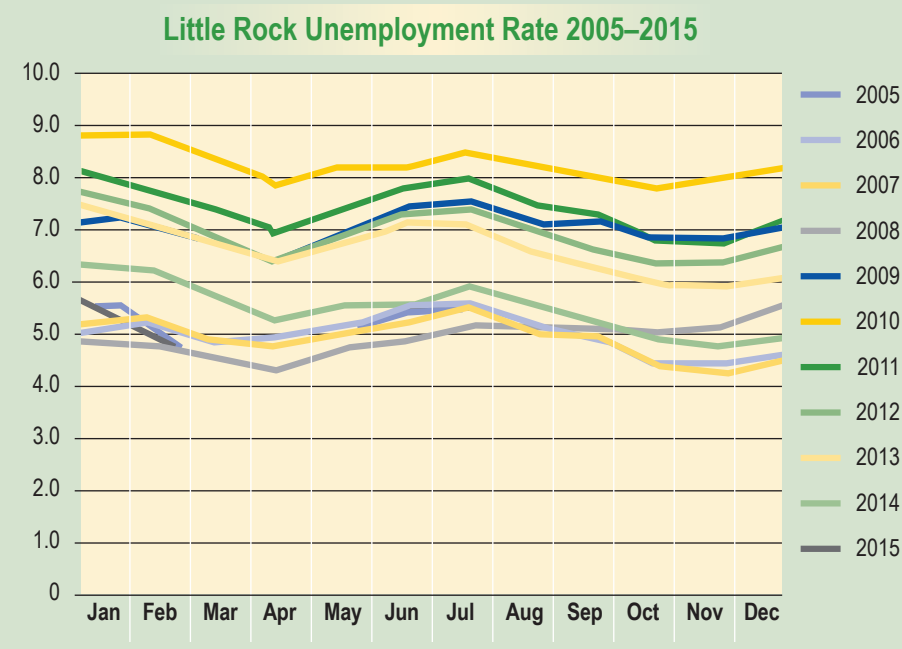
Little Rock Unemployment Rate 2005–2015

[1]Offense records provided by ACIC data; enrollment population data provided by the ADE Data Center.

Department of Community Programs:

The 2015 budget of approximately $5.5 million supported more than 50 programs and 11,600 children, youth, and families. This includes PIT funding that also helps to support the Mayor's Youth Council, the Department of Parks and Recreation, and other enrichment programs.

An ongoing appropriation is administered through the Department of Community Programs by contracting with established 501(c)3 community and faith-based organizations to provide services. These programs include the following:

- **Prevention—Purpose/Approach:** Reach children and young adults before they commit a crime or become involved in youth and gang violence.
    - These programs are contracted services designed to offer specialized tutoring and homework assistance for Little Rock youth ages 3 –9 or 10–12 or 13–18.
    - The program seeks to enhance specific skills in areas appropriate to grade level as well as afford participants opportunities to apply skills learned through planned projects, exercises, field trips, etc.
    - Examples include Boys & Girls Clubs, Inner City Futurenet.
- **Intervention—Purpose/Approach:** Provide deliberate outreach to children and young adults before they become involved in criminal activities or change current activities.
    - The YIP program offers several programs targeting at-risk youth between the ages of 13–19.
    - The staff provides intensive case management and are available 24 hours a day to provide emergency support to youth and their families.
    - Examples include Greater Second Care, Hamilton, Better Community Development.
- **Treatment—Purpose/Approach:** Reach children and young adults who have become addicted to drugs and alcohol.

Services from the City of Little Rock Department of Community Services in 2015 include the following:

1. Reentry programs/services
2. Skills training
3. PIT expansion and youth development (prevention and afterschool programs)
4. Transition/disconnected youth
5. Domestic violence (education, training, and awareness services)
6. Summer programs

The chart below shows general 2015 funding allocations by program category:
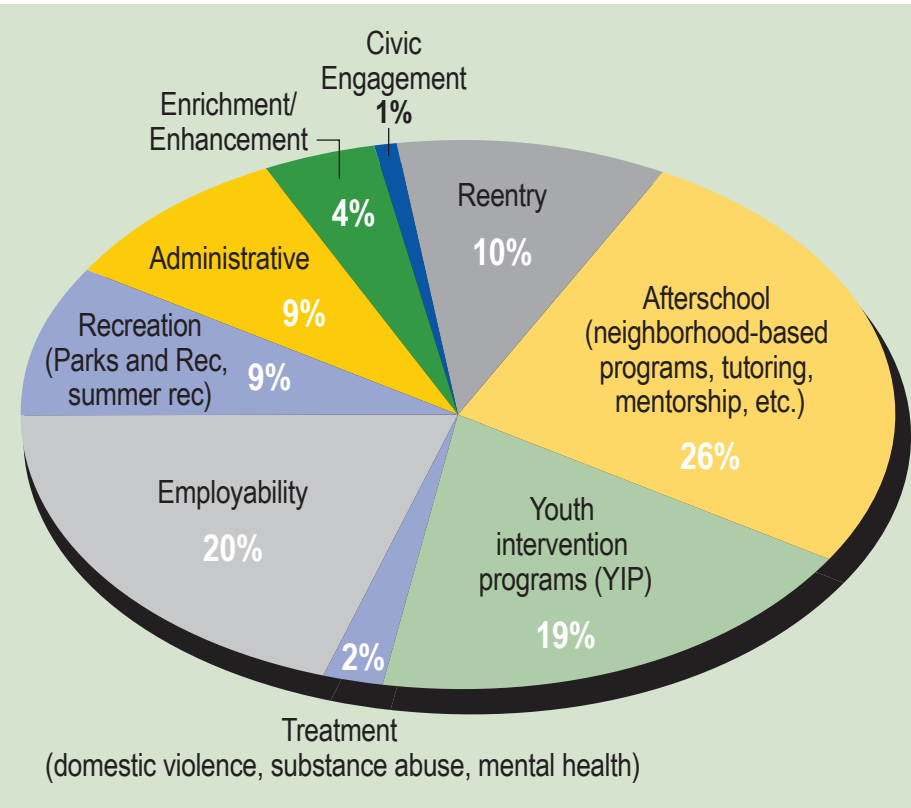
City Boundaries Definition:

City boundaries used in the Master Plan are defined in the Status of Youth in Little Rock Report 2010. The areas are defined by census tracts, and the descriptions below are based on tracts as defined in the 2010 U.S. Census. The boundaries are defined as follows:

- **East:** The western border of this area is approximately Arch Street. Interstate 30 runs down the western one-third of the East area. The Arkansas River borders the northeast side. The areas inside the city limits of Little Rock in the following census tracks are included in this area: 40.01, 40.06, 40.07, and 2.

- **Central:** This area includes downtown Little Rock, is bordered on the north by the Arkansas River and on the west by Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive. Roosevelt Avenue runs through the southern half this area. Census tracks included in this area are: 5, 44, 45, 46, and 47.

- **Midtown:** This area is bordered on the north by Markham Street and on the south by Fourche Creek. I-630 runs through the northern side of this area. University Avenue runs through the western edge of this area Census tracks included in the Midtown area are: 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 21.02, and 48.

- **Southwest:** This area is bordered on the south and east by the Pulaski County line, and is surrounded by Fourche Creek on the west and north. Census tracks included in this area are: 20.01, 20.02, 41.03, 41.04, 41.05, 41.06, 41.07, and 41.08.

- **West:** This area includes neighborhoods east and west of Barrow Road and is surrounded by Fourche and Rock creeks. Census tracks included in this area are: 22.06, 22.08, 22.09, 24.03, 24.05, 24.06, 24.07 and 24.08.

- **Northwest:** This area is bordered on the north and east by the Arkansas River and on the South by 12th and Markham Streets. Cantrell Road runs through this area, and the area is bordered on the west by Rodney Parham Road. Census tracks included in this area are: 15.01, 15.02, 16, 21.03, 21.04, 22.03, 22.04, and 49.

- **Far West:** This area stretches to the western most boarder of Pulaski County and is bordered on the north by the Arkansas River. Bowman, Napa Valley and Rodney Parham roads form the eastern border. Census tracks included in this area are: 42.02, 42.05, 42.07, 42.12, 42.13, 42.14, 42.15, 42.16, and 42.18.

Youth data was gathered using the following sources:

- New Futures for Youth, Status of Youth in Little Rock Report 2010
- National League of Cities Leadership for Juvenile Justice Reform TA Initiative presentation
- U.S. Census Bureau
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Statistics
- Arkansas Department of Education
- Arkansas Department of Health
- Little Rock School District Annual Report 2013-2014
- Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families December 2014 report (http://www.aradvocates.org/wp-content/uploads/Playgrounds-to-Prisons-December-2014.pdf); and
- Department of Community Programs- Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment Funded programs

A Place to Thrive The Master Plan for Little Rock's Children, Youth, and Families

Community Interviews

As part of the research conducted for the Master Plan, Advocacy & Communication Solutions, LLC (ACS) conducted interviews with community leaders, the City of Little Rock Board of Directors and the Mayor of Little Rock, and conducted a survey with the city's Commission on Children, Youth, and Families. This summary provides guidance to shape the Master Plan for Children, Youth and Families, the environmental scan and future community outreach.

While each of the community leaders had varying ideas of where they would like to see programmatic investment, nearly all thought the plan should address systemic changes. Systemic changes range from establishing and tracking outcome-based measures, to ensuring better collaboration between the city and the Little Rock School District, to establishing a referral system for programs. Addressing some of these systemic changes will require a critical shift in how services are accessed and delivered to children, youth, and families. They also identified several indicators that, if tracked, can provide the basis for outcome-based measurement.

Community stakeholders believe the following issues should be addressed in the Master Plan for it to be successful:

Community outreach

- Establish a parent advocate or student/family navigator in the schools.
- Engage the Latino community.
- Encourage employers to hire youth and/or ex-offenders.
- Work with churches to help support parents with education and resources.
- Establish a publicity campaign to promote conversation and raise awareness about resources and services for families. This could include the following:
  - Discussion/roundtable regarding issues facing families and youth.
  - Brochures or bulletins on effective parenting; tutorial on topics such as what to do if your child is facing issues.
  - Information on services available, such as a parent hotline/referral source.
  - Publicity about the resource guide of Pulaski County youth services.

Programs and services

- Some community leaders mentioned infusing certain parts of the city with the greatest need/poverty (Southwest or East or Midtown) with programs and resources, while others expressed the need for access to services and supports city-wide.
- Establish wraparound services for students and families.
- Increase access to treatment facilities.
- Establish a female version of the state's boot camp program (Camp Robinson).
- Increase mental health services including medication assessment, psychological evaluations, therapy, and counseling.
- Support effective and evidence-based afterschool programming that addresses educational and life skills.

- Support school-based health centers.
- Develop enhanced summer programs that include work opportunities and apprenticeships for older youth and age-appropriate activities for younger children. Food and nutrition should be included in summer programs.
- Focus on career awareness and preparation, including mentorships, apprenticeships, inventories for skills, assessments, to understand what it takes and how to go to college and/or begin a career.
- Enhance prevention activities at the neighborhood level.
- Focus on younger kids (elementary level).
- Offer year-round programs.
- Enhance programs that help transition to adulthood.
- Incorporate employability/soft/basic skills in programming, specifically in the summer youth employment program.
- Support vocational programs driven by the skills and knowledge businesses need.
- Fund programs that address the following:
  - Needs of young girls and parenting skills, including teen pregnancy.
  - Community mental health, particularly for individuals reentering the community from the justice system.
  - Afterschool programs connecting kids to opportunity.
  - Respect for law enforcement, school, parents, etc.
  - High-risk youth with an incarcerated parent.
  - Domestic violence and substance abuse treatment programs.
  - Transition to adulthood.

Systemic

- Increase program access by addressing policies and other barriers like transportation.
- Increase program accountability by including the following:
  - Measurable goals and outcomes.
  - Long-term outcomes.
  - Rigorous data collection system so when the City of Little Rock awards a grant, it is possible to tell what outcomes they have.
  - Specific outcomes and indicators attached to program areas.
  - Specific standards of practice attached to program areas.
  - Effective monitoring of funding for services provided (including an assessment to determine where and how money is spent).
  - Evidence-based needs assessment process to identify family needs.
  - System of assessing city-funded program effectiveness that includes outcome measurement.
- Identify shared outcomes for City departments serving children, youth, and families.

- Establish a referral network to help navigate children, youth, and families to available services and supports. This could include:
  - Streamlined intervention programs that directly network with relevant school staff to link at-risk students with available alternative programs.
- Policy
  - Revision of disciplinary procedures, particularly around truancy and removing students from the classroom.
  - School-support staff (counselors, school administrators, teachers) capacity building to deal with disciplinary issues.
  - Allowing programs to serve children and youth outside of their designated catchment areas. For example maybe 95% of funding goes to kids in their zone and 5% to others outside of zone.
- Removing policies that could result in leaving funding on the table.
- Increase collaboration with the following: school district, law enforcement, city agencies, nonprofits, workforce board, colleges, and courts.
- A whole-family approach to provide services for children and youth, and their families. For example, a school-based health clinic or wrap around services that parents can access.
- Communication about the programs for an effective, systematic approach to information dissemination. This includes:
  - Enhanced education and awareness about programs and their success.
  - Greater awareness/public website around all programs that are available for families (food, housing, transportation, work, etc.).
  - All youth/family serving departments within the City government actively communicating and sharing resources (each mission complementing the other). Break down program silos for better program coordination.
- Program capacity building to increase staff capacity to build and establish relationships in the community.
- Leverage funding from foundations and federal and state government.
- Review the contracting process
  - Review the process to increase dialogue among board members and communication to the public about funding and contract decisions.
  - Review contracting strategy for new grants (including award process and contract length) to increase efficiency in work start-up and consistency in programming.
  - Increase youth voice in decision-making.

Indicators of success

If these happen, community stakeholders believe children, youth and families will be successful:

- Systemic:
  - All organizations that work with youth work together towards a common goal and provide a continuum of services.

- A transparent decision making process is put in place.
- Ambitious but measurable goals and outcomes are tracked.
- Memorandums of understanding, formal partnerships to address transition to adulthood are in order.
- More formal partnership with the Workforce Investment Board, school district and City departments.
- Policies are established that enhance and support funding for children, youth and families (first source proposals).
- Better leveraging funding from foundations, state, and federal government.
- Positive outcomes for afterschool and reentry programs.
- Expanded Commission for Children, Youth, and Families to include additional members of the business community.
- Increased capacity of community-based programs in all areas of Little Rock.
- Increased networking and collaboration between programs.
- Increased number of and availability of programs.
- Crime:
  - Reduction in violence.
  - Reduction in the juvenile arrest rate.
  - Reduction in arrest rates for recidivism.
  - Decreased school-based referrals to juvenile court.
- Education:
  - Better grades and standardized test scores.
  - Kids stay in school.
  - Reduced dropout rate or pushout rate.
  - Reduced out of school rate.
  - Increased number of college-bound youth.
- Workforce:
  - Reduced youth unemployment.
  - Increased job opportunities for college grads.
- Civic Engagement:
  - Youth participation in their neighborhoods.
- Health
  - Reduction in in teen pregnancy.
  - Reduction in domestic violence.
- Community:
  - Inviting neighborhoods.
  - Retained youth in the community.

Community Outreach

Community outreach was completed in two phases:

1. Phase one was conducted by the Philander Smith College Social Justice Institute, took place in summer 2015, and included youth focus groups, youth survey, and community conversations (youth and adults).
2. Phase two was conducted by the Department of Community Programs and took place in January 2016 and included community forums, which were informal public meetings for individuals to provide feedback.

In total 475 youth and 285 adults participation in Master Plan community outreach. The results of both phases are included below.

Phase One
Focus Groups

Focus groups took place in the following locations:

1. Boys & Girls Club
2. Goodwill
3. I-630 Basketball Court*
4. Life Skills for Youth
5. Little Rock Central High School*
6. Our House
7. Positive Impact for Youth
8. Promise Land

*These sites were non-City funded programs.

