Building Postsecondary Pathways for Youth Involved in the Justice System

November 6, 2013
Context: Youth in the Juvenile Justice System

- Characteristics:
  - 1.3 million total referrals in 2010.\(^1\)
  - In 2010, **70,792** youth were in juvenile facilities.\(^2\)
  - Only **30%** are working or in school within 12 months of release.\(^3\)
  - **50%** of all incarcerated youth will return within 3 years.\(^4\)

- These youth face multiple barriers to postsecondary success, and there is often overlap with other special populations.

- Successful supports should involve multiple entry points and strategies, as well as collaboration between systems and providers.

---

Today’s Agenda:

- **Yelena Nemoy**, Project Manager, National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC)

- **Sophia Morel**, Director, Youth Education Services, Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES)

- **Patricia Gill**, Senior Program Associate, Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL)
PROMOTING POSTSECONDARY SUCCESS OF COURT-INVOLVED YOUTH

Yelena Nemoy
Project Manager
National Youth Employment Coalition
yn@nyec.org
ABOUT THE NATIONAL YOUTH EMPLOYMENT COALITION

- **National Member Network**: established in 1979.

- **Mission**: improve the effectiveness of organizations that help youth become productive citizens.

- **Members**: direct service providers, researchers, policymakers, advocates, intermediaries and technical assistance providers from across the nation.

- **Our Work**: NYEC promotes youth centered quality standards; monitors, proposes and influences policy decisions, and convenes professional development opportunities.
POSTSECONDARY SUCCESS INITIATIVE

PILOT initiative supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, and the Open Society Foundations.

SUPPORTS a network of CBOs in engaging disconnected youth onto a path leading to postsecondary attainment and employment at a living wage.

PARTNERS: Jobs For The Future, YouthBuild USA, The Corps Network, and Brandeis University Center for Youth and Communities.

REPORT: Promoting Postsecondary Success of Court-Involved Youth: Lessons From the NYEC Postsecondary Success Pilot.
http://nyec.org/content/documents/NYEC_Court_Involved_Youth_Postsecondary_Final_May_2013.pdf

FEATURED SITES: CASES (New York, NY); College Initiative (New York, NY); ISUS, Inc. (Dayton, OH); Los Angeles Conservation Corps (CA); My Turn, Inc. (Brockton, MA); Our Piece of the Pie, Inc. (Hartford, CT); X-Cel, Inc. (Boston, MA).
IMPACTS OF INCARCERATION

INDIVIDUAL
- Loss of opportunity
- Psychosocial impacts

COMMUNITY
- 93% will return to their communities\(^1\)

SOCIETY
- $75 billion spent on corrections in 2008\(^2\)
- 50% will return to prison within 3 years\(^3\)

---

WHY EDUCATION?

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
- Future options
- Diversion
- Transformative power of education

ECONOMIC MOBILITY
- By 2018, 63% of new jobs will require postsecondary credentials

PUBLIC SAFETY
- College enrollment, higher education spending associated with reduction in violent crime

---

Enriched Preparation
*Integrates high quality college-ready instruction with strong academic and social supports*

Postsecondary Bridging
*Builds college-ready skills and provides informed transition counseling*

First Year Supports
*Offers appropriate supports in first year to ensure postsecondary persistence and success*
INTERNAL BARRIERS
- Psychosocial impacts of stigmatization
- “College is not for me”
- Gaps in academic readiness, college knowledge

PROMISING PRACTICES & INTERVENTIONS
- Peer Mentoring: connect to positive peer models and networks
- College Going Culture: reinforce belief in possibility of success
- Social Capital: build personal assets, resources, networks, relationships
- Academic Support & College Navigation: provide tutoring, assist with college-related tasks
BARRIERS TO SUCCESS & INTERVENTIONS

EXTERNAL BARRIERS

- Lack of resources, employment
- Criminal records
- Supervision requirements
- Financial aid eligibility

PROMISING PRACTICES

- Intensive Case Management: provide adult support, interventions
- Sealing and Expunging Juvenile Records: improve employment prospects
- Hands-on Learning and Work Experiences: develop workforce skills
- Partnerships: increase resources available to students
PROMISING PRACTICES: EXAMPLES

ACADEMIC SUPPORTS:
- LA Corps: academic coaching / tutoring program
- CASES, College Initiative: college prep program
- X-Cel: Accuplacer prep and testing

CASE MANAGEMENT:
- Our Piece of the Pie: positive youth development approach
- CASES: education-focused