Key Findings:

The following themes and issues were discussed:

Safety
- Gangs
- Violence
- Shooting
- Guns

Environmental Issues
- Abandoned Houses
- Littering
- Speeding Cars
- No Sidewalks
- No Neighborhood Parks/Centers

Drugs
- Drug Use
- Drug Dealers
- Alcohol Abuse

Social Problems
- Poverty
- Homelessness
- Bad Language
- No Jobs
- Single Parent Homes

Education
- Ineffective Teachers
- Disrespectful Teachers
- Schools Do Not Take Drug or Sex Issues Seriously Enough

Top 10 suggestions for the Master Plan:

1. Ongoing Youth Discussion Groups
2. Teen Hangout Center
3. Youth Business Program
4. Sports Programs
5. Neighborhood Swimming Pools
6. Safe Community Centers
7. Program on Life Skills and Career Guidance
8. Arts Program
9. Internship Programs
10. Mentorship Programs

Youth Survey

Top proposed city programs (by number of response):

- Sports Programs
- Afterschool Hangout
- Afterschool Programs
- Job Placement Services
- Mentors/Adult Role Models
- Entrepreneurship Training
- Wraparound Services
- Parenting Programs
- Mental Health Services
- Cultural Related Programs
- Teen Pregnancy Prevention Centers
- School-Based Health Centers
- Substance Abuse Treatment Centers

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Community Conversations

Community conversations took place in the following locations in Little Rock:

- Philander Smith College (Ward1)
- Willie Hinton Resource Center (Ward 2)
- Second Presbyterian Church (Ward 3,4,5)
- Second Baptist Church (Ward 6)
- Southwest Community Center (Ward 7)

Key Findings:

Issues and themes discussed during community conversations:

Education

- Year around schools
- The need for diversity programs offered during school year
- Lack of educational resources for parents
- The need for City Directors to work with school district
- The need for programs to fill academic gaps

Safety

- The need for conflict resolution programs
- Gang intervention
- Communication
- City Director need more visible presence in Wards
- City needs to communicate better about all of the programs it offers

Parental Involvement

- A need for parental involvement at after school programs
- The need for parent-specific programs

Data Collection

- The need for tracking children and youth through all city program
- The need for consistent assessment tools at service provider sites

Youth Employment

- City should form partnerships with businesses to assist youth in getting jobs and internships
- The need for job training for soft skills for youth

Collaboration

- The need for more collaboration among service providers
- The need to share resources among service providers to make greater impact
- The need to collaborate with non-city funded program to expand the impact

Youth Development

- The need for life skills that focus on respect
- The need for cultural based programs
- The need for youth lead programs

Top 10 issues concerning children (in order of importance):

1. Education
2. Afterschool Programs
3. Safety
4. Poverty
5. Health Care
6. Hunger
7. Drugs
8. Bullying
9. No Activities
10. Teachers

Top 10 issues concerning youth (in order of importance):

1. Education
2. Jobs
3. Drugs
4. Crime
5. No Activities
6. Violence
7. Safety
8. Bullying
9. Gangs
10. Poverty

Top 10 issues concerning families (in order of importance):

1. Jobs
2. Education
3. Crime
4. Poverty
5. Drugs
6. Lack of Resources
7. Lack of Parenting
8. Safety
9. Violence
10. Single Parent Household

Top 10 recommended program types (in order of importance):

1. Afterschool Programs
2. Tutoring Programs
3. Youth Leadership Programs
4. Community Centers
5. Mentoring
6. Early Childhood Programs
7. Jobs Program
8. Cultural Programs
9. Recreational Centers
10. Financial Literacy Program

Top 5 recommended outcomes for the Master Plan:

1. Collaboration among service providers
2. Professional development for service provider staff
3. Increased number of Jobs for Youth
4. Increased number of Educational programs (e.g., tutoring, afterschool programs, etc.).
5. Safe spaces for children and youth to go to.

Phase Two

The information below includes findings from community forums conducted by the Department of Community Programs in January 2016. These forums were conducted to target the following audiences:

- Law Enforcement, City, County, and State Government, Re-Entry (11 participants)
- Parents, Faith-based, Non-Profit Organizations and Neighborhood Association (25 participants)
- Latino Community (35 participants)
- Business Community (10 participants)
- Education/Media/Political Community (15 participants)
- Community Programs Community Forum (48 participants)
- Ward 3 (6 participants)
- Ward 4 (12 participants)
- Ward 5 (25 participants)
- Hamilton Academy Forum (24 participants)*

NOTE: Hamilton Academy Forum questions were customized for the youth audience and responses are recorded separately below.

Community Forum Questions and Responses

What type of services do you feel work best to meet the 5 areas of impact:

1. Social and Emotional Learning Opportunities
2. Academic and Life Skills
3. Health, Wellness, and Safety
4. Career and Work Readiness
5. Parental and Community Involvement
   - Citizens would like to see more mentoring programs within the community. Mentors should be representative of the community they serve and knowledgeable of the needs as well as the challenges that impact youth and their families.
   - It was also highly recommended that the City have one place where youth and their families can receive information about the services they need. The center would act as a multicultural and multifaceted unit where all people from different backgrounds and demographics will be able to receive services.
   - People would like to see more coordination between organizations and programs that offer services. Specialization of services is recommended. Collaboration should be encouraged to reduce duplication of services but increase the amount of youth reached.
   - It should be noted that certain areas of the City have different issues than others, and each area should be able to identify those issues, voice them, and locate resources to reduce them if not eliminate the issues.

- Identified community leaders should be more hands on with youth in the City. Education is very important and should be encouraged; however, youth are being exposed to the criminal justice system more than schools and skill centers. The community is interested in skills training programs that focus on STEM and programs that will attract 18–30 year olds. There should be more systems put in place to inform students on what is expected of them; encourage youth by having student leaders; encourage parents by using a trusted community leader.
- Parental skill building courses, parental development and parental engagement with the youth is very important, and the community wishes that the City could offer these types of programs and services. This include a more rigorous reentry program.
- Otolaryngology (specifically hearing), ophthalmology, and orthodontist services.
- There is a desire for the faith-based community to be more involved with the community not just their parishioners.
- The City should be a repository of non-profits, use of city buildings for the summer, partner with neighborhoods; there is also a request to have public schools be more open about using school buildings for summer programs.
- Parental development courses that discuss the best ways to speak to your kids, how to have the best care for your children (hygiene).
- Connect Home-DHS program.
- Partner with PTA (Parent and Teacher Association) and ViPS (Volunteers in Public Schools).
- The City should consider more wraparound services, crowdsourcing ideas, and think more globally.
- The City would like to collaborate with organizations that can help undocumented residents with immigration benefits and work permits.
- ESL (English as a Second Language) courses for youth and parents (youth who have parents that are not fluent in English).
- The City and schools need services that help students apply for college, scholarships, file taxes, etc.
- Transportation is one of the biggest issues for youth and families in the city. There should be extended hours and more routes.
- The best way to reach the Latino community is through newspapers, radio stations, and flyer for the churches in the communities.
- Summer programs should be soccer-driven.
- The community would like to have more programs that help students finish high school, and if not more GED programs.
- There needs to be a place where young adults can go to hang out and be safe in a positive environment.

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What do you think is the best approach to reach and engage understand children, youth, and families?

- Organizations should practice having more partnerships with one another to address the needs of the community. Once needs are identified, organizations should work together to provide services. It was suggested that the City be divided up into sections and separate environmental scans be performed.
- Transportation is also a large issue for afterschool programs as well as parents.
- Better relationships between the City and other community leaders, program leaders, and others who help to serve the community. People do not want to feel that the help offered is not genuine. Underserved families and youth should be involved in this process and possibly serve on these boards and commissions.
- Reproductive health and teenage pregnancy should be addressed and consistently taught to youth and adults as well.
- The City take advantage of grassroots tactics to spread the word as well as encourage people to be more involved with this process.
- Participants felt that the best way to approach youth would be to speak with them directly. They would like to find out what interests the youth and engage in some type of brainstorming session that leads to career development strategies. They would like to see the youths' interests used as avenues to reach them. Possibly travel to the youth. This engagement may enable many relationships across generations.
- Communities should invite speakers that would interest students and have them speak about the importance of education, having a career, and how to navigate through life obstacles. Parents may be engaged using this method as well. Contact neighborhood associations to have them partner with the local neighborhood programs to help engage youth in the community.
- Use social media apps to engage youth and parents. Possibly have specific apps and webpages for neighborhood-based programs and YIP programs.
- Engage in more visits to underserved areas, use billboards and radio opportunities to encourage communities to consider taking advantage of services.
- There should be more activities that engage families.
  - daddy-daughter dances
  - mother-son football days
  - cooking classes
  - wood/metal/paint shops
  - Boy/Girl scout
  - community gardens, murals
  - nature trips
- There should be more research on what other cities have done to become successful.
- Sex education should be taught at home and not left up to the schools.
- There should be more door-to-door engagement. The Department of Community Programs can develop a volunteer list for people to help reach the communities they live in.

- More focus on parental involvement and less dependency on school teachers for parenting. More legislative processes supporting teachers.
- The best approach would be to go to the youth in the community and hold presentations about the services they provide. Youth like to have incentives and to get involved if the presentations are interactive maybe even competitive.
- The City should come to more cultural events held by the Latino community.
- Health fairs that encourage the Latino community to receive free health checks and exams.
- Stay in contact with youth pastors and business store owners.

From your experience, how do you currently show that participants are being impacted by a program and/or what do you think is the best way to track and show results and/or outcomes of a program?

- Community leaders should take advantage of ViP's (Volunteers in Public Schools).
- Programs would like to take advantage of keeping a paper trail of the youth and their stories. Maintain documentation and have stories in the youth's own words.
- Programs would like to take advantage of using pre- and post-test assessments that monitor how the youths' mindset has changed over time. Use both quantitative and qualitative data.
- The City needs to provide case management, policy analysis, program evaluation, and resources training for program directors and coordinators.
- Participants would like to see more success stories. These stories can be displayed on the City websites, have social media pages for each program or presentations in front of the Board of Directors. Pre- and post-assessments that track attendance, enhancement programs, literacy levels, training, and innovation. Participants considered having youth-led conferences and ask forces within each program.
- Monitor youth by looking at attendance, change in attitude, progress, and returning students each year. Youth should be celebrated for their success in attendance, goals etc. Have different invites that invite youth and friends as well as families that offer better incentives. Incentives should be more valuable, parents tend to respond to items that can be used. (family household items, school supplies, gift cards, gas cards, soap)
- Check number of hits on social media, create hashtags, have photo apps, and check efficiency of marketing.
- Track 3 to 5 things that all programs much achieve, have professional development with parents and youth.
- Define what "quality of life" is within the Department of Community Programs' mission statement and define variables that can measure "quality of life."
- Determine different leaders that are willing to travel to schools and positively influence youth.
- Use short-term goals that lead into long-term goals (linear growth; discuss in depth the different steps).
- Principals, teachers, and parents should be in constant contact. There needs to be an alternate solution to find a way to bridge the relationship between parents and educators.
- Encourage teachers to live in their students' communities.

- Military and boot camp programs with basic character skills should be considered in the neighborhood-based programs. The youth need to understand why certain skills are important to have.
- Target gender differences and work with each to discuss topics and hardships related to their gender specifically.
- Youth would like to see more skills and activities that they see will help them in the present, more practical and tangible skills.
- It is important for youth to do things in the community so that they feel that this is their community and they are a part of its success.
- It would benefit many parents to participate in the programs with their children. That way parents are able to work on their speech as well as participate in the success of the programs.

Hamilton Academy Forum Results

Are you aware of services offered by the City of Little Rock? Do you want services? Do they work for you? Why or why not? What services do you want to access? (some options may be GED assistance, work training, work placement, food assistance, child care, health care, and drug or alcohol treatment services)

- Afterschool/mentoring programs that are related to my background, that's hands-on.
- Programs that can show me different things (tours, speakers, real life issues, street scholars).
- Services that focus on helping me not just with school work but help me with handling the home problems.
- Deal with my parents (prison), teen pregnancy, peer pressure, no money, confused about what to do next in life.

How do you currently hear about available services (for example, probation officer, pastor, parent)? Does that work? Are there other services that you rely on? How are you surviving day-to-day? What stops you from accessing services?

- You all need some recruiters that go where we hang out that can build the trust.
- We don't trust too many people especially the ones who don't look right (like they don't have good intentions).
- We don't have transportation to safely get to some of services that are offered.
- Need to be in the neighborhoods close to where the kids are; we need to feel safe and [that it is] easy to get to. If it's too hard for us to get or find we won't come.
- We need to make money so going to a program may keep us from making money. If we can get some incentives (shoes, clothes, supplies, gift cards, movie passes) then we can have a reason (motivation) to come to these programs.

Is there a better way to reach you and help you access services? What is the best way to reach you? How can the services go to where you are? Basically, who would they trust to tell them about and help them access services? Where should those services be located? Why do you trust them? How likely are you to use the services?

- The services should be close to where we live, because we don't like to go where we are not comfortable (might get jumped, robbed).
- Should send stuff out through the schools, churches, places where our parents hang out (check cashing place, on Power 92).
- We should be asked what programs we want cause if not then we won't come.
- If we are at the gym all the time then why not have people at the gym with services or recruiting us.

Where won't they go to access services (for example, the community center by the police station or at a health center)?

- Police station.
- To a place that looks like a police area.
- The resources have to be a place where we feel comfortable.
- Programs within the school will work (but not with teachers).

A Place to Thrive The Master Plan for Little Rock's Children, Youth, and Families

Local Program Scan

Overview

A local program or environmental scan developed by Advocacy & Communication Solutions, LLC (ACS) as part of the Master Plan for Children, Youth, and Families was designed with a specific purpose: To be a resource and depository of information that can inform the Department of Community Programs' investments in the following areas:

• Afterschool

• Employability or skills training

• Reentry

• Substance abuse

• Teen pregnancy or parenting

• Violence prevention

The environmental scan is a snapshot in time, based on discussions with the Master Plan for Children, Youth, and Family Advisory Committee, interviews with community leaders, interviews with the City Board of Directors, and a survey distributed to the Commission for Children, Youth, and Families. ACS also conducted an online search for all of the suggested programs from the surveys and interviews. Follow-up calls for additional information were conducted as needed. The scan includes an Excel document that should be updated on an ongoing quarterly or annual basis by the City. This summary provides a high-level overview of the information in the environmental scan as of May 22, 2015.

The challenge with any scan is that the moment it is published, it is likely out of date. New programs are created and old ones shut their doors. The opportunity exists, however, for the City of Little Rock to leverage the work completed by ACS to develop a living, breathing resource for stakeholders in the community to increase transparency and awareness of available programs, and/or as a resource for children, youth, and families to find programs that suit their needs. The purpose will drive what future products will look like. For example, a searchable and downloadable spreadsheet may be suitable for community stakeholders to increase awareness about programs, while a searchable website may be the best vehicle to provide this information to children, youth, and families to help them find programs. A more transparent and coordinated system of program information will enrich the lives of children, youth, and families in Little Rock and support them in efforts to attain skills that will lead to a thriving, sustainable quality of life. ACS provides recommendations for leveraging the environmental scan on

Key Findings

Observed strengths:

• Generally, there appears to be numerous afterschool programs available for school-aged children, ages 6-14, throughout the City of Little Rock. The exact location of these programs is outside the scope of this analysis, so transportation may still be a barrier to access these programs.

• Several programs exist to help teen parents continue their education and build their skills to find work.

• Programs exist that encourage middle school and high school students to pursue Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). STEM education is a critical component to career awareness and job preparedness. The extent that these programs are available or accessed by children and youth in high-poverty areas, however, is unclear.

Observed gaps:

• Based on the scan, there appears to be a lack of preventative programs that help children and teens avoid pregnancy or substance abuse.

• There appears to be few community-based treatment programs available for children and youth who face mental health issues or substance abuse issues.

• There appears to be a lack of career awareness opportunities for middle school and high school-aged youth. Although the summer employment programs provide valuable work experience, there is little evidence these programs help students become more aware of career opportunities and help them figure out a career pathway.

• Employment programs do not appear to include academic components. There is no evidence that employment opportunities connect to the classes kids need to get those jobs. A stronger connection between classroom education or academics and work opportunities could show students what it takes for different careers.

• It appears there are a limited number of targeted programs for disengaged youth (those not in school or in the workforce).

• The City of Little Rock appears to lack culturally-specific programs for Black and Latino children and youth.

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A Place to Thrive The Master Plan for Little Rock's Children, Youth, and Families

Program service overview

Teen parenting and pregnancy prevention:

- The Teen Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) program is available to mothers up to age 20 who live in the University District.
- The Centers for Family and Youth have several programs for teenagers who are pregnant or parenting in Little Rock.
- Arkansas Children's Hospital Center for Effective Parenting (CEP) provides information and skills training for new parents.
- Promise House Maternity Home provides health care and pediatric services, and helps mothers continue their education.
- Arkansas Rice Depot provides food and infant items for pregnant teens, teen moms, and their babies.
- Life Skills for Youth at the Temple Baptist Church provides effective parenting classes.
- Planned Parenthood Little Rock provides pregnancy prevention, health care, and sex education.

Violence prevention:

- Little Rock's YIP (Youth Intervention Program) is a unique program designed to target youth ages 20–25 and ages 13–19 involved in gangs or at the greatest risk of being involved in or recruited by gangs in midtown, central, southwest, and west areas of the city.
- Let Our Violence End (L.O.V.E.) trains health care professionals, law enforcement officers, school teachers and counselors, foster parents, social service workers, churches, and civic groups in identifying and intervening in the lives of these at-risk youth.

Afterschool programs and summer camps:

- The Aviators program is for preschool through elementary-age children who live in the University District. Family services are available on Wednesdays through the program.
- Central Arkansas Library System (CALS) offers several afterschool programs.
- Our House provides afterschool services to low-income families with children ages 6-17.
- AR Kids Read is a volunteer, school-based tutoring program to increase literacy.
- 21st Century Community Learning Center is open to students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools and provides tutoring services and academic enrichment.
- UALR Children international Kids' Clubs afterschool programs are open to students who attend Central Little Rock schools.
- Hillary Rodham Clinton Children's Library—geared toward preschool, elementary, and middle school students—focuses on hands-on learning.
- Arkansas Dream Center provides homework help to 120 children in Little Rock.
- Joseph Pfeifer Kiwanis offers five weeks of summer camp for at-risk youth ages 9–14 in Pulaski County.
- College of Engineering and Information Technology at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock provides outreach programs for students in 6th–12th grades (ages 11–18) to encourage STEM.

- ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Summer Science Camp (EMBHSSC) is a two-week residential summer camp for rising 6th-8th graders to increase STEM education. Participants must meet academic qualifications and be from traditionally underserved and underrepresented communities.
- Summer Laureate University for Youth provides expanded educational opportunities for kindergarten-8th grade students who apply. Scholarships are available for students in need.
- The Youth Activity Center sites (female and male) serve youth, ages 12–18, each day, to provide positive alternatives to at-risk youth, giving them the chance to participate in constructive activities with peers, receive help in times of crisis, and develop healthy relationships with caring adults.
- Positive Atmosphere Reaches Kids (P.A.R.K.) is an afterschool and summer program for Little Rock's children ages 13–18.
- Boys and Girls Club provides afterschool services to children and teens.
- Life Skills for Youth at the Temple Baptist Church provides afterschool programming and an eight-week summer camp with an academic focus. They also offer an out-of-school time program for days that youth are out of school during the school year (e.g., spring break, in-service days, winter break).
- First Tee is a summer camp for youth ages 5–18.
- Arkansas Arts Center provides art opportunities and programs to children, teachers, and organizations at a reduced rate.
- Wildwood Park for the Arts has a summer camp for children ages 7–12.
- Adventureland Academy provides preschool programs (starting with infants) and transitions to kindergarten, afterschool recreation and education, and summer camp up to age 12.
- Bale Elementary School has a partnership with UALR/Children's International that provides an afterschool Kids' Club. The school also focuses on literacy and reading for students in 1st-3rd grades.
- The Child Development Center provides Little Rock's children ages 4–12, with afterschool and out-of-school programs and summer camp.
- Childcare Network 190 summer camp, afterschool, and kindergarten prep serves children from ages 4–12.
- Christ the King Catholic Church summer camp is designed for teens and young adults.
- In His Image Youth Development Center is in southwest Little Rock and provides day care and afterschool programs for children from 6 months–12 years old.
- Lake Nixon Summer Camp is a summer camp in west Little Rock for ages 6–12.
- Kidz Palace provides free afterschool activities and meals to youth ages 5–18.
- Junior League of Little Rock provides mentorship and literacy programs.
- Fellowship Student Ministries (FSM) is dedicated to providing a place for 7th–12th grade students to connect to their faith and assists with spiritual development.

Employability skills:

- The Learning Center at Our House focuses on employment, adult education, and life skills for families in homeless or near-homeless situations.
- Literacy Action of Central Arkansas provides services for adults over 18 who cannot read beyond 8th grade level and/or people for whom English is second language.
- City of Little Rock Summer Youth Employment Program gives youth ages 16–21 opportunities to learn about careers, while earning a wage during the summer.
- The Nia Center provides training for writing, jobs skills, computer literacy, and social activism for young adults ages 18–25.
- Life Skills for Youth at the Temple Baptist Church prepares and improves work-ready students to find and keep a job.
- Little Rock Workforce Investment Board offers YouthBuild to help youth ages 18–24 attain a GED, earn recognized vocational certificates and licenses that will lead to employment, and build leadership and community service awareness. In addition to the academic challenges in the program, participants are encouraged to pursue vocational training and licensing programs in the fields of certified nursing assistantship, weatherization technology, commercial truck driver training, highway construction training, and apprenticeships in the traditional construction trades. Participants receive incentives and wages as they learn their vocations.
- The Little Rock Workforce Investment Board's Workfroce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Services for youth ages 14–21 offers tutoring, paid work opportunities, internships, skills training, leadership development activities, and supportive services.
- The Little Rock Workforce Investment Board's Young Parents Demonstration Program provides educational and occupational skills training leading to family economic self-sufficiency to both mothers and fathers, and expectant mothers ages 16–24.

Reentry:

- The Learning Center at Our House has a program specifically targeted to students with criminal history and focuses on specific barriers unique to their situation.
- Division of Youth Services Mentoring Program provides mentors to juveniles ages 15-18 involved in the Arkansas Division of Youth Services system, incarcerated at the Alexander facility. The program is on hold due to lack of funding.
- City of Little Rock Reentry Program is designed to provide services and opportunities to those with a history of non-violent convictions and incarceration to transition into the Little Rock community and improve their quality of life.

Health:

- The Centers for Family and Youth provide a comprehensive continuum of mental health services for all children and families in Arkansas, including emergency psychiatric services and counseling.
- Arkansas Center for Addictions Research, Education and Services (CARES) focuses on breaking the cycle of substance abuse for pregnant women or mothers with children under age 12.

Recommendations for Leveraging the Program Scan

ACS recommends that, regardless of the final vehicle the content is presented in (searchable spreadsheet or website) the City do the following to keep the information up to date in the scan:

1. **Determine the purpose of the information.** ACS's recommendation is that continual updates to the scan are made. Therefore, the purpose should be clarified. As discussed above, the purpose may be to share with community program stakeholders, or it may be to increase awareness about community programs to the general public.
2. **Determine appropriate vehicles for the information and how they will be developed.** Depending on the purpose of the information, new products (i.e., searchable spreadsheet or website) to house the information may be needed.
3. **Review content bi-annually.** Twice a year City staff should review programs included in the scan to see if any have closed or changed.
4. **Remove promising practices.** Promising practices was useful for internal assessment of assets in the community. For future use, promising practices should be removed from scan.
5. **Designate staff.** One person on staff should receive forms, verify information, and include information on the scan.
6. **Place form and directions online.** The fillable form below should be placed on the City's website.
7. Communicate about the process. Talking points about the purpose of public scan information (to be decided on by the City) and process for adding programs should be developed and communicated.
8. **Verify content submitted.** Not every program submitted by others will be a valid program. City staff will need to call the contact provided and verify the details of the program. At a minimum, verify the starred items. The City staff should make up to three phone calls within a 2–4 week timeframe. If the information cannot be verified in that time, the program should not be included in the scan.
9. **Test the process.** Send the form out to a select few (potentially the Master Plan advisory committee or the Commission for Children, Youth, and Families to test the form and the process, and ensure designated City staff are clear on the process.
10. **Be timely and reliable.** The internal process for verification and inclusion in the scan should be followed consistently. After a form is submitted, information should be verified and included within 2–4 weeks.

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Partnerships and Resources

The Department of Community Programs (DCP) will maintain an ongoing list of organizational partners and resources, such as facilities, staff, and funding. These are separated into three categories: funding, supportive services, and service providers. As DCP looks at partnership opportunities and sustainability, it is recommended they use this inventory to identify funding to leverage and strategic partners. The list of service providers will be provided to potential grantees, and it will be a requirement of the proposal process to identify the gap or need that they fill, and/or how they will partner with other organizations to fill needs in the community. DCP will determine how others may access the information in the inventory.

Partnership and Resources Inventory

Category: Government Entities	Organization: Pulaski County
Contact Information	Jamie Scott 501-340-8250
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	By mobilizing resources for quality enrichment and educational programs for Pulaski County youth ages 6–18.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	Job Training Job Placement • ACT Prep • Leadership Camp • Financial Literacy • Community Service • Referral of identified Participants • Community Education on Police Contact • Reentry Job Placement Site
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	• Federal and State grants to expand and enhance youth programing/services currently being offered. • Training/Technical assistance grants for providers.

CATEGORIES		
	Funding	
CATEGORIES	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	X

Category: Government Entities	Organization: Workforce Investment Board
Contact Information	WJ Monagle 501-683-3843
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Target the employment and training needs of 14–21 and 18–24 year olds and young parents.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Job Training • Job Placement • ACT Prep • Leadership Camp • Financial Literacy • Community Service
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	• Federal and State grants to expand and enhance youth programing/services currently being offered • Training/Technical assistance grants for providers.

CATEGORIES		
	Funding	X
CATEGORIES	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	X

Partnership and Resources Inventory

Category: Government Entities	Organization: Department of Human Services DYS/DCFS/DBHS
Contact Information	Keesa Smith 501-682-8649
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Has more than 7,500 employees that provide a number of services and programs to ensure citizens are healthy and safe and enjoy a high quality of life.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Evidence-Based Training • Juvenile Justice Trainings, Workshops ConferencesMental Health Screenings/Service • Local Service Providers (based on custody/court involvement • Local Training • Education and Prevention Grants
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	• Federal grant collaborations (i.e., delinquency prevention, reentry services, mental health substance abuse disorders).

CATEGORIES		
	Funding	X
CATEGORIES	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	X

Category: Government Entities	Organization: Little Rock Police
Contact Information	Captain T. Washington, Chief Kenton Buckner 501-918-5135
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Educate citizens about public safety issues and striving to gain community support in the suppression of criminal activity through community engagement programs.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• O.K. Program • GEMS Program • Latino Outreach • School-based Diversion (SRO) • Referral of identified Participants • Community Education on Police Contact • *Reentry Job Placement Site
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	• Federal grants for evidence-based delinquency prevention

CATEGORIES		
	Funding	X
CATEGORIES	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	X

Partnership and Resources Inventory

Category: Government Entities	Organization: LR Parks and Recreation
Contact Information	Truman Tolefree/ Selandria Jackson 501-371-6855
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Provide the citizens and visitors of Little Rock accessible recreational program opportunities, experiences, and activities that promote active living, health and wellness, socialization, self-esteem, growth, and achievement.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Organized Sports Programs (minimal cost) • Summer Recreation Programs • Facilities for Activities/Meetings • All City youth are eligible
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	• Community Recreation Grants • Prevention Grants

CATEGORIES	Funding	
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	

Category: Government Entities	Organization: Arkansas Minority Health
Contact Information	Dr. Michael Knox, Stephanie Cross 501-686-2720
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Provide Arkansas minorities access to health care that is equal to the care provided to other citizens of the state, and seek ways to provide education, address issues, and prevent diseases and conditions that are prevalent among minority populations.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Sponsorships for Minority Health Events (adults and children) • Minority Health Awareness Summits • Health Fairs • Volunteers • Community Service Opportunities • Camp IRock
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	None identified.

CATEGORIES	Funding	X
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	

Partnership and Resources Inventory

Category: Government Entities	Organization: Arkansas Game and Fish (Education) Stephens Nature Center
Contact Information	Neil Curry 501-223-2004 501-223-6428
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Bring the joys of hunting, fishing, and watching wildlife to everyone from toddlers to teens.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Educational Programs/Presentations • Fishery Tours • Fishing Clinics • Hooked on Fishing not on Drugs • Archery/BB Guns • Fishing Derbies • Nature Center Tour
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	None identified.

CATEGORIES	Funding	
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	

Category: Government Entities	Organization: Department of Corrections
Contact Information	Re-entry 870-267-6236
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Motivate and provide opportunities for offenders to prepare for successful reentry into society through community engagement and stakeholder partnerships aimed at increasing public safety and reducing recidivism while slowing prison growth.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Transitional Living • License Application Assistance • Mentoring • Substance Abuse Treatment • Mental Health Treatment
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	• Federal DOJ Reentry Grant.

CATEGORIES	Funding	
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	X

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Partnership and Resources Inventory

Category: Community Organizations		Organization: New Futures for Youth	
Contact Information		Dr. Mark Perry 501-314-1011 Kent Broughton 501-489-3081	
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?		Capacity Building Trainings Family Programing for Foster Kids/Parents Teen Pregnancy Prevention Life Skills Training BMOST-Community Collaboration	
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?		• Summer Employment • Community Service Project • Development	
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.		• Federal grants (capacity building) • Leverage foundations to enhance City funding.	
CATEGORIES	Funding	X	
	Supportive Services	X	
	Service Provider		

Category: Community Organizations		Organization: Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance	
Contact Information		Kathy Webb Sekia Brown 501-399-9999	
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?		No Kid Hungry Campaign Increase Access to USDA Reimbursed Meal Programs	
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?		• County Poverty Snapshot • Technical Assistance • Afterschool/Summer Grants • Cooking Matters Programs • Staff Training/Nutrition Education	
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.		• Capacity building grants	
CATEGORIES	Funding	X	
	Supportive Services	X	
	Service Provider		

Partnership and Resources Inventory

Category: Community Organizations		Organization: Arkansas Out of School Network	
Contact Information		Levita Wills-Hale 501-280-0577	
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?		AOSN ensures that children and youth have safe, healthy, and enriching learning experiences during the Out-of-School Time hours. Engages policy makers and leverages state and local partnerships in support of Out-of-School Time, and provides resources and supports to improve the quality of programs and services.	
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?		• Public Policy Advocacy/Research • Community Engagement/Strategic Planning • Technical Assistance • Professional Development	
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.		• Regional Best Practices Academies: Training for Youth Development Professionals • Regional STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Academies: Training for Youth Development Professionals Informal STEM Learning/Best Practices • The Arkansas Youth Development Institute (YDI): Online series of core content knowledge for Youth Development Professionals—24 free courses. A Youth Worker Certificate is available upon completion of specified courses • AOSN Community Innovations Project: Technical Assistance to communities to identify common goals and effective strategies related to Out-of-School Time programming • Technical assistance in program planning and implementation available upon request.	
CATEGORIES	Funding		
	Supportive Services		
	Service Provider		

Category: Community Organizations		Organization: Audubon of Arkansas	
Contact Information		UTA Meyer 501-244-2229	
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?		Audubon Arkansas's education program connects students to nature through hands-on, field science.	
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?		• Nature Education • Environment Education • Enrichment Opportunities • Community Service Projects • SYEP potential Site	
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.		• Grant opportunities for expansion of age 12–18 years.	
CATEGORIES	Funding	X	
	Supportive Services	X	
	Service Provider		

Partnership and Resources Inventory

Category: Clubs/Councils	Organization: Urban League/100 Black Men
Contact Information	Sherman Tate/ Ken Wade 501-850-8967
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Focused on leading efforts in advancing and obtaining equal opportunities for all citizens with a concerted focus on the areas of health, education, jobs, and housing.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Connection to the Business Community • Minority Leadership Development • Convening and actively recruiting black leadership (preferably male mentors)
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	None identified.

CATEGORIES	Funding	
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	

Category: Clubs/Councils	Organization: Ministerial Alliance
Contact Information	Judge Marion Humphry 501-235-8222
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	A network of likeminded ministers committed to empower our communities to exalt our Christ.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Convening Black Churches/Pastors • Announce Available Programs and Services • Solicit support and community buy in
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	None identified.

CATEGORIES	Funding	
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	

Partnership and Resources Inventory

Category: Clubs/Councils	Organization: Arkansas Humanities Council
Contact Information	Marynell Branch 501-320-5761
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Promote understanding, appreciation, and use of the humanities in Arkansas.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Mini Grants • Exhibits • Events/Activities • Seminars • Museums
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	• Local grants available to plan and conduct projects in the humanities.

CATEGORIES	Funding	
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	

Category: Clubs/Councils	Organization: Arkansas Educational Television Network (AETN)
Contact Information	Karen Walker 501-682-2386
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	A safe place for Arkansas parents and kids to get the latest news about events, contests, special programming, reading lists, and healthy recipes, and to learn about inspirational people.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Youth Tools • Youth T.V. Programming • Youth Activities • Educational Curriculums • Parent Tools
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	None identified.

CATEGORIES	Funding	
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	

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A Place to Thrive The Master Plan for Little Rock's Children, Youth, and Families

Partnership and Resources Inventory

Category: Clubs/Councils	Organization: Kiwanis Camp
Contact Information	Sanford Tollette 501-821-3714
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Ensure that at-risk and underprivileged youth can have wilderness experiences and get out of the city.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Summer Camp • Youth Development • Behavior Modification • Parent Engagement
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	• Wilderness education mini grants.

CATEGORIES	Funding	
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	X

Category: Clubs/Councils	Organization: Junior League
Contact Information	Sabrina Lewellen 501-375-5557
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Improve the community by providing volunteers, funding, and leadership support. And support nutrition and wellness and school preparedness improvement efforts.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Little Readers Rock • Trained Volunteers • Marathon • Nonprofit Capacity Building (Shared office space)
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	None identified.

CATEGORIES	Funding	
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	

Partnership and Resources Inventory

Category: Business Community	Organization: Little Rock Chamber of Commerce (50 for the Future)
Contact Information	Kathey Perez 501-377-6016
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	The Little Rock Regional Chamber of Commerce is the principal business-driven leadership organization responsible for fostering the economic growth and development of the Little Rock Region to ensure that business and industry may operate profitably and enhance the earning opportunities and quality of life for every citizen.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Professional and Small Business Development. • Youth Employment Work-sites Referrals
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	None identified.

CATEGORIES	Funding	
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	

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Partnership and Resources Inventory

Category: Education/Training Organizations	Organization: Little Rock School District/BOOST
Contact Information	Baker Kurrus/Frederick Fields 501-779-4838
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Deliver tutoring, remedial education services or other educational services to school-age children and youth; and to deliver supplemental services.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• School Based Diversion • Parent Engagement • Program Referrals • Assessments/Testing • Training • Tutoring • Counseling • Family Assistance • Supplemental Services • Summer Enrichment
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	• Federal/State education assistance grants • Family assistance funding • Training assistance grants (DOE)

CATEGORIES	Funding	X
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	X

Category: Education/Training Organizations	Organization: Thompson Driving School
Contact Information	Broch Thompson 501-225-4028
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Give youth drivers knowledge and techniques to help avoid accidents and to develop safe, responsible, and lawful driving habits. supplemental services.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• 30 hours, 5-day classroom program for new drivers 13 years of age and up • Arkansas Road Permit/State Police Exam • Behind the Wheel Program: Driving Lessons
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	None identified.

CATEGORIES	Funding	
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	

Partnership and Resources Inventory

Category: Education/Training Organizations	Organization: U of A Division of Agriculture Cooperative Education/4-H Center
Contact Information	Erica Williams 501-340-6650 Erica Fields 501-671-2270 Noah Washburn 501-671-2064
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Provide youth ages 5–19 with leadership, communication, problem-solving, decision making, and life skills through projects that enable them to become positive, productive, capable, and compassionate members of society.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Afterschool Program Training • In-school Programming for ages 5-19 years • Training Programs on Curriculum 4-H model/Learn by Doing / STEM/Healthy Life Styles
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	• National 4-H grant opportunities.

CATEGORIES	Funding	X
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	

Category: Education/Training Organizations	Organization: (Hippy/ACH)
Contact Information	Alta Jones 501-447-1870 501-364-3671
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	HIPPY is an evidenced-based family support model that works directly with parents in their homes to give them books, activities, and skills needed for them to take responsibility for preparing their children for school.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Preschool Home-based Educators 3–5 year olds eligible (developmentally delayed, teen parent, high school dropout)
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	• Arkansas Better Chance grant.