COLLEGE GOING CULTURE:
- All sites: early conversations about college; exposure to college materials and information; college tours; and college and career panels

HANDS-ON LEARNING:
- LA Corps: internships, workforce training programs
- ISUS: stackable credentials

PARTNERSHIPS:
- All sites: community colleges
- LA Corps: providers of mental health, housing, legal aid
- College Initiative: NY Department of Corrections

PEER MENTORING:
- College Initiative: CI Mentors
- X-Cel: cohorting

SEALING JUVENILE RECORDS:
- ISUS: court advocate
- X-Cel: CBO partner can check, seal records

SOCIAL CAPITAL:
- College Initiative: mentors provide connections to resources, networks
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM DESIGN & PRACTICE

PROGRAM DESIGN & IMPLEMENTATION
- Focus on social capital, community engagement, and identity shift
- Integrate postsecondary education and workforce development
- Partner with service providers
- Align state, local, and CBO services
- Create the right mix of staff and support staff development

PRACTICE
- Support academic and college readiness
- Support career planning
- Provide legal resources and support
- Promote peer mentoring
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY & SYSTEMS CHANGE

POLICY & SYSTEMS CHANGE

- Support multiple pathways to and through postsecondary
- Support comprehensive programs that serve court-involved youth but do not exclusively focus on this population
- Maintain and increase investment in programs
- Facilitate cross-system communication
- Build strategic partnerships
Next Steps: Post-Secondary Education Initiative

Sophia Morel
Director of Youth Education Services
The mission of CASES is to increase the understanding and use of community sanctions that are fair, affordable, and consistent with public safety.
Established as an independent organization in 1989 by combining two pilot programs of the Vera Institute of Justice, CASES has grown to offer nine programs and serve over 8,000 youth and adult clients per year.
# CASES Youth Programs

## Diversion Programs (court-mandated)

- **Court Employment Project**
  - a six-month alternative to incarceration
  - participants have Supreme Court cases in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, or the Bronx

- **Choices ATD**
  - an alternative to juvenile detention
  - participants have Family Court cases in Manhattan

## Shared Services

- **Career Exploration**
  - provides job-readiness training and subsidized internships in the community

- **HSE Preparation Program**
  - Instruction in preparation for HSE exam

## Voluntary Programs

- **Civic Justice Corps**
  - serves youth with previous juvenile justice system involvement
  - provides case management, education services, and service learning opportunities

- **Justice Scholars**
  - serves previously court-involved youth annually
  - provides case management, education services, and community referrals

- **Queens Justice Corps**
  - serves previously court-involved youth from Southeast Queens annually
  - provides case management, education services, internships and service learning opportunities

## Next Steps Post-secondary Initiative

- Enroll, retain and support participants in college
Demographics

Gender:
- Male, 61, 85%
- Female, 11, 15%

Race & Ethnicity:
- Black, 48, 67%
- Hispanic/Latino, 14, 19%
- White, 4, 6%
- Black Hispanic, 3, 4%
- Asian, 2, 3%
- Other (Egypt), 1, 1%

Diploma Type:
- GED, 41, 57%
- High School, 31, 43%

Next Steps College Program
(students to date as of 9/23/2013 = 72)
Demographics continued

Alternative to Incarceration:
(Average time in detention prior to ATI intake: 42 days)

- ATI, 53, 74%
- Other CASES programs, 19, 26%

Age at Start of College with Next Steps Program:
(Average: 20 years)

- 18-19, 34, 47%
- 20-22, 26, 36%
- 23-25, 12, 17%
Next Steps Program Model

Diploma attainment
HSE
HS

Academic preparation Pre College
College Prep Class
Individual sessions

Applications
Admissions
FAFSA/TAP

College Enrollment
Next Steps Supports

Financial Supports
Monthly car fare, cafeteria vouchers, books, debt relief, tuition assistance

Social Supports
On-going case management, recreational activities, leadership workshops, celebratory events

Academic supports
On-site tutoring, registration advisement, on-site computer lab w/ printer, academic counseling
Employment Services

Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

Next Steps students participated were placed in individual placements rather than the traditional group placement.

This was a summer retention strategy.

15 of the 18 Next Steps students enrolled in college for Fall 2013.

Largest group to persist from Spring to Fall semester.

On-going Employment services:

School Year: as needed employment counseling and job placement.