CATEGORIES	Funding	
	Supportive Services	
	Service Provider	

A Place to Thrive The Master Plan for Little Rock's Children, Youth, and Families

Partnership and Resources Inventory

Category: Education/Training Organizations	Organization: Arkansas Head Start Collaborative
Contact Information	Jackie Govan 501-371-0740
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Ensure availability of comprehensive early childhood education and high-quality services for children and families in Arkansas.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Non-profit Agencies Eligible for Local Head Start Initiative • Technical Assistance/Support/ Services
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	• Federal Head Start Initiative grants • Local funds for early childhood services DHS

CATEGORIES	Funding	X
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	

Category: Education/Training Organizations	Organization: UAMS Head Start
Contact Information	Tyra Larkin 501-570-5000
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Provides services to 840 Head Start and 88 Early Head Start children and families in Pulaski County.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Ark Early Learning 0–3 years of age • UAMS head start 3–4 years of age (income eligibility requirements)
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	• Federal Head Start Initiative grants • Local funds for early childhood services DHS.

CATEGORIES	Funding	X
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	

Partnership and Resources Inventory

Category: Education/Training Organizations	Organization: Pulaski County Special School District
Contact Information	Dr. Janice Warren, Equity and Pupil Services 501-234-2021
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Deliver tutoring, remedial education services, or other educational services to school-age children and youth; and to deliver supplemental services.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Parent engagement • Program Referrals • Assessments/Testing • Training/Tutoring • Counseling • Family assistance • Supplemental Services • Summer Enrichment
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	None identified.

CATEGORIES	Funding	
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	X

Category: Transportation	Organization: First Student/LRSD Special Needs Transportation
Contact Information	Michael Martello 501-447-7559
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?	Provides transportation for alternative /special needs school/ programs.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?	• Potential Summer Work-Site • Activities/Event Transportation • Reentry Job placement • Youth Bus Safety Training
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.	None identified..

CATEGORIES	Funding	
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	

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Partnership and Resources Inventory

Category: Transportation		Organization: Rock Region Metro (CATA)
Contact Information		Becca Green, Director of Public Engagement 501-375-1165 ext. 241
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?		The largest transit agency in Arkansas.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?		• Student Rates • Discount Rates
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.		None identified.
CATEGORIES	**Funding**	
	Supportive Services	
	Service Provider	X

Category: Mental Health/Disabilities		Organization: Arkansas Children's Hospital
Contact Information		Community Outreach 501-364-110
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?		Reach children and families with informative and fun health education, through several statewide outreach programs with a focus on wellness, prevention, and health promotion.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?		• Fire Safety • Health and Safety • Seatbelt Safety • CPR Training
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.		None identified.
CATEGORIES	**Funding**	
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	X

Partnership and Resources Inventory

Category: Mental Health/Disabilities		Organization: Pathfinders
Contact Information		Pam Satterfield 501-982-0528 Debra Rogers 501-982-5402
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?		Provide programs and services for youth with developmental disabilities and behavioral health needs to expand their growth opportunities.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?		• Mental Health Services • Therapeutic Activities • School Based Services • Referral Source for Mental Health Needs
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.		None identified.
CATEGORIES	**Funding**	
	Supportive Services	X
	Service Provider	X

Category: Mental Health/Disabilities		Organization: Camp Aldersgate
Contact Information		Ali Miller 501-225-1444
How does the organization serve children, youth, and families relevant to PIT?		Offer programs to youth with special needs, that aim to strengthen personal and social development, promote healthy lifestyles, enrich communities, and foster environmental awareness.
What programs/services could be leveraged to support PIT programs in meeting their goals or filling a gap (e.g., transportation)?		• Summer Camps • Specialty Camps • Group Activities • Weekend Camps • Summer Work-site
Are there opportunities for shared grants or leveraging resources to support PIT? (e.g., applying for state or federal funding together or targeting funding for PIT participants) If yes, please describe.		None identified.
CATEGORIES	**Funding**	
	Supportive Services	
	Service Provider	X

A Place to Thrive The Master Plan for Little Rock's Children, Youth, and Families

Promising Practices for Children, Youth, and Families: A National Scan of Selected Programs and Organizations

Introduction

As part of the process to develop the City of Little Rock's Master Plan for Children, Youth, and Families, Advocacy & Communication Solutions, LLC (ACS) researched promising practices both nationally and from specific cities that have developed effective policies and/or invested funding in programs that provide prevention, intervention, and treatment services to children, youth, and families. Of primary interest were practices that would help Little Rock define and develop objectives, structure, strategies, key partnerships (interagency and cross-sector), evaluation design and accountability measures, program capacity, and communication. In some cases programmatic promising practices are also included.

Sources include online resources, publicly available research papers, and general information from national subject matter experts, as well as cities identified by the City of Little Rock and other successful programs that have implemented strategies that support prevention, intervention, and treatment services for children and youth during school, after school and out-of-school.

This brief covers promising practices from topics that maximize Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment (PIT) funds and support the Commission on Children, Youth, and Families. The following topics are included:

- Violence prevention and intervention
- Afterschool programs
- Reentry programs
- Employability
- Domestic violence
- Substance abuse
- Teen pregnancy prevention and teen parenting
- 5 year-old-children/transitioning to kindergarten

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Violence Prevention and intervention

Overview

ACS researched violence prevention and intervention programs in five cities that were identified by the City of Little Rock or with proven best practices through online research. These include the following programs:

- NOLA FOR LIFE PLAYbook: Promoting Life for All Youth (New Orleans, LA)
- Detroit Youth Violence Prevention Program (Detroit, MI)
- Operation: Safe Community (Memphis, TN)
- Operation Peacekeeper (Stockton, CA)
- Positive Action Program (Multiple states)

Promising practices

Some key promising practices include the following:

1. **Structure an initiative that works (goals, strategies, and objectives).**
   - New Orleans organizes goals and strategies into three main areas that correspond to prevention before violence, in the midst of violence, and after violence already has occurred. The comprehensive plan's[2] infrastructure section guides implementation, tracking, metrics, and outreach.
   - Detroit's plan has three key features: Safe Routes, Safe Passage, and Ceasefire. Safe Routes provides Detroit students with safe routes to school. Volunteers from organizations such as MADE Men patrol the areas around the schools before and after school to protect students as they walk to and from school. Safe Passage is an anti-truancy program and provides an alternative to traditional suspension and expulsion. Safe Passage provides students with an in-school remedy, in which they can continue to learn, but with some consequences for their misconduct, including participating in community service such as mowing lawns and removing graffiti. Ceasefire seeks to prevent violence by utilizing data to identify individuals likely to engage in violent conduct and implementing measures to reduce that risk.
   - Operation: Safe Community in Memphis is supported by a 50-member board of directors, representing 45 accountable partners in government, K-12, higher education, social service agencies, and the business community. The plan has four goals: prevention, intervention, enforcement, and reentry.

2. **Identify community outcomes.**
   - New Orleans will measure progress using the Caring Communities Youth Survey (CCYS) given to all 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in New Orleans schools. The survey asks students if they feel safe in their schools and in their neighborhoods. The program compares survey results against baseline metrics.
   - Operation: Safe Community in Memphis has a five-year report[3].

3. **Focus on building social and emotional skills.**
   - The Positive Action program has content units on self-concept that cover diverse topics such as nutrition, problem-solving, decision-making, study skills, self-control, managing personal resources, social skills, self-honesty, and setting and achieving goals. They include:
     - positive actions for body and mind.
     - social and emotional positive actions for managing oneself responsibly.
     - social and emotional positive actions for getting along with others.
     - social and emotional positive actions for being honest; and
     - social and emotional positive actions for self-improvement.

4. **Conduct evaluation of programs.**
   - All NOLA FOR LIFE initiatives are part of NOLA FOR LIFE Stat, a monthly performance management meeting in which the initiative's leaders come together with top City leadership to review performance measures and discuss progress in implementing NOLA FOR LIFE initiatives.
   - Detroit's data drives alignment and collaboration both in pilot areas and for the city as a whole.
   - Operation: Safe Community has a clear action plan[4] that names goals, deliverables, and responsible parties. The crime-reduction initiative has 26 strategies, 45 accountable partners, and more than 100 public and private agencies engaged in the implementation.

5. **Build relationships across city departments, local organizations, and schools.**
   - NOLA FOR LIFE is a partnership of public and private entities, non-profits, public schools, and social and community service partners. It is run by the City's health department, coordinates with local government, and uses a federal model. The New Orleans Children and Youth Planning Board serves as an advisory board.
   - In Detroit, the community-based planning process brought together community leaders, youth, nonprofit organizations, advocacy groups, representatives of the juvenile justice system, and City agencies to craft a multi-faceted strategy to significantly reduce youth violence.
   - Operation: Safe Community has created strong partnerships with religious youth services organizations, Memphis City Schools, and highly rated preschools in the city to ensure more children enroll in preschool, and the University of Memphis, which evaluates its programs.
   - Operation Peacekeeper uses outreach workers in collaboration with government and community-based organizations to provide resources for youths to escape a gang lifestyle. The program also depends on the involvement of the community to help influence criminal justice agencies to construct customized solutions.

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[2]Please see: The NOLA for LIFE PLAYbook plan. http://www.nola.gov/getattachment/Health/Data-and-Publications/NOLA-FOR-LIFE-PLAYbook_for-web-9-2-14.pdf/

[3]Source: Operation: Safe Community report. https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CB8QFjAA&url= http%3A%2F%2Foperationsafecommunity.org%2Fassets%2F1294%2Fosc-five_year_report_2006_to_2011.docx&ei=T9EJVdiQK4WYNvCphJAH&usg=AFQjCN FnnJl71GAZ3KMlvIqIaWw4Pf1xAw&sig2=8MhppIlePaRs4nIDF-go4w&bvm=bv.88198703,d.eXY

[4]Source: Operation: Safe Community report. http://operationsafecommunity.org/assets/1294/osc_2012-2016_action_agenda_with_detailed_action_plans_ final_102212.pdf

6. **Address capacity issues for programs.**

- The New Orleans Health Department plan calls for leveraging the training and technical assistance resources available through the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention and the UNITY Cities Network, as well as local partners.

- Memphis' Operation: Safe Community plan calls for 100 additional transitional school classroom slots and enhancing services at the Memphis City School's transitional and preparatory schools serving reentering youth.

7. **Leverage additional resources (funding and partnerships).**

- In Detroit, public and private partners fund the program. Additionally, many organizations work together to support the program, including local and federal government and the public schools.

- Operation: Safe Community uses partners such as Memphis City Schools, Memphis Talent Dividend, United Way, Youth Villages, Juvenile Court, JustCare Family Network, Workforce Investment Network, local churches and community benefit organizations, and the Department of Children's Services.

8. **Communicate to the public about services and programs.**

- Detroit's participants hold press conferences and send out news releases. They also have initiated an aggressive marketing campaign, with an emphasis on the use of social media, which fosters the increased use of nonviolent approaches to conflict resolution, connects youth with programs and services, and raises awareness around youth violence prevention.

- Information on the Opportunity: Safe Community program in Memphis is available at www.operationsafecommunity.org.

9. **Meet youth where they are.**

- Operation Peacekeeper is deployed in schools as well as neighborhood settings – wherever young people at risk of violence are found, including parks, street corners, and apartment complexes. It uses a problem-oriented policing paradigm to address specific problem areas and offenders. In particular, it uses the "pulling levers" deterrence strategy, which tackles a specific problematic criminal activity by implementing specialized prevention or intervention techniques. In Stockton, this strategy focused on the issue of gun violence among youth gang members.

Afterschool Programs

Overview
ACS scanned afterschool programs that have shown strong evidence-based outcomes for at-risk youth. Additionally, the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network database of model programs[5] provided promising practices. Additional cities and programs that were reviewed include the following:

- At-Risk Afterschool Meals Program (National)
- After School Matters (Chicago, IL)
- Global Kids (Washington, DC, and New York, NY)
- Communities In Schools (Arlington, VA)
- National League of Cities (National)
- Washington State
- The Arkansas Standards for Quality Afterschool Programs (Arkansas)
- National Summer Learning Study

Why these programs matter
According to the Afterschool Alliance, more than 4.1 million, or 61 percent, of African-American parents and 4.2 million, or almost half, of Latino parents of children who are not enrolled in an afterschool program say they would enroll their children in quality afterschool programs if one were available— significantly higher than the national average of 38 percent.

Studies[6] show that afterschool programs effectively address and help resolve many of the issues that lead to dropout.

Teens[7] need guidance to stay on the path to productive adulthood. There are 14.3 million children in the United States who take care of themselves after the school day ends; 51 percent of them are in grades 9–12. The rate of juvenile crime triples between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., and youth are more likely to become victims of crime. Self-care and boredom can increase the likelihood that a young person will experiment with drugs and alcohol by as much as 50 percent.

[5]See: National Dropout Prevention Center/Network. http://www.dropoutprevention.org/modelprograms

[6]Source: Afterschool Alliance Alert. http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/issue_briefs/dropout_prevention_brief_38_FINAL%5B1%5D.pdf.

[7]Source: Afterschool Alliance Alert. http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/issue_briefs/issue_older_youth_20.pdf

Promising practices

1. **Offer food, e.g., through the At-Risk Afterschool Meal program.** To help inform strategies for increasing participation in afterschool meals, Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry campaign partnered with APCO Insights in 2013 to conduct a national survey to learn more about low-income families' need, awareness, and interest in afterschool meal programs for their children. They found:

   - Low-income families are interested in afterschool programs that provide free healthy food.
   - While most parents already expressed an interest in afterschool programs, 73 percent of parents said they would be even more interested in an afterschool program if it provided free healthy food.
   - As food insecurity increases, so does interest in an afterschool program that provides food. The most food insecure parents are the most likely to be interested in such a program; 67 percent of parents with food insecurity say they are very interested.
   - 63 percent of low-income parents say that an afterschool program would be very helpful for their family.

2. **Expose teens to rewarding careers and help them develop marketable job skills.** The following is true of the Afterschool Matters (ASM) Program in Chicago:

   - Apprenticeships are the core model of ASM; teens learn marketable skills in a professional atmosphere from industry experts.
   - The instructor-to-student ratio is 1:15, and the ideal program incorporates two instructors working with 30 teens.
   - Most apprenticeships last 90 hours over 10 weeks during the school year and 135 hours over six weeks during the summer.
   - ASM participants had seen an increased school performance over students of similar backgrounds who were not involved in the program.
     - Students who participated regularly in ASM had the lowest number of school absences.
     - Students who participated regularly failed a significantly lower percentage of their core courses (10 percent) than similar non-participants (16 percent).
     - Participants had higher graduation rates and lower dropout rates than peers who did not participate in the program.

3. **Combine counseling, career readiness preparation, skill building, and exposure to experts who mentor and inspire participants.** All Global Kids youth programs[8] share these key components:

   - Focus on international affairs and global education.
   - Involve 21st Century skill-building including problem-solving, critical thinking, digital literacy, and cross-cultural communication.
   - Have hands-on leadership opportunities through youth-led peer education, social action campaigns, service learning projects, digital media production, and internships.
   - Provide exposure to and dialogue with experts, policymakers, and activists.
   - Focus on college and career exploration.
   - Have youth development support and mentoring by Global Kids staff.

4. **Position a coordinator inside schools to assess needs and deliver necessary resources that remove barriers to success.**

   - Communities in Schools (CIS) (Arlington, VA) surrounds students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. Program staff are actively engaged with policymakers, school staff, parents, and business partners to ensure that Communities In Schools' services are extended to as many K-12 students as possible and that those students have access to college.

5. **Improve quality improvement and build staff capacity.**

   - More than half of the 27 cities identified by the National League of Cities have created or adopted local afterschool standards to ensure that out-of-school-time providers can assess and improve the quality of their programs and achieve desired outcomes for youth. Twenty-one of the cities reported using a quality assessment tool to help providers evaluate their programs, and 22 cities reported offering more training opportunities to increase the knowledge and skill level of afterschool program staff.

6. **Set benchmarks and standards.**

   - Arkansas Standards for Quality Afterschool Programs are intended to be flexible enough to apply to a wide variety of program types but concrete enough to offer some elements that, while adaptable, must be addressed by any program, regardless of the ages served, program type, or overall goal. The standards are intended to suggest and offer a strong foundation for quality programming that embraces the belief that quality should be the standard, for all ages, all communities, and all programs. The standards are:

     1. Safe and Appropriate Program Environments and Facilities—Quality programs provide a safe, healthy, and appropriate learning environment for all participants.
     2. Ongoing Training and Staff Development—A quality program recruits, hires, and trains diverse staff members who values each participant, understands their developmental needs, and works closely with families, school partners, and staff.

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[8]Global Kids programs have been successful, with more than 90% of participants graduating high school and 96% of those graduates enrolling in post-secondary education. In 2013-2014, Global Kids enrolled 1,368 students in its weekly afterschool and expanded learning time programs and 1,222 students in school leadership development and service learning programs.

A Place to Thrive The Master Plan for Little Rock's Children, Youth, and Families

3. Program Monitoring and Evaluation—A quality program has a system for measuring outcomes and using that information for ongoing program planning, improvement, and evaluation.

4. Positive Youth Development—A quality program provides a well-rounded variety of activities and opportunities that support the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive growth and development of all participants. A quality program provides the opportunities for youth to participate in planning, to exercise choice, and engage in a variety of offerings.

5. Community Partnerships—A quality program establishes strong partnerships with families and communities in order to achieve program goals.

6. Sustainability Planning—A quality program has a coherent vision/mission and a plan for increasing the capacity that supports sustainability and growth.

- The State of Washington's Quality Standards Handbook[9] was developed in 2014 based on evidenced-based programs from across the country. The guide provides a set of benchmarks to create high-quality programs serving young people (ages 5 through young adult). All standards fall under one of nine domains, including:

1. Safety and Wellness—Quality programs provide safe, healthy, and developmentally appropriate learning environments for all participants.

2. Cultural Competency and Responsiveness—Quality programs respect and are responsive to the diversity of program participants, their families, and community.

3. Relationships—Quality programs develop, nurture, and maintain positive relationships and interactions among staff and participants.

4. Youth Leadership and Engagement—Quality programs promote a sense of purpose and individual empowerment in youth through opportunities to engage in a rich variety of experiences, participate in planning, and exercise choice and leadership.

5. Program and Activities—Quality programs offer a variety of activities that are active, developmentally appropriate, and culturally sensitive and enrich the physical, social, emotional, and creative development of all participants.

6. Assessment, Planning, and Improvement—Quality programs have policies and procedures in place that promote continuous improvement.

7. Ongoing Staff and Volunteer Development—Quality programs ensure competent, motivated, youth-centered staff and volunteers through effective orientation, training, and a philosophy that views professional development as a journey rather than a destination.

8. Leadership and Management—Quality organizations have a coherent mission, well-developed systems, and sound fiscal management to support and enhance quality programming and activities for all participants.

9. Family, School, and Community Connections—Quality programs establish and maintain strong, working partnerships with families, schools, and community stakeholders.

[9]Source: Raikes Foundation. https://raikesfoundation.blob.core.windows.net/media/OutofSchool_Resource_WAStateOutofSchoolQualityStandards%282014%29.pdf

Reentry

Overview
Promising practices from national reports and subject matter experts on reentry include the following organization, state, and local programs:

- Models of Change (Pennsylvania)
- Michigan Youth Reentry Model
- Wisconsin Going Home Program
- California Intensive Aftercare Program
- The Sentencing Project
- CoNEXTions© (Austin, TX)

Why these programs matter
According to the Reentry & Aftercare Guide[10] from the National Conference of State Legislatures, every year, approximately 100,000 juveniles are released from juvenile detention facilities and other out-of-home placements. An out-of-home placement can be disruptive even for juveniles who have family, school, or community support. Juveniles released from confinement experience challenges returning to society. Based on data from the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement (1997-2007), Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention reports that the youth reentry population is overwhelmingly male, a racial minority, and age 15 or older. Other important demographics to note include the following:

- At the time juveniles entered custody, 19 percent were living in two-parent households, 56 percent were living with one parent, and 26 percent were not living with any parent.
- Roughly one in 11 juveniles reports having children of their own.
- Nearly 25 percent have a sibling who is or has been incarcerated, and 25 percent have a father who is or has been incarcerated.

Promising practices
1. **Use a phased approach that recognizes a continuum of care.** The Justice Center from the Council on State Governments cites that promising practices[11] recognize that reentry begins at the time of admission to an out-of-home placement and continues beyond the youth's release and reintegration into the community. This reentry continuum consists of three overlapping phases: 1) in facility, 2) the transition out of facility and into community, and 3) in community. The three phases overlap, and each requires its own set of components to work effectively. Models use different phased approaches to provide services:

[10]Source: The National Conference of State Legislatures. http://www.ncsl.org/documents/cj/jjguidebook-reentry.pdf

[11]Critical Elements of Juvenile Reentry in Research and Practice. April 21, 2014. By David Altschuler, Ph.D. and Shay Bilchik, J.D. http://csgjusticecenter.org/youth/posts/critical-elements-of-juvenile-reentry-in-research-and-practice/

- The Michigan Youth Reentry Model uses the three-phase reentry approach of the U.S. Department of Justice's Serious and Violent Offender ReEntry Initiative (SVORI): Getting Ready; Going Home; and Staying Home.
- The Wisconsin Going Home Program provides institutional and community-based transition services to delinquent youth and their families using a three-phase model. The first phase, Institution, begins during a youth's placement at a secured juvenile correctional facility. Transition, the second stage, begins about three months before a youth returns to the community and continues for about three months after the youth is back in the community. The third phase, Stabilization, takes place during ongoing community supervision of the youth for an average of six to nine months. A reentry case manager leads a Transition Team for each youth through all three phases.

2. **Have overarching case management.** Case management is crucial to success. By incorporating it in the policies and procedures of its programs, juvenile justice systems will be in a better position to implement the following six critically important programmatic functions in day-to-day practice:

- Assessment of Risk for Reoffending, Strengths, and Needs
- Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions
- Family Engagement
- Release Readiness
- Permanency Planning
- Staffing and Workforce Competencies

Reentry programs that include all six functions operating in tandem best exemplify broad, evidence-based programming. Incorporating the six programmatic functions into a single continuity of care plan that cuts across all reentry stages and is guided by an Overarching Case Management approach is not a matter of simply adopting a specific model or registry program. Rather, jurisdictions should develop programs and implementation processes tailored to their needs and that draw upon available evidence and promising practice.

- The foundation of the Michigan Youth Reentry Model includes two equally important concepts: collaborative case management and evidence-based principles of risk, need, and responsiveness.

3. **Ensure smooth transitions with comprehensive services.** The Sentencing Project recommends the following successful principles for ensuring a successful transition back to the community:

- Pre-release planning services.
- Location in the community where returning youth live.
- Individualized service to assist with developmental deficits.
- Heavy concentration on ensuring school reenrollment, attendance, and success.
- Focus on permanent family/guardianship connections.
- Access to mental health and substance abuse treatment.
- Support and preparation for obtaining employment.
- Guidance and support for obtaining residential stability.

4. **Build relationships across state and city departments, local organizations, and schools.**
A strong partnership between the Models for Change[12] and the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee, Pennsylvania's State Advisory Group, focused on the key issues of strengthening the system of aftercare services and supports, reducing disproportionate minority contact with the juvenile justice system, and improving the coordination of the mental health and juvenile justice systems.

5. **Use evidence-based assessment tools.** CoNEXTions uses an evidence-based, automated assessment, the Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT), to assess individual youth risk factors and protective factors. The PACT provides the foundation for designing individual treatment plans targeting skill building to reduce a youth's risk factors and increase protective factors. The basic assumption of CoNEXTions is that intense and system-wide implementation of thinking skills training and interventions specific to risk and protective factors will decrease recidivism and crime among youth in the program.

6. **Ensure programs are accountable.** The Texas Juvenile Justice Department staff promote a "CoNEXTions Culture" by:

- Practicing/Modeling the five basic rules.
- Participating actively in multi-disciplinary teams.
- Asking youth about their community re-integration plan.
- Coaching youth according to their individual risk and protective factors.
- Setting limits by giving youth options paired with consequences.
- Using "thinking reports" when problems arise.
- Modeling partnership, teamwork, and effective communication.
- Proactively engaging families and volunteers.
- Celebrating positive accomplishments, emphasizing educational achievement.
- Using the common language of CoNEXTions.

7. **Communicate to the public about services and programs.**

- CoNEXTions has a website that defines the program areas for the public and interested parties: http://www.tjjd.texas.gov/programs/conextions.aspx.
- The Annie E. Casey Foundation publishes reports annually that include the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative.

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[12]Source: Models for Change. http://www.modelsforchange.net/reform-areas/index.html

3. **Use a common system to streamline services, coordinate efforts, and track outcomes.**
   - By sharing data across systems, the City of Boston and its partners are providing more targeted, coordinated services to strengthen families and their communities.
     - For example, the BOA launched the Summer Learning Project (SLP) in 2010. It is a citywide effort aimed at advancing a year-round expanded learning system that connects school, out-of-school time, and summer learning for high-needs students in 2nd grade–12th. Co-managed by the Boston Public Schools (BPS) and Boston After School & Beyond (BASB), SLP serves high-needs students, identified largely by principals, who are not likely to find their way to summer programming on their own. During the summer of 2013, SLP involved 51 BPS schools and 18 community partners that collectively provided more than 1,700 students with structured and engaging summer learning opportunities. Teachers and community partner staff co-manage the programs, jointly developing and delivering academic and skill-building content and experiences for students. During the summer of 2013, 11 additional summer providers also used the same measurement tools as SLP to measure their program quality. The sites share the results, as well as demographic and attendance information to inform continuous improvement across Boston's summer providers. SLP has built a strong framework for integrated school-community partnerships with a suite of measurement tools that report on student academic and skills outcomes, impact on teachers, and programmatic quality. The program was recognized in 2013 by the National Summer Learning Association, which awarded it the New York Life Excellence in Summer Learning prize. Evaluation has shown improvements in academic progress, skill development and relationships, and capacity building for community partners.
   - Working collaboratively on multiple initiatives are the Boston Police Department, Boston Centers for Youth and Families—the City agency that oversees youth development programs and family services—and the Boston Redevelopment Authority's Jobs and Community Services agency, which oversees education, training, career development, and human services. These public agencies have involved private philanthropy and the business community in efforts to build capacity and coordinate efforts. One example of their work has been targeted services for children, youth and families, cutting across agencies in specific "hot spot" neighborhoods. The partners in the Comprehensive Community Safety Initiative pilot in Grove Hall have been able to zero in and provide a range of supports and services to specific children and families who have been and continue to be generationally involved with both social services and law enforcement. Much of this pilot work can be credited to the sophisticated use of geographic information system technology and case and data file sharing.

4. **Focus on employability skills.** Answer the question of "What specifically should programs be teaching young people to prepare them for the workforce?" The National Youth Employment Coalition outlines several youth development competencies for programs, that include the skills, knowledge, and abilities of what youth need to know to successfully transition into adulthood. Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) provides a specific list of core competencies needed for employment. The framework lists 37 specific competencies broken down into six categories: career development, job attainment, job survival, basic skills, leadership and self-development, and personal skills.

   According to evidence in the "What Works in Job Training" report, education that is work-based and industry-based combined with occupational training and preparation appears to be effective for youth. Evidence in the "What Works in Job Training" report states early exposure to a range of career and higher education information and opportunities is associated with better post-secondary education outcomes. Three examples of industry-based education include the following:

   - "School-within-a school" sectoral high schools, such as career academies or LinkedLearning[14], have been found to be effective when academic instruction is linked to industry-based job skills, career preparation, and work-based training (e.g., paid internships).
   - YouthBuild[15], a program in which low-income young people ages 16 to 24 work toward their GEDs or high school diplomas, while building affordable housing in their communities, is a promising career-based program. A survey of 900 YouthBuild graduates from over 30 programs showed that a high proportion re-connected to school or the workforce upon graduation.
   - Additionally, a study of Year Up[16], a one-year program that offers 18- to 24-year-olds a comprehensive service package and paid vocational training, found the program had positive impacts on participant earnings.

[14]For more information: http://linkedlearning.org/about/
[15]For more information: https://www.youthbuild.org/
[16]For more information: http://www.yearup.org/

5. **Provide comprehensive services.** Provide services such as vocational training, academic instruction, counseling, career exploration and guidance, mentoring, health and dental care, childcare, community service experience, job readiness workshops, work experience, and internships.

- The Seattle Human Services Department seeks to provide youth with the skills, knowledge, and support they need to lead healthy and productive lives. They work to keep youth in school, improve their academic achievement, help them learn job skills, and reduce criminal activity and violence, especially for youth facing multiple barriers to success due to poverty and racism. Services include case management, counseling, tutoring, opportunities for work experience, and leadership and social skills classes. They support homeless youth through a continuum of care designed to meet emergency needs, while helping youth move into stable, permanent housing. Seattle Human Services Department programs support the following goals: work toward school and life success; strengthen social skills; help students gain valuable work experience; and prepare them for college. Low-income youth and youth of color receive high priority for services and programs, which are offered throughout the city by several nonprofit partners.

- The "What Works in Job Training" report suggests that work experience programs that include academic and vocational training, job search and placement assistance, and other supports have been shown to have strong impacts on school attendance and academic outcomes. Evidence from the report suggests that youth disconnected from work and school can benefit from comprehensive and integrated models that combine education, occupational skills, and support services.

Additionally, from the same report, Job Corps[17], an intensive program for disadvantaged youth that provides integrated education, job training, counseling, health and mental health services in mainly residential settings, was found to increase literacy and educational attainment (high school or GED completion), reduce criminal involvement and, at least for the first two years after the program, increase earnings. Longer-term follow-up over 10 years found that the program had positive earnings impacts only for youth who were older when they enrolled (20 to 24 year olds), but not for those who were younger when they enrolled.

Finally, the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe[18], an intensive, highly structured residential program for economically disadvantaged high school dropouts, offers a comprehensive 17-month program in 27 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia, including Arkansas.[19] The 17-month ChalleNGe program is divided into three phases: Pre-ChalleNGe, a two-week orientation and assessment period, a 20-week Residential Phase, and a one-year Post-residential Phase featuring a mentoring program. During the first two phases, participants live at the program site, often on a military base. An evaluation from 2005 to 2006 found that after three years, there were no significant differences in health or criminal activity between ChalleNGe participants and a control group of youth who did not go through the program; however, employment and earnings and receipt of a GED among Challenge participants were significantly higher. Specifically,[20] one notably large impact was on the percentage of youth who had earned a high school diploma and/or GED: 72 percent of youth admitted to the ChalleNGe program, compared with 56 percent of the control group youth. Youth admitted to the ChalleNGe program had average earnings in the past 12 months of about $13,500, compared with an average of $11,250 among the control group.

6. **Use positive youth development principles that build on youths' strengths.** The YouthBuild model[21] program exemplifies positive youth development principles that build on youths' strengths rather than deficits. Programs using positive youth development see youth as assets and focus on leadership and skill-building opportunities.

7. **Document and evaluate competencies gained for continuous program improvement.** In addition to the number of job placements, outcomes may focus on competencies gained, including soft skills (such as communication and team work) and technical skills.

- One of the Boston Opportunity Agenda (BOA)'s key principles is to key performance measures in public view. They track the following indicators along the learning continuum:
  - Early literacy: percent of entering kindergarteners achieving the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) benchmark.
  - 3rd grade reading proficiency.
  - Percent of non-exam 8th graders who are enrolled in Algebra 1.
  - Percent of 10th graders who pass all Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests.
  - Annual dropout rate.
  - High school completion—4-year graduation rate.
  - College completion.
  - Percentage of 25- to 64-year-olds with postsecondary credentials.

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[17] For more information: http://www.jobcorps.gov/home.asp

[18] For more information: http://www.ngyf.org/about-challenge-2/

[19] For more information: http://www.discoverarkansas.net/article.asp?ArticleID=1857

[20] For more information: http://clear.dol.gov/study/staying-course-three-year-results-national-guard-youth-challenge-evaluation-millenky-et-al

[21] For more information: https://www.youthbuild.org/about-youthbuild

Advocacy & Communication SOLUTIONS

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Domestic Violence

Overview
This research brief provides promising practices for serving children and youth who are witnesses to domestic violence. These practices are synthesized from the following sources and programs:

- Promising Futures Without Violence
- National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning
- National Resource Center for Domestic Violence
- Children Who Witness Domestic Violence (CWWV) (Cuyahoga County, OH)
- Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP) (Alexandria, VA)
- PALS Programs (Peace: A Learned Solution) (New Jersey)

Promising practices
The above sources present promising practices in five broad categories:

1. **General programmatic practices:** Promising practices within programs that are found to be most effective in reducing domestic violence among youth.
2. **Program design:** Types of programs available for children who witness violence.
3. **Assessments:** Three main evidence-based assessment tools to determine what level of intervention a child needs.
4. **Infrastructure:** Infrastructure and operations to support the actual program.
5. **Professional development and capacity building:** Refers to the supports for staff to receive training to improve their role as child and family advocates.

General programmatic practices
- The program model should seek to connect children with their non-abusive parent/caretaker.
- The program should have a physical environment that includes safe spaces for children and families to express their feelings, play, have alone time, and do activities together.
- The program should develop clear lines of communication, coordination, and collaboration between children and adult-focused advocates.
- The program should be trauma-informed.
- Program materials should be accessible to people with varying disabilities, language proficiencies, and reading levels.
- Programs that provide services to families in which domestic violence has been identified (even if child abuse has not been substantiated) must include helping abused women protect themselves and their children.
  - DVIP offers a children's program in which a family services specialist is available to provide short-term individual counseling to children living in abusive homes. A children's support group is offered and runs concurrently with the women's support group. This group provides children, who share their circumstances, an opportunity to meet and talk. For children whose mothers have relocated to the battered women's shelter, the family services specialists available on-site for support and counseling.

Program design[22]
Programs for children who witness domestic violence generally take the form of group or individual therapy. Both of these types of programs have shown success in promoting open discussion about children's experiences with domestic violence, helping children deal with the emotions and consequences that follow such exposure, reducing the problematic symptoms children experience, strengthening children's relationships with their non-abusive caregivers, and helping children and their families to create and maintain relationships and living situations that are free from violence and abuse. A third type of therapy that has proven promising is family therapy, and is usually conducted in addition to a group or individual intervention.

- Group Interventions: Group interventions, or group counseling, are best suited for adolescents who are likely to turn to peers for defining behavioral norms. Group interventions are typically not the best approach for toddlers and those who are more traumatized because they have more complex needs.
- Individual Interventions: Individual counseling is more effective for children who have more complex needs, such as younger children and children who have witnessed fatal domestic violence.
- Families Interventions: Family interventions, or family counseling, are also promising practices for children who witness domestic violence, because this type of therapy can help non-abusive parents recognize the impact of violence on their children, can increase the stability and routine in their children's lives, and can devise strategies to help the children cope with their stress or fears.