Winter Break: Work Readiness workshops, preparing for Work Study, planning for coming semester.

Summer Break: SYEP and other summer internship opportunities.
SYEP Job Profiles of Next Steps Participants

Shaquanna: CCA “Soul Sisters”
- Interest in obtaining MSW
- Participated in training to learn how to mentor at-risk girls
- Was a counselor at the summer institute for girls

Vincent: Friends of the Rockaways
- Intaked clients needing relief services
- Support various tasks around office of intakes

Tyrell: GrowNYC
- Led Tours of Green Markets
- Gave hands-on demonstrations to student groups
Question and Answer
Patricia D. Gill
Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL)

www.ncwd-youth.info
Who Am I?

- Institute for Educational Leadership
- Center for Workforce Development
- National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability for Youth
- Ready to Achieve Mentoring Program
- Right Turn Career-Focused Transition Model
Ensures that youth with disabilities are provided full access to high quality services in integrated settings in order to maximize their opportunities for employment and independent living. www.ncwd-youth.info

3 levels:
1. System (policy),
2. Organizational, and
3. Front Line (youth service professionals)

Funded by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)
Youth with Disabilities in School, Work, and Juvenile Corrections (or Why JJ?)

- Almost \( \frac{3}{4} \) of secondary students with ED have been suspended or expelled: a rate four times that of peers (Wagner, Kutash, Duchnowski, Epstein, & Sumi, 2005)

- Youth who drop out of school are: 72% more likely to be unemployed & earn 27% less than HS graduates (U.S. DOL, 2003)

- Educational failure and unemployment are both related to law-violating behavior (Snyder & Sickmund, 2006)

- In juvenile corrections, an average of 30-44% of youth receive special education services and, in some states, the rate exceeds 75%: 3-4 times the public school rate (Gagnon, Barber, Van Loan, 2008; Quinn, Rutherford, Leone, Osher, & Poirier, 2005)

- Excluding conduct disorder, \( \frac{2}{3} \) (male) - \( \frac{3}{4} \) (female) within the juvenile justice system met diagnostic criteria for one or more psychiatric disorders (Skowyra & Cocozza, 2006; Teplin et al., 2002)
The Guideposts for Success

- Core commonalities were identified using research and model programs in youth development, quality education, workforce development, and juvenile justice.

- No one institution or organization can provide the full range of services.

- Communities, states, the federal government and multiple organizations at all levels must collaborate with one another in order to help assure quality transitions for all youth.
Guideposts: Basic Values

The Guideposts are built on the following basic values:

- **High expectations** for all youth, including youth with disabilities.
- **Equality** of opportunity for everyone
- **Full participation** through self-determination, informed choice, and participation in decision-making;
- **Independent** living
- **Competitive employment** and economic self-sufficiency, with or without supports; and
- **Individualized transition planning** that is person-driven and culturally and linguistically appropriate.
Meeting the Needs of Youth in the Juvenile Justice System: The Guideposts

1. School-Based Preparatory Experiences
2. Career Preparation & Work-Based Learning Experiences
3. Youth Development & Leadership
4. Connecting Activities
5. Family Involvement & Supports

Which does your program do well?
All youth need:
- Career and technical education programs.
- Flexible graduation standards.

Youth with disabilities may also need:
- Individual transition plans to drive their personal instruction, and strategies for postsecondary transitions.
- Knowledge of reasonable accommodations available, including assessment accommodations.

Youth with and without disabilities in the JJ system also need:
- Opportunity to earn transferable credits.
- Collaboration among professionals across disciplines.
Career Preparation & Work-Based Learning Experiences

All Youth Need

- Career assessments
- Structured exposure to postsecondary education and other life-long learning opportunities
- Exposure to career opportunities that ultimately lead to a living wage.
- Training designed to improve job-seeking skills and work-place basic skills.
Youth with Disabilities Need to

- Understand the relationships between benefits planning and career choices
- Learn to communicate their disability-related work support and accommodation needs
- Learn to find, formally request, and secure appropriate supports and reasonable accommodations in education, training, and employment settings
Career Preparation & Work-Based Learning Experiences

Youth with and without disabilities in the JJ system may also need:

- Comprehensive vocational programming as a diversion and prevention approach
- Collaboration among corrections, workforce programs, and other community stakeholders
- Development of career pathways
- Work-related and soft skills instruction
- Work experiences on and off facility grounds
All Youth Need
- Mentoring activities.
- Exposure to personal leadership and youth development activities like community service.