Assessments
Programs for children who are witnesses to domestic violence use three main evidence-based assessment tools to determine what level of intervention a child needs. These tools are:

- The Dimensions of Stressful Events (DOSE) is a 29-item rating scale completed by a clinician who gathers the information by interviewing a child or parent. Parents will complete the interview for children under age 4; children 5 years or older will complete the interview.
- The Trauma Symptom Checklist for Children (TSCC) is a 54-item self-report measure that was developed to assess post-traumatic stress and related psychological symptoms in children ages 8-16 who have experienced a traumatic event such as abuse, loss, witnessing violence, etc.
- The Pediatric Emotional Distress Scale (PEDS) is a 21-item scale that was developed to assess behaviors that children (and young adults) ages 2–20 typically display following a traumatic event. The parent and crisis worker rates the presence and severity of a behavior using the tool.

[22]Mental Health Services for Children who Witness Domestic Violence was published by the Future of Children, draws on field research from both academic and practitioner sources, and includes an overview of important components of domestic violence programs. This report can be found at: https://www.princeton.edu/futureofchildren/publications/docs/09_03_8.pdf

Infrastructure
Programs should:

- Have a multi-year sustainability plan to ensure they can work with children and families on an ongoing basis, and potentially long-term. This plan should include clear, measurable goals, strategies, and objectives.
  - The CWWV's goal is to establish a system of service, training, community awareness, and evaluation to prevent or minimize the cognitive, social, and emotional impairment of children who witness violence.
  - The goals of DVIP are to coordinate and monitor the response of the legal system and the community to family violence incidents in Alexandria, VA, by ensuring victims are provided with effective protection and services, seeing that assailants are held accountable for illegal behavior, and increasing community awareness of family violence.
  - The primary goal of PALS is to provide children and their non-offending parent/guardian with a safe environment to reduce the impact of domestic violence and to improve child and family functioning and wellbeing.
- Build in time to evaluate their outcomes, philosophies, core values, and personal policies through the lens of their experiences with family support, advocacy, and trauma.
- Build partnerships—both with other violence-related efforts within government, nonprofit, grassroots, and school organizations, and with cross-system to develop protocols and coordinate services and responses to families.
  - CWWV is overseen by an advisory committee of more than 150 individuals representing parents, nonprofits, public, and private entities with an interest in support services to children who witness domestic violence. Collaboration among a large number of community organizations is critical to the program.
  - DVIP is a community-wide partnership that includes the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS), Alexandria INOVA Hospital, Court Services Unit, Department of Community & Human Services, Fire Department, Health Department, Legal Services of Northern Virginia, Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney, Office of Housing, Office of the Magistrate, Office of Probation and Parole, Office of Sheriff, private citizens, police department, social services, Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN), substance abuse services, and the Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP).
  - PALS programs look different in each county they are implemented, and often include partnerships among battered women's shelters, the local department of children and family services, police departments, schools, and other social services organizations.
- Have clear policies about working with undocumented and immigrant families.

- Have established connections and referral protocols with community programs and mental health providers.
  - Identifying victims:[23] Under the CWWV program model, police departments from communities participating in the CWWV program make referrals at the scene of the violent event by calling the 24/7 hot line operated by a Mobile Crisis Team. The team then goes to the family's home and provides an immediate assessment and crisis intervention services. A program evaluation completed by Kent State University showed that children who completed services felt less anxious and depressed, and parents reported that their children were less withdrawn and restless.
- Co-locate domestic violence advocates in child welfare offices for case consultation and supportive services.
- Institute family court models that address overlapping domestic violence and child abuse cases.
- Have a structure to identify, assess, and provide mental health and therapeutic interventions to children.
- Have a mechanism to accurately identify children who witness domestic violence, and standardize the documentation of each situation. In the CWWV program in Ohio, not all policy reports list the children who were present at the time of a domestic violence call. New Jersey police reports, for example, include all children involved in the police report at the time of a domestic violence call. If domestic violence programs for child witnesses worked with policy departments to collect this information, they would be able to identify children who are not identified through school, a family member, or another source as being a witness.
- Communicate publicly about the services offered.
  - The DVIP has a robust public awareness campaign that consists of collateral materials distributed to families through all partners, posters around the community, and several events throughout the year that focus on domestic violence prevention and treatment.

Professional development and capacity building
Programs should:

- Ensure staff is aware of child abuse reporting standards and mandates.
- Ensure staff has access to express their feelings and experiences about specific domestic violence situations.
- Support professional development and training of all staff to adequately support mothers and children as families.
- Ensure staff has the skills to balance advocacy with children and mothers both as individuals and as families.
- Train all staff in child development, child advocacy, nonviolent discipline, and parent support.
- Train all staff in providing trauma-informed services with some focus on how trauma impacts children and brain development.
- Cross-train domestic violence and child welfare advocates.

[23]In 2008 the Children's Defense Fund of Ohio published an issue brief on the impact to and successful services for children who witness domestic violence. This brief can be found at: http://cdf.childrensdefense.org/site/DocServer/children-who-witness-domestic-violence-ohio.pdf?docID=9961

Youth Substance Abuse

Overview

This summary provides a list of promising practices both for communities that are seeking to reduce substance use among youth and for programs that treat youth with substance use disorders. These promising practices include promising practices areas outlined from national resources on youth substance programming. Sources include:

- United States National Drug Control Strategy
- National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)[24]
- The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP)25
- National Criminal Justice Reference Service[26]
- American Counseling Association
- The North Carolina Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment Project

Promising practices

The most successful strategies cited include:

1. **Launch a comprehensive youth anti-drug media campaign.** In the past decade, there have been several youth anti-drug media campaigns geared at both parents and youth. Promising practices for implementation of these campaigns include: strong legislative support, free advertising created in conjunction with private partners, and participation by leading media corporations as well as civic, volunteer, youth-serving, education, prevention, public health, and multicultural organizations. The following campaigns have been evaluated:

  - http://abovetheinfluence.com: This website provides information on all aspects of the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign in the United States.
  - www.theantidrug.com: This website equips parents and other adult caregivers with the tools they need to raise drug-free kids.

2. **Build successful community coalitions.**[27] Community coalitions have been successful in decreasing substance abuse among youth. These coalitions primarily target youth, but also can focus on young adults ages 18–25. The coalitions supported by the federally-funded Drug Free Communities Program must include local representatives of the following groups in their membership: young people, parents, media, law enforcement, faith-based organizations, fraternal organizations, state, local, and tribal government agencies, health care professionals, and other community representatives.

3. **Screen and intervene to interrupt the cycle of drug abuse.** This strategy leverages the health care community as a tool in identifying and intervening in youth substance use. Screening is not just highly effective, it also inexpensive to implement as it can be added into the existing medical infrastructure of a community.

4. **Provide quality drug treatment services at low cost.** Efforts to expand access to recovery and treatment options for youth have been highly successful in the United States. Efforts like Access to Recovery (ATR), a federal grant awarded to states such as Massachusetts, Iowa, and Indiana, target and assess youth seeking treatment and recovery support, and provide a subsidy or voucher to pay for appropriate services. Implementation of these programs is usually done through joint administration by public and private entities to distribute vouchers, and to deliver alcohol and drug treatment and other services. Expansion of access can be measured easily, by linking reimbursement for services to demonstrated abstinence from drug and alcohol use by clients after discharge.

5. **Establish drug treatment courts.** Drug treatment courts combine the power of the justice system with effective treatment services to break the cycle of criminal behavior, alcohol and drug use, child abuse and neglect, and incarceration. The first drug court was founded in Miami, FL, in 1989, and has been proven to be one of the most successful demand reduction initiatives in the United States. A decade of drug court research indicates that drug courts reduce crime by lowering rearrests and conviction rates, improving substance abuse treatment outcomes, reuniting families, and producing measureable cost benefits. Several analyses have shown to have significant impacts in communities that have implemented drug treatment courts:

  - A National Institute of Justice study found that the likelihood that a drug court graduate would be rearrested and charged for a serious offense in the first year after graduation was 16.4 percent, compared to 43.5 percent for non-drug court graduates. By the two-year mark, the recidivism rate had grown to 27.5 percent, compared to 58.6 percent for non-graduates.
  - An analysis in Washington State concluded that drug courts cost an average of $4,333 per client, but save $4,705 for taxpayers and $4,395 for potential crime victims, yielding a net return on investment of $4,767 per client.
  - An analysis in California concluded that drug courts cost an average of about $3,000 per client, but save an average of $11,000 per client over the long term.

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[24]The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) publishes information on evidence-based approaches to substance abuse treatment and prevention. More information can be found at: http://www.drugabuse.gov/

[25]The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) has summarized promising practices for community-wide substance use treatment and prevention initiatives. More information can be found at: www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov

[26]What Works: Effective Public Health Responses to Drug Abuse, published in 2008 by the National Criminal Justice Reference Service, provides an overview of national and community driven successful evidence based efforts to reduce drug abuse among youth in America. The full report can be found at: https://www.ncjrs.gov/ondcppubs/publications/pdf/whatworks.pdf

[27]Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) provides training and technical assistance through its National Coalition Institute. Originally formed in 1992 in response to the dramatic growth in the number of community coalitions and their need to share ideas, problems, and solutions. More information can be found at www.cadca.org

Promising Practices

Promising practices for serving youth with substance abuse problems have been presented by a several sources in two broad categories:

1. **Therapeutic Practices:** The types of therapies in substance abuse programs that are found to be most successful.

2. **Assessment:** The consistently recommended evidence-based assessment for youth in substance abuse programs.

Therapeutic Practices:

- Family involvement has been identified as a major component to motivating individuals with substance abuse issues to enter and stay in treatment while strengthening and extending treatment benefits.

  - Research has shown several types of family-based treatment models to be effective in treating substance abuse disorder in adolescents. Among them: brief strategic family therapy, family behavioral therapy, functional family therapy, multidimensional family therapy, and multi-systemic therapy are the most commonly used family-based treatment methods.

- Successful programs also use cognitive behavioral therapies to address addiction from the neurological perspective that addiction is a brain disease that impacts brain development and behavior, and these neurotoxic impacts are more notable during adolescence.

- Motivational Interviewing is a preferred clinical practice within substance abuse treatment due to its collaborative approach between treatment providers and clients, and has been found to be extremely successful in decreasing the likelihood of an adolescent relapsing.

- Mindfulness is an evidence-based therapy approach that has become increasingly popular in the fields of mental health, pain management, stress reduction, and more recently substance abuse treatment.

- Programs that have spirituality options for participants are found to be extremely effective in successful substance abuse treatment outcomes.

- The most successful programs combine the evidence-based therapeutic practices with a research-based curriculum.[28]

Assessment

Research consistently cites the use of The Global Appraisal of Individual Needs (GAIN)[29] as an effective evidence-based assessment tool that should be used for diagnosis, placement, and treatment planning for youth ages 12 and older with substance abuse. GAIN is an elastic tool that can be used in a variety of program settings, including outpatient, intensive outpatient, partial hospitalization, methadone clinics, short-term residential, long-term residential, therapeutic community, and correctional programs.

The core sections of GAIN are listed below and gauge the extent of symptoms using more than 100 scales and subscales to assess the youth:

- Background
- Substance Use
- Physical Health
- Risk Behaviors and Disease Prevention
- Mental & Emotional Health
- Environment and Living Situation
- Legal
- Vocational

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[28]The Texas Department of State Health Services requires their funded programs to use evidence-based curriculums. More information on the Texas Department of State Health's funding of substance abuse programs can be found at: https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/sa/child-adolescent-services/

[29]More information on GAIN can be found at: https://www.assessments.com/catalog/GAIN_SS.htm

Teen Pregnancy Prevention and Teen Parenting

Overview

This summary provides promising practices for preventing pregnancy in teens and guiding teens who are parents themselves. These practices are synthesized from the following sources and programs:

- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Family and Youth Services Bureau
- The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unwanted Pregnancy
- The Children's Aid Society—CAS-Carrera Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program
- Teen Outreach Program
- Focus On Kids Plus Impact
- Alabama Department of Health Think About It

Promising practices

According to The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unwanted Pregnancy, effective programs can be divided into five broad categories:

1. **Curriculum-based education that usually encourages both abstinence and contraceptive use.** These programs are generally offered as part of regular school classes or as part of afterschool programs either on school grounds or in community centers.

   - For example, TOP is curriculum-based and designed to be interactive and engaging, and covers a wide variety of developmental topics of interest to teens. Core curriculum content includes relationships and exploring healthy dynamics of relationships; communication and assertiveness, including active listening and learning to say "no"; developing critical thinking skills about media messages and peer influence; long-term goal setting; and development and human sexuality.

   - The CAS-Carrera program emphasizes both academic assistance and sex education. The main components are: 1) all teens will have an individual academic plan created by the education team; 2) each young person receives a minimum of one hour of homework help, tutoring, enrichment, and/or remediation at least four times per week; 3) all school report cards and standardized scores are collected from their schools; and 4) academic maintenance activities occur during the summer months, and all teens participate in project-based learning activities.

   - FOK+I is a two-part program, consisting of an 8-session skills-based HIV risk reduction curriculum (Focus on Youth [FOY]) and a 1-session parent component (ImPACT). The Focus on Youth content is designed to be delivered to small groups of same-gender friends; the curriculum teaches participants about abstinence and safe sex, alcohol, drugs, AIDS and STDs, contraception, and human development through use of games, homework, discussions and videos.

2. **Service learning programs in which the primary focus is keeping young people constructively engaged in their communities and schools.** Participants in such programs typically take part in community service (such as tutoring, working in nursing homes, or helping fix up recreation areas) and reflect on their service through group discussions or writing about their experiences. Sometimes, a bit of education about ways to prevent teen pregnancy and related problems is included in the curriculum.

   - TOP uses community service learning to develop a sense of competence and self-efficacy. Teens identify needs, plan and implement service projects, and reflect on their service experience.

   - The CAS-Carrera program also has community service opportunities.

3. **Youth development programs that take a broader approach.** For example, CAS-Carerra, a program that has been found to be effective with girls, combines health care, academic assistance, sex education, participation in performing arts and individual sports, and employment assistance. All of these activities are designed to encourage participants to think and plan for their future.

   - The CAS-Carrera program offers a Job Club with weekly exposure to the "world of work." Essential elements of the job club component are: 1) each young person opens and maintains a savings account; 2) each young person earns a stipend for job club participation; 3) monthly bank trips enhance lessons on banking; 4) regular entrepreneurial activities teach young people skills that lead to an understanding of small business ownership; 5) community service opportunities; and 6) career exploration that evolves over time.

   - CAS-Carrera also offers self-expression opportunities through the arts and project-based activities. The program offers exposure to sports through which young people learn skills in various sports such as golf, squash, tennis, martial arts, horseback riding, fencing, and swimming.

   - FOK+I uses multiple content delivery formats, including small group discussions, lectures, videos, games, role-playing, acting, storytelling, and crafts projects.

4. **Parent programs that involve both parents and adolescents, and, in general, seek to improve parent-child communication, particularly on sex and related topics.** These programs are usually offered in a community-based setting, and are targeted to moms, dads, or both.

   - The CAS-Carrera program has Family Life and Sexuality Education (FLSE). Its components are: 1) weekly education sessions throughout the year; 2) age- and stage-appropriate instruction; 3) emphasis on abstinence throughout the curriculum; 4) encouraging young people to talk with their parents about sexuality; 5) parent family life and sexuality education sessions; 6) reproductive health counseling and care as needed; and 7) the annual FLSE survey.

   - CAS-Carrera also includes a Parent Family Life and Sexuality Education program that facilitates a parent's/adult's ability to communicate more effectively with children about important family life and sexuality issues.

   - FOK+I uses ImPACT, a single session home-based intervention administered to parents (and their children) to increase parental monitoring. It consists of 22-minute video focusing on parental monitoring, followed by youth-parent role-play, discussions, and condom use skill-building.

5. **Community-wide programs that tend to be much broader in scope and that encourage involvement from the entire community.** These programs might include public service announcements, educational activities for the community, or community-wide events such as health fairs. The Alabama Department of Health created a Youth Leadership Team, which helped design and launch an innovative and informative website, http://www.thinkteen.org. This teen-friendly website empowers youth by providing accurate information and resources to assist them in making responsible, informed decisions to avoid unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

Additional promising practices

1. Curriculum-based programs that share the following characteristics are more effective, according to The National Campaign.
   - Programs should last a sufficient length of time (more than a few weeks).
   - Programs convince teens that not having sex or that using contraception consistently and carefully is the right thing to do, rather than laying out the pros and cons of different sexual choices.
   - Leaders believe in the program and are adequately trained.
   - Participants are actively engaged, and the information is personalized toward them.
   - The program addresses peer pressure.
   - Participants are taught communication skills.
   - Program design reflects the age, sexual experience, and culture of young people in the program.

2. **Programs supporting teens who are parenting follow some best practices.** According to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, the following are important best practices for programs that support teens who parent. Programs should:
   - Focus on self-sufficiency outcomes for pregnant and parenting teens.
   - Focus on developmental outcomes for children of teen mothers and teen fathers.
   - Focus on relationship outcomes for pregnant and parenting teens.
   - Include teen and young fathers.
     - Funding streams may dictate the priority population, which often means that pregnant and parenting mothers receive the bulk of the services. It is important that programs include the father, as appropriate and as long as it is a healthy relationship for the mother and child(ren). Regardless of whether the teen mother and father are engaged in an intimate relationship or are co-parenting but no longer in an intimate relationship, program providers can work to provide both parents supports and services.[30]

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[30]Working with Pregnant and Parenting Teen Mothers. https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/pregnant-parenting-teens-tips.pdf

The National Campaign offers recommendations on how communities can increase the chances that the programs they select—or design on their own—will actually change teen sexual behavior. Keeping the target group in mind, consider the following three strategies:

First choice: Choose a program already shown through careful evaluation to be effective with similar groups of adolescents, and then put it into action as it was designed – no changes, no additions, or deletions.

Second choice: If using an existing successful program is not possible, communities should select or design programs that incorporate as many characteristics of effective programs as possible.

Third choice: If options one and two are not possible, communities should 1) select the specific sexual behavior(s) they want to change; 2) study and understand the factors in the lives of young people most closely tied to the behavior to be changed; and 3) design activities that might affect some or all of these factors. For example, if the behavior to be changed is early sexual activity, learn about the factors that are closely tied to early sex (such as older partners) and then design interventions to change those factors.

5-Year-Old Children/Transition to Kindergarten

Overview

Research proves that children who attend preschool are more likely to succeed in kindergarten than those who do not, according to the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER). Participating in early education can also provide academic and social benefits that last well beyond kindergarten. Researchers have repeatedly demonstrated that for children—particularly children from low-income backgrounds—to benefit from preschool, it must be of high quality.[31] Unfortunately, according to NIEER, children from the lowest income families are found more likely to attend lower-quality programs. Children who are at risk for school failure benefit the most from good early education, but they are the least likely to get it. Furthermore, many children from middle-class families also attend preschool programs of mediocre quality.

Transition to a formal school setting can be very challenging for young children. Ohio Ready Schools[32] cites research[33] that finds about 20 percent of children entering kindergarten experience "serious" difficulties with transition, while another third have "some" problems. Since a child's experience in kindergarten plays a critical role in his or her adjustment to school and in later academic success, minimizing those difficulties can be a school's most critical challenge.

Ohio Ready Schools indicates that transition practices actively involve staff, families, and the community in creating seamless experiences for children as they enter kindergarten and adjust to school. Key considerations for smooth transitions include:

- Strong relationships with students' families, and partnerships with early childhood programs.
- Transition activities that include screenings to ensure that children are healthy and ready to fully participate in the academic process.
- Beginning transition activities before children enter kindergarten, and continuing them both formally and informally throughout the entire year. Transition approaches also can support all new students and families, including those who transfer to the school after the start of the school year.

Preschools tend to address 3- and 4-year-old children. Each year, there are 5-year-old children who have fall birthdays who find themselves sandwiched between preschool and kindergarten eligibility. Programs called "transitional kindergarten" are being developed specifically for these children. Transitional kindergarten programs are relatively new and few in number; the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) points to TKCalifornia as a widespread program, which shows promising results.

Reasons for implementing transitional kindergarten

According to TKCalifornia, entry date changes in California have meant that the state's children have historically started kindergarten at a younger age than kids in almost any other state—often without the maturity, social skills, and early academic skills they need to succeed in kindergarten and beyond. At the same time, kindergarten today is far more academic than it once was.

The youngest kids in a kindergarten class risk struggling academically, emotionally, and/or socially. Some may not be practiced in socializing with their peers and teachers, while others may not yet know how to listen or follow a structured class schedule. Transitional kindergarten ensures that children have these pivotal skills, which are foundations to successful learning, when they begin kindergarten.

Transitional kindergarten bridges the path between preschool and kindergarten and gives students a head start that will yield huge payoffs in future academic success. It provides the gift of time that will help students build a strong foundation for success in elementary school.

The following are some of the impacts of transitional kindergarten:

- Children are better prepared to succeed.
- Families have an additional option to ensure their children enter kindergarten with the maturity, confidence and skills they need to excel.
- Schools benefit because children will be better prepared to succeed academically and less likely to be placed in special education or held back in later grades.

Promising practices

1. **Determine the eligibility age for transitional kindergarten based on state kindergarten enrollment eligibility** (August 1 in Arkansas). For example, most California transitional kindergarten programs were for children who turned 5 between September 1 and December 31.

2. **Allow flexibility for classroom configuration, depending on what the schools can accommodate.** Some California transitional kindergarten classes were in conjunction with traditional kindergarten classes; others were standalone classrooms.

3. **Determine length of day.** In California, more than half of districts reported offering full-day transitional kindergarten classrooms (more than four hours per day), although more than 40 percent offered half-day schedules (four hours per day or fewer).

4. **Modify the kindergarten curriculum to be age and developmentally appropriate.** Focus more on social-emotional skill development, and provide more opportunities for child-directed learning.

[31]High Quality Preschool: Why We Need It and What It Looks Like. http://nieer.org/resources/policybriefs/1.pdf

[32]Ohio Ready Schools. http://www.ohioreadyschools.org/OhioReadySchool_Guide.pdf

[33]Pianta, R. C., & Kraft-Sayre, M. (2003). Successful kindergarten transition: Your guide to connecting children, families, and schools. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes. Contains guidance for developing a transition plan and provides a menu of transition activities.

5. **Engage a panel of experts to develop the transitional kindergarten program to serve the needs of teachers and administrators as they implement transitional kindergarten.** For example, TKCalifornia is the result of a content creation and a review process led by 20 experts from across the state, including local school districts, county offices of education, researchers, and state-level decision makers. This panel identified the following key agreements and recommendations as critical to students' learning:

   • Reflecting the continuum of development of all children, recognizing the breadth of their experience, and meeting them where they are to help them advance.

   • Fostering warm, responsive relationships.

   • Supporting family involvement.

   • Offering examples of good teaching.

   • Providing concrete guidance for teachers by showing how to sequence instruction and presenting easy-to-use resources.

   • Helping teachers understand the use of formative assessment.

   • Supporting teachers in differentiating instruction.

   • Articulating with preschool and kindergarten through complementary curriculum.

   • Focusing on the essential needs for teachers to build the foundation for kindergarten success.

   • Providing integrated learning and instruction.

6. **Staff the classrooms with qualified teachers.** Ninety-five percent of TKCalifornia teachers had experience teaching preschool, kindergarten, or first grade, and they have more than 14 years of teaching experience on average.

7. **Secure funding.** In California, districts receive the full Average Daily Attendance funding for transitional kindergarten classrooms, but also can seek private funding.

8. **Have an effective communication strategy** so families will know about transitional kindergarten its benefits, and be encouraged to register their children.

9. **Determine professional development needs of teachers**.

10. **Establish assessment tools.** These can include observations and check lists, so teachers can help meet individual student needs.

11. **Focus on family engagement.** Parents need to feel welcomed and that their family and cultural assets are recognized in school. These actions pave the way for productive communication that leads parents to support and advocate on behalf of their children and their schools. Examples of family engagement strategies include creating a warm environment that helps families feel welcome in the school community, including a survey to better understand the assets of students' families, and initiating positive conversations with families at the beginning of the school year.

Conclusion

This promising practice report presents strategies and actions from a wide range of national and local organizations and programs that work on the behalf of children, youth and families. No one place implements all of these practices. Each of the examples highlighted in the brief addresses a specific issue (e.g., substance abuse) through a targeted approach. Many of these communities have specific outcomes on which they base their strategies.

Factors of success demonstrate that relationships with state and local agencies and community-based organizations are a critical component to provide comprehensive services along a continuum. Additionally, each program uses evidence-based approaches to ensure children, youth, and families receive high-quality services. Local context is critical to successful implementation. Each location carries its own history, dynamics, relationships, and partnerships that make it unique. These promising practices provide examples, ideas, and approaches that may be used as a resource to help make strategic decisions about services for children, youth, and families that enrich their lives and support them in efforts to attain skills that will lead to a thriving, sustainable quality of life.

Cases and Resources

Violence Prevention and Intervention

The NOLA FOR LIFE PLAYbook: Promoting Life for All Youth (New Orleans, LA)
The National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention is a network of communities and federal agencies that work together, share information, and build local capacity to prevent and reduce youth violence. Supported by the Forum, the City of New Orleans developed the *NOLA FOR LIFE PLAYbook: Promoting Life for all Youth* in 2013 as a strategic plan to prevent youth violence in New Orleans. The PLAYbook is designed to improve youth safety by addressing risk and protective factors for youth violence and coordinating resources for youth.

Detroit Youth Violence Prevention Program (Detroit, MI)
The White House's National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention is a national program involving six cities, including Detroit. The City of Detroit began its work by conducting listening sessions with stakeholders from various communities including law enforcement, education, business, non-profit, faith, public health, and youth. The City of Detroit also used data to identify hot spots where youth violence is particularly prevalent. Based on the information that was collected, the City of Detroit devised a plan in 2012 that will pilot its efforts in the neighborhoods surrounding Cody High School on the west side and Denby and Osborne high schools on the east side. A steering committee is now working to implement the plan.

Operation: Safe Community (Memphis, TN)
The Memphis Youth Violence Prevention Plan was launched in 2007 and aims to reduce youth violence by building youth resiliency and supportive neighborhoods, so young people succeed in spite of pervasive local risk factors. In 2006, Memphis had the second highest violent crime rate in the country. A public sector partnership, led by then Shelby County Mayor A C Wharton, District Attorney Bill Gibbons, Sheriff Mark Luttrell, Memphis Police Director Larry Godwin, and U.S. Attorney David Kustoff, came together with top business leaders to address this urgent issue by creating Operation: Safe Community, a 15-point research-based crime reduction plan.

Operation Peacekeeper (Stockton, CA)[34]
Operation Peacekeeper is a community and problem-oriented policing program implemented in 1997 to address gun violence among youth gang members in Stockton. The program's goal is to reduce gang involvement among urban youth ages 10 to 18 and decrease gun-related violence among gang-involved youths. It is modeled after the Ceasefire Initiative created by the Boston Police Department, which used detailed information about gang activity to identify problem areas and to reduce gang-related violence in the Boston metropolitan area. The average monthly count of gun homicide incidents decreased by approximately 35 percent between 1997 and 2002 in Stockton. In the time period prior to the intervention, the monthly average was 2.9 gun homicides; the monthly average then dropped to 1.9 during the intervention period. Operation Peacekeeper continues to operate as a department of the City of Stockton.[35] In 2010, the program received two prestigious awards: the League of California Cities Helen Putnam Award for Excellence and the Cities and the Counties and Schools Partnership Award for the extensive use of community partnerships to address public safety issues.

[34]More information: https://www.crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=51
[35]Operation Peacekeeper 2014 brochure. http://www.stocktongov.com/files/Peacekeepers_Brochure_2014.pdf

Positive Action[36]
The Positive Action (PA) program is designed to improve youth academics, behavior, and character. It has been in operation for more than 30 years helping educators around the world create positive learning environments for their students in school. No comprehensive listing of states is available, but the program is used in New York, Illinois, Nevada, Hawaii, and other states. PA uses an audience-centered, curriculum-based approach to increase positive behaviors and decrease negative ones. PA is grounded in a broad theory of self-concept. It relies on intrinsic motivation for developing and maintaining positive behavioral patterns, and teaches skills focused on learning and motivation for achieving success and happiness for everyone. The premise—that you feel good about yourself when you do positive actions and there is always a positive way to do everything—is represented by the self-reinforcing "thoughts–actions–feelings" circle: positive thoughts lead to positive actions, positive actions lead to positive feelings about oneself, and positive feelings lead to more positive thoughts. Student self-reporting of violent behavior was significantly lower for the treatment group, a finding confirmed by teacher reports of student violent behaviors. An in-depth look at all research-based outcomes is available on the PA website.

Find Youth Info Program Directory[37]
A source that ACS found specifically helpful is the FindYouthInfo Program Directory, which features evidence-based repository of programs whose purpose is to prevent and/or reduce delinquency or other problem behaviors in young people.

Afterschool Programs

At-Risk Afterschool Meals Programm[38] (National)
Through the At-Risk Afterschool Meals program, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides reimbursements for snacks and meals served at afterschool programs offering enrichment or education programs under the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The program is available in locations where at least 50 percent of children are eligible for free and reduced-price meals. The CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Supper program is available for afterschool care programs that participate in the afterschool snack program.

After School Matters[39] (Chicago, IL)
The Chicago After School Matters (ASM) program creates a network of out-of-school-time opportunities for teenage youth in under-served communities. ASM provides these programs through a network of public and private partnerships that include Chicago Public Schools, the Chicago Park District, the Chicago Public Library, and community organizations throughout the city.

[36]More information: https://www.crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=113
[37]For more information: http://youth.gov/
[38]For more information: http://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/afterschool-programs
[39]For more information: http://www.afterschoolmatters.org/

Global Kids[40] (Washington, D.C. and New York, NY)

Global Kids ensures that youth from underserved areas have the knowledge, skills, experiences, and values they need to succeed in school, participate effectively in the democratic process, and achieve leadership in their communities and on the global stage. Ninety percent of students enrolled in the program graduate from high school, despite the multiple challenges faced by youth in underserved communities. Furthermore, 96 percent of participants attend college, many earning scholarships and financial support.

Communities In Schools[41] (Arlington, VA)

Communities In Schools (CIS) serves nearly 1.3 million young people in more than 2,700 schools. Its mission is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and to achieve in life. The program is a unique model that positions a coordinator inside schools to assess needs and deliver necessary resources that remove barriers to success. A recent impact report found that 91 percent of the seniors who received targeted services from CIS graduated during the 2013-2014 school year.

National League of Cities (NLC)

NLC's report, Municipal Leadership for Afterschool: Citywide Approaches Spreading Across the County[42], describes the importance of municipal leadership and highlights the various ways that municipal leaders are playing a role to increase afterschool opportunities. Commissioned by the Wallace Foundation, the paper identified 27 cities that have developed comprehensive afterschool and out-of-school time programs.

Washington State

The Washington State Quality Standards for Afterschool and Youth Development Programs have been created by School's Out Washington[43] to support Washington State programs in achieving positive youth outcomes by providing staff with guidelines for what quality looks like in a program setting. The standards are based upon those developed by dozens of communities around the country and represent the priorities of a wide cross section of the youth-serving community in Washington. Nearly 200 afterschool and youth development programs in Washington are currently participating in the Youth Program Quality Initiative with School's Out Washington, in order to increase quality of afterschool and out-of-school programs.

The Arkansas Standards for Quality Afterschool Programs (Arkansas)

The Arkansas Out-of-School-Network (AOSN) is a network of afterschool and summer program leaders and stakeholders from across the state. It is one of 38 statewide afterschool networks working to promote an expansion of school-based and school-linked afterschool programs serving children and youth ages 5–19. AOSN's mission is to create safe, healthy, and enriching experiences for Arkansas youth during out of school times. AOSN was formed in 2005 as a result of a grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and fiscal support from key partners, and is a sponsored initiative of Arkansas State University's Childhood Services. AOSN serves as a vehicle to bring together key stakeholders and has an array of partners who have committed staff, resources, and technical assistance to support afterschool programs. AOSN's work is currently organized into four main categories: Program Quality; Professional Development, Communication and Public Education; Finance and Resource Development; and Public Education. AOSN released the best practice standards for afterschool programs entitled Arkansas Standards for Quality Afterschool Programs[44]. AOSN also offers training through its Arkansas Youth Development Institute, which provides free, easily accessible, and quality training on the core knowledge needed when working with youth. The Institute was developed from working closely with the Colorado Afterschool Network and The Partnership for Families and Children based in Denver. The Institute's course work is organized into courses that take approximately one to two hours to complete. Youth workers can choose which courses to take in any order. The content of the courses are of relevance to youth workers serving children and youth from elementary through high school. The list of AOSN providers[45] in Little Rock is the same list provided to ACS from the City of Little Rock.

National Summer Learning Study[46]

The Wallace Foundation is funding a five-year demonstration project in five urban school districts in Boston, Dallas, Duval County (Florida), Pittsburgh, and Rochester (New York). These districts have been pioneers in offering full-day voluntary programs for five to six weeks free of charge to large numbers of struggling elementary students, not just those facing grade retention. The districts all provide at least three hours of academic instruction in math and reading by certified teachers, along with a range of enrichment activities (e.g., art, music, tennis, swimming), many of which are provided by community-based organizations that partner with the district. Wallace found that there was strong demand for these programs among low-income children and their families, and that these programs appeared to provide opportunities that these children would not have had otherwise. The programs had a significant positive effect on students' mathematics achievement when compared to students in the control group. The researchers found no similar effect for reading skills or in social-emotional competencies between the treatment group and the control group. The program began with instruction in summer 2013. Based on preliminary outcomes, the program recommends that academic summer programs do the following: 1) plan programs that run five to six weeks; 2) schedule 60–90 minutes of mathematics per day; 3) hire effective, qualified teachers; and 4) maintain positive student behavior.

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[40]For more information: http://www.globalkids.org/

[41]For more information: http://www.communitiesinschools.org/

[42]http://www.nlc.org/Documents/Find%20City%20Solutions/IYEF/Afterschool/municipal-leadership-afterschool-rpt-sept-2011.pdf

[43]For more information see: http://www.schoolsoutwashington.org/199/AboutUs.htm

[44]For more information see: http://www.statewideafterschoolnetworks.net/system/files/resources/The%20Arkansas%20Standards%20for%20Quality%20Afterschool%20Programs-%20May%202009.pdf

[45]For more information see: http://media1.razorplanet.com/share/510991-7245/resources/559366_OutofSchoolTimeProgramsAroundArkansas.xlsx

[46]For more information see: http://www.summerlearning.org/

Reentry

Models for Change, Pennsylvania[47]

Pennsylvania is a flagship state on juvenile justice and was the first state chosen to participate in the Models for Change initiative for its favorable reform climate, strong public-private partnerships, demonstrated success in reforms and considerable consensus on juvenile justice. The state began its Models for Change program in 2004; its cost, $21 million, was funded by a grant from the MacArthur Foundation and other private and public funds.

Michigan Youth Reentry Model[48]

The Michigan Youth Reentry Model launched in 2011 and provides a multi-dimensional framework designed to stop the cycle of crime among Michigan's youngest offenders and prepare them for successful transitions into adulthood. The model is being implemented in the Michigan Department of Corrections Thumb Correctional Facility, the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) juvenile justice facilities, and the Oakland County Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Village Division. Based on available statistics from 2011, these sites have noticed a significant decline in recidivism rates, including a 98 percent success rate from the Thumb Correctional Facility and an 84 percent success rate among youth exiting DHS placements.