Youth with Disabilities May Also Need
- Mentors and role models with and without disabilities.
- An understanding of their rights and responsibilities.

Youth with and without disabilities in the JJ system may also need:
- Instruction on laws, rights, and JJ process.
- Education on consequences of risk-taking behaviors.
Connecting Activities

All Youth Need
- Health services; Transportation & housing; Tutoring; Financial planning & management; Connection to other services and opportunities (recreation, sports, faith-based organizations).

Youth with Disabilities May Also Need
- Community orientation and mobility training.
- Personal assistance services, including attendants, readers, interpreters, and others.

Youth in the JJ system May Also Need
- Advocates at each stage of the JJ process.
- Support from multiple systems, including mental health, education, social services, and workforce development.
- Knowledgeable probation/parole staff.
Family Involvement & Supports

All Youth Need Families and Caring Adults who:

- Hold high expectations that build upon the young person’s strengths and interests
- Are involved in their lives and assisting them toward adulthood
- Have access to information about employment, further education, and community resources
- Take an active role in transition planning with schools and community partners
- Have access to medical, professional, and peer support networks
Family Involvement & Supports

Youth with Disabilities Need Families and Caring Adults who:

- Understand their youth’s disability.
- Are knowledgeable of rights and responsibilities.
- Have access to programs, services, supports, and accommodations.

Youth with and without disabilities in the JJ system may also need:

- Facilities and programs committed to engaging families.
- Family focused treatments such as MST and mental health.
- Specific opportunities at each stage of the JJ process.
Understanding the Juvenile Justice System

- Initial Interaction
- Diversion
- Prosecution
- Intake & Detention
- Formal Processing & Judicial Waiver
- Adjudication & Disposition
- Alternative Sentencing
Practices that Work: Prevention & Early Intervention

- Keep them in school or otherwise engaged
  - Youth in School are arrested less
  - Employed youth are more likely to be employed as adults
- Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support
  - System-wide, targeted, individual
- Career-Focused Mentoring
  - Individualized plans, peer-supported goal setting
  - Ready to Achieve Mentoring Program (ramp.iel.org)
Practices that Work: Non-Institutionalized Juveniles

- Keep them out of jail!
- Diversion
- Rehabilitative Models (yd vs punishment)
- Family-focused Treatment (cognitive-behavior)
- Teen Courts, Drug Courts, MH Courts
- Multi-Systemic Therapy (family, cognitive-behavior, community, school)
Practices that Work: Institutionalized Juveniles

- Do something REAL with the time!
- Education – follow the law
- Strategic Instruction Model (teacher & student)
- Work – Career & Technical Education (NC – VoCATS)
- Behavioral & Mental Health Interventions
- Transition & After Care (Pre-release)
Career & Technical Education

- Youth who completed either vocational training or a GED program while confined were *twice as likely* to be employed six months after their release (Black et al., 1996)
- North Carolina Vocational Competency Tracking System (VoCATS) plan instruction, assess students, evaluate student mastery, document student achievement, and provide accountability data.
- 129 course blueprints validated by business/industry
- 10 career pathways, including agriculture, chemistry, business technologies, commercial production, construction, engineering, health sciences, & transportation systems.
NCWD/Youth Resources

- National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability for Youth  
  www.ncwd-youth.info

- Making the Right Turn: A Guide About Improving Transition Outcomes for Youth Involved in the Juvenile Corrections System

- 411 on Disability Disclosure (Cyber Guide & Adult Version)

- Personal Assistance Services Toolkit

- Professional Development: Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Office of Disability Employment Policy http://www.dol.gov/odep

- Patricia D. Gill gillp@iel.org or 202.822.8405 ext. 154
More Resources

• **Teen Courts:** National Association of Youth Courts
A comprehensive website on Youth Courts, Teen Courts, Peer Courts and Student Courts [www.youthcourt.net](http://www.youthcourt.net)

• **Multisystemic Therapy:** This website will provide you with an introduction to Multisystemic Therapy, and the necessary components for its successful implementation. They have established links to related web sites for additional information about Multisystemic Therapy. For more information, go to: [http://www.mstservices.com/](http://www.mstservices.com/)

• **Strategic Instruction Model (SIM):** a comprehensive approach to adolescent literacy that addresses the need of students to be able to read and understand large volumes of complex reading materials and express themselves effectively in writing [http://www.kucrl.org/](http://www.kucrl.org/)
Question and Answer