The Sentencing Project[49]

The Sentencing Project is dedicated to changing the way Americans think about crime and punishment. It was founded in 1986 to provide defense lawyers with sentencing advocacy training and to reduce the reliance on incarceration. The Sentencing Project works for a fair and effective U.S. criminal justice system by promoting reforms in sentencing policy, addressing unjust racial disparities and practices, and advocating for alternatives to incarceration.

CoNEXTions©[50] (Austin, TX)

CoNEXTions is an integrated, system-wide rehabilitative program offering various therapeutic techniques and tools to help individual Texas Juvenile Justice Department youth. The name, CoNEXTions, stems from the basic goal of the program—to prepare youth to take the NEXT step, to connect youth to healthy, law-abiding relationships with their peers, families, and communities. The name symbolizes the hope that once youth are properly connected with other people, they are in a better position to connect to their futures, or the NEXT phase of their lives, with an optimistic and realistic outlook.

Employability Skills

National League of Cities[51] (NLC)

NLC celebrated its 90th year as a membership organization and resource for city leaders. NLC's City Solutions & Applied Research serves as a resource for a wide variety of issues affecting cities, including economic development, city finances, governance and civic engagement, housing, community development, immigrant integration, infrastructure and sustainability. NLC conducts extensive research on issues, compiling promising practices, providing effective solutions, and creating toolkits and action guides for use by city officials. NLC's Action Kit on Reengaging Disconnected Youth provides additional case studies and practices.

National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC)[52]

NYEC represents more than 285 member organizations in 44 states and the District of Columbia. Its diverse membership network includes direct service providers, local and state education and workforce agencies, research and policy organizations, national organizations, and technical assistance providers. NYEC is a significant player in the development of youth employment policy and the improvement of youth employment and youth development practices.

MDRC[53]

Created in 1974 by the Ford Foundation and a group of federal agencies, MDRC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan education and social policy research organization dedicated to learning what works to improve programs and policies that affect the poor. MDRC is best known for mounting large-scale demonstrations and evaluations of real-world policies and programs targeted to low-income people. From welfare policy to high school reform, MDRC's work has helped to shape legislation, program design, and operational practices across the country.

City of Madison Department of Planning, Community and Economic Development (Madison, WI)

The City of Madison researched promising practices for youth employment in 2009.[54]

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[47]Models for Change is a multi-state initiative working to guide and accelerate advances to make juvenile justice systems more fair, effective, rational and developmentally appropriate through providing resources and tools to a network of partners. See more about Models For Change here: http://www.modelsforchange.net/about/States-for-change/Pennsylvania.html

[48]See more about the Michigan Reentry Program here: http://www.njjn.org/uploads/digital-library/Michigan-Youth-Reentry-Model-9.11.pdf

[49]For more information about The Sentencing Project, visit: http://www.sentencingproject.org/template/index.cfm

[50]For more information, go to: http://www.tjjd.texas.gov/programs/conextions.aspx

[51]For more information, go to: http://www.nlc.org/find-city-solutions/institute-for-youth-education-and-families/expanding-youth-opportunities/expanding-youth-opportunities/dropout-reengagement/municipal-leadership-for-disconnected-youth-phase-i-and-ii

[52]For more information about NYEC standards for youth programs, please visit: http://www.nyec.org/page.cfm?pageID=116

[53]In 2013 MDRC published an evaluation on programs that assist disconnected youth with employability skills. This research can be found here: http://www.mdrc.org/publication/building-better-programs-disconnected-youth

[54]A link to that research can be found here: http://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/communitydevelopment/funding/documents/AreaI/A2/BestPracticesForYouthEmploymentPrograms.pdf

Opportunity Youth (Boston, MA)

Boston has a complex mix of providers, funders, employers, and stakeholders working with and for youth to help them gain skills to be successful in school, pursue and graduate with postsecondary credentials, and become employed. They work collaboratively to serve Boston children, youth, and families. In February 2013, the Boston Opportunity Agenda, the Hyams Foundation, and the Private Industry Council convened a group of more than 50 practitioners and others invested in the "Opportunity Youth" population (disconnected youth ages 16–24). Together they have secured funding for key partners, including the Boston Service Youth Network; increased public awareness (through Mayoral forum); and collected baseline data to identify goals. The **Boston Opportunity Agenda (BOA)** is a public/private partnership among the City of Boston, the Boston Public Schools, the city's leading public charities, and many local foundations to ensure that all Boston residents have access to the education necessary for upward economic mobility, civic engagement, and lifelong learning for themselves and their families. The Private Industry Council (PIC) convenes the **Youth Transitions Task Force**, a broad cross-section of organizations that includes the Boston Public Schools, community organizations, city departments, and state agencies. The task force is charged with reducing the city's dropout rate. The city's **Department of Youth Engagement and Employment** is a one-stop shop resource center for youth. Their goal is to meet the needs of young people by connecting them to a variety of opportunities, resources, and free or low-cost events in the city. The **Boston Youth Service Network** is a community-based collaborative that aims to increase the quality and diversity of programs for youth at-risk that allow them to develop the academic, work readiness, life skills and support structure necessary to become productive adults.

Seattle Youth Employment Initiative (Seattle, WA)

This initiative is a combination of summer youth employment, year-round youth employment, and out-of-school youth. The Mayor's summer youth employment program employs approximately 2,000 youth and young adults ages 14–24. A Year Round Program provides youth, ages 14–21, enrolled in the Seattle Public High Schools, with academic support and work training. Participants are able to achieve their educational goals and explore career pathways by receiving educational support, leadership development, and work readiness training. An out-of-school program is open to youth, ages 16-21, who have dropped out of high school or are basic skills deficient, to develop a plan to achieve education, personal, and employment goals. The program connects youth to GED preparation, job readiness training, and post-secondary education opportunities.

What Works in Job Training: A Synthesis of the Evidence (National)[55]

This report was prepared by the U.S. Secretaries of Labor, Commerce, Education, and Health and Human Services, with input from other federal agencies and staff. The report was a government-wide review of federally funded programs in the workforce and training system to ensure they are designed to equip the nation's workers with skills matching the needs of employers looking to hire. The review culminated in an action plan to ensure the workforce system was more job-driven, integrated, and effective. To inform the development of the action plan, agencies were asked to summarize the evidence on adult and youth job training strategies and programs to ensure the federal programs invest in effective practices.

According to this report, more research on positive youth development and skill-building strategies, including for disconnected youth, is needed to better understand how to improve educational and early employment opportunities for low-income youth and to strengthen the nation's future workforce. In an effort to improve the evidence base on comprehensive and integrated models for serving youth, the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, the Corporation for National and Community Services, and related agencies, launched applications for Performance Partnership Pilots in late 2014; review of applications is due to begin May 2015 and pilot programs will begin thereafter. The pilots will empower communities to help improve outcomes for disconnected youth who are not working, not in school or at risk of dropping out, or face the additional challenges of being homeless, in foster care, or involved in the justice system.

Domestic Violence

Promising Futures Without Violence[56]

A collaborative website supported by the Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to provide resources on serving children, youth, and parents who are experiencing domestic violence.

National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning[57]

An information packet on promising practices in assessing domestic violence in situations of child welfare, and provided several research and practitioner-based infrastructural and programmatic promising practices.

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence[58]

The Resource Center publishes research situations, interventions, and successful preventions in services to children exposed to domestic violence.

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[55] A link to the research can be found here: http://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/jdt/jdt.pdf

[56] Promising practices for youth victims and perpetrators of domestic violence can be found from Promising Futures Without Violence at: http://promising.futureswithoutviolence.org

[57] More information from the National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning can be found at: https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/domviolence/casework-practice/evidence-based/

[58] See: Enhanced Services to Children, Youth, and Families Exposed to Domestic Violence, published in 2012 by the National Resource Center for Domestic Violence. Full report can be found at: http://www.vawnet.org/assoc_files_vawnet/escy-ppllguide.pdf

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Children Who Witness Domestic Violence (CWWV)[59] (Cuyahoga County, OH)

The program Children Who Witness Domestic Violence was organized by the Cuyahoga County Commissioners in the mid 1990s, replicated in several other Ohio communities, and has become a national model for domestic violence programs for children. This program provides crisis and short-term services to children and families impacted by violence. Funding for CWWV is provided by local government agencies such as mental health boards, juvenile services organizations, criminal justice services, local and national foundations, the state Attorney General, and federal sources such as Medicaid and the Violence Against Women Act.

Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP)[60] (Alexandria, VA)

The Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP) is run out of the City of Alexandria's Community & Human Services Center for Children and Families agency, and is a coordinated community response to domestic violence. Although the program is geared toward domestic violence protection, prevention, treatment, and identifications within families, there are specific strategies related to helping children who witness domestic violence. DVIP addresses arrest, prosecution, victim advocacy, treatment, education, and training.

PALS Programs (Peace: A Learned Solution)[61] (New Jersey)

The New Jersey Department of Children and Family Services oversees PALS programs in 11 counties for children who have witnessed domestic violence. PALS is an evidence-based nationally recognized therapeutic program model that provides counseling and creative arts therapy for children who have witnessed domestic violence, primarily ages 3–12, and their non-offending parents/guardians. PALS programs are usually 6–8 months long. PALS programs are funded by the state Department of Children and Family Services, and combined with local dollars and in-kind services from partner organizations.

Youth Substance Abuse

United States National Drug Control Strategy[62]

The Obama Administration's inaugural National Drug Control Strategy, published in 2010, charted a new course in our efforts to reduce illicit drug use and its consequences in the United States. The three *strategies* that followed promoted a balance of evidence-based public health and safety initiatives focusing on key areas such as substance use disorder prevention, treatment, and recovery.

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)[63]

The National Institute on Drug Abuse publishes information on evidence-based approaches to substance abuse treatment and prevention.

The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP)[64]

The Office of National Drug Control Policy has summarized promising practices for community-wide substance use treatment and prevention initiatives.

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[59]For more information about CWWV, go to http://www.frontlineservice.org/trauma-services/

[60]More information on DVIP can be found at: http://alexandriava.gov/DomesticViolence#intervention

[61]More information on New Jersey's PALS program can be found at: http://www.nj.gov/dcf/women/domestic/

[62]For more information: https://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp

[63]More information can http://www.drugabuse.gov/

[64]More information can be found at: https://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/national-drug-control-strategy

National Criminal Justice Reference Service[65]

What Works: Effective Public Health Responses to Drug Abuse published in 2008 by the National Criminal Justice Reference Service provides an overview of national and community driven successful evidence based efforts to reduce drug abuse among youth in America.

American Counseling Association[66]

The American Counseling Association published a set of promising practices for substance use disorder treatment for adolescents in 2014.

The North Carolina Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment Project[67]

The North Carolina Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment Project published a review of evidence-based practices for adolescent substance abuse that provides an overview of therapeutic and programmatic elements of successful programs.

Teen Pregnancy Prevention and Teen Parenting

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Family and Youth Services Bureau[68]

The U.S Department of Health & Human Services offers summaries of best practices in pregnancy prevention and teen parenting programs.

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unwanted Pregnancy

The report "What Works 2011–2012"[69] offers evidence-based insights into programs that are curriculum-based and effective.

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[65]The full report can be found at: https://www.ncjrs.gov/ondcppubs/publications/pdf/whatworks.pdf

[66]Promising practices: Substance Use Disorder Treatment for Adolescents was published by the American Counseling Association and can be found at: http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CEQQFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.phoenixcenter.org%2Fmydocuments%2Fcolistra_crite_campbell_brickner_2014_article_43.pdf&ei=-5IcVZW3MNjgoATc8YC4Ag&usg=AFQjCNHdiBjOjX6VJJpl75RBAVqx0wnv7A&bvm=bv.89947451,d.cGU

[67]The North Carolina Adolescent substance abuse Treatment Project's 2008 publication by the UNCG Center for Youth, Family, and Community Partnerships in collaboration with the NC Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services with financial support from the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT), US Department of Health and Human Services on evidence-based substance abuse treatment programs can be found at: http://www.narbha.org/includes/media/docs/catsu-attach-c.pdf

[68]http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/resource-library

[69]"What Works 2011–2012" is available at: https://thenationalcampaign.org/sites/default/files/resource-primary-download/WhatWorks.pdf

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The Children's Aid Society—CAS-Carrera Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program[70]

The program's holistic, "above the waist" approach seeks to develop a participant's capacity and desire to avoid early pregnancy and break the cycle of poverty and despair. CAS-Carrera has been designated as a "top tier" evidence-based program by the Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy. Findings, from a large, multi-site, randomized, controlled trial of the program at 12 community-based organizations in six states (Florida, Maryland, New York, Oregon, Texas, and Washington) with teens aged 13–15 not parenting or pregnant, include:

- reduced birth rate by 50% in communities served
- delayed initiation of sexual intercourse
- used contraception more conscientiously
- increased sexuality information scores
- increased bank accounts and work experience
- more employment experience over three years
- higher PSAT scores

Youth targeted by the program typically come from single-parent homes and neighborhoods characterized by increased rates of poverty, teen pregnancy, crime, unemployment, and high school dropouts.

Teen Outreach Program[71]

The Teen Outreach Program (TOP)™ promotes the positive development of adolescents through curriculum-guided, interactive group discussions; positive adult guidance and support; and community service learning. TOP is focused on key topics related to adolescent health and development, including:

- healthy relationships
- communication
- influence
- goal setting
- decision-making
- values clarification
- community service learning
- adolescent development and sexuality

The development of supportive relationships with adult facilitators is a crucial part of the model, as are relationships with other peers in the program. The program was designed for and tested with disadvantaged and high-risk youth in grades 9 to 12. To make TOP appropriate for a range of grades and ages, the curriculum has four levels. Each level contains material that is developmentally appropriate for the age group involved (12 to 13 year olds; 14 year-olds; 15 to 16 year olds; 17 to 19 year olds).

The program was evaluated in high schools at 25 different sites around the country. Within each site, participants were randomly assigned, either individually or by classroom, to either a treatment group that received the intervention or a control group that received the regular curricula and programs each school provided. Surveys were administered before and after the program, at the beginning and end of the school year. Data for all 25 participating sites were pooled for analysis. At the conclusion of the evaluation at the end of the school year, female adolescents participating in the program were significantly less likely to report a pregnancy during the academic year of the program. The program is run nationally by the Wyman Center[72] and has sites throughout the country.

Focus On Kids Plus Impact[73]

For use with low-income, African-American youth ages 13–16, this community-based intervention consists of two major components: 1) Focus on Kids (FOK), an 8-session risk reduction intervention that includes interactive games, discussion groups, videos, and homework; and 2) ImPACT, a culturally appropriate videotape with group discussion and a role play for youth and parents. This program emphasizes making decisions, setting goals, communicating, and negotiating. It helps adolescents to define consensual relationships and provides information about abstinence and safer sex, drugs and alcohol, and selling drugs. A study was conducted in Baltimore with youth from 35 public housing sites. The study found that at the 24-month follow-up, youth who received FOK and ImPACT were significantly less likely than youth receiving FOK only to report having been pregnant or having gotten a girl pregnant. The program is available from ETR Associates.

Alabama Department of Health Think About It[74]

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) is the Title X Family Planning agency for the state. ADPH focuses its teen pregnancy prevention activities on Mobile County. Mobile County has the highest teen pregnancy rate (65.6 per 1,000 population) of Alabama's three largest metropolitan statistical areas, and more than 29,000 females aged 10-19 years. The Mobile County Health Department has established partnerships with 11 youth-serving organizations and four family planning health care providers at eight sites to recruit teens into the program. As a result of these efforts, by 2015 ADPH expects a 10 percent reduction in birth rates among African-American females aged 15-19 in the target community.

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[70]More information can be found here: http://www.childrensaidsociety.org/carrera-pregnancy-prevention

[71]More information can be found here: http://thenationalcampaign.org/effective-programs/teen-outreach-program-top

[72]More information can be found here: http://wymancenter.org/

[73]More information can be found here: http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/2115

[74]More information can be found here: http://thinkteen.org/

5-Year-Old Children/Transition to Kindergarten

TKCalifornia[75]

In 2010, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed the Kindergarten Readiness Act (SB 1381) into law. The law changed the kindergarten entry cutoff so that children must turn 5 by September 1 (instead of December 2) to enter kindergarten. It phases in the new age requirement by moving the cutoff date back one month each year for three years, beginning in the 2012–13 school year. SB 1381 also established a new grade level—transitional kindergarten (TK), which is the first year of a two-year kindergarten experience for students who turn 5 between September 2 and December 2. The new grade level is to be taught by credentialed teachers using a modified kindergarten curriculum that is developmentally appropriate. When fully implemented, TK is intended to provide an additional year of early education for these children, with the goal of promoting their success in school. A study by the American Institutes of Research about TKCalifornia can provide insights into how to structure a program in Little Rock if desired. For reference, the research briefs available are:

- Comparing Transitional Kindergarten to Traditional Kindergarten Classrooms[76]
- Report from First Year of Implementation[77]
- Early Outreach, Enrollment, and Parent Perspectives[78]

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[75]TKCalifornia. http://www.tkcalifornia.org/tk-info/

[76]Source: http://tkstudy.airprojects.org/sites/default/files/14-3044_v06%20TK%20Research%20Brief%2003554%20002%2001.pdf

[77]Source: http://tkstudy.airprojects.org/sites/default/files/14-3044_v06%20TK%20Research%20Brief%2003554%20002%2001.pdf

[78]Source: http://tkstudy.airprojects.org/sites/default/files/styles/15-1308_v04%20AIR%20TK%20Research%20Brief%2003554%20003%2001%20lvr_0.pdf   http://tkstudy.airprojects.org/sites/default/files/styles/15-1308_v04%20AIR%20TK%20Research%20Brief%2003554%20003%2001%20lvr_0.pdf

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