



Transitioning Youth – Creating Successful Outcomes

Agenda

- Define terms
- Introduction to youth challenges in current LMI and model
- Components of successful Youth Employment Services
- Examples current successful strategies and services

Challenges with Defining Terms

- The term “youth” is poorly defined
- Youth in the new model is defined as 16 to 30 years of age
- BC Youth Unemployment statistics refer to youth as 15 – 24 years of age
- *Get Youth Working Program* eligibility is between 15 – 29
- “At Risk Youth” vs. “High Risk Youth” vs. “Youth with barriers to employment”

Challenges with Defining Terms

“Youth With Barriers to Employment” tends to relate to almost all youth. Barriers include: unstable housing, substance abuse, criminal involvement, low literacy, single parent, physical and/or mental health challenges, new immigrant, lack of employable skills/training and lack of previous (Canadian in case of new immigrants) work experience.

Challenges with Defining Terms

“At-risk” youth experience difficulty with family, in school, work, and/or in the community and/or have high vulnerability for becoming “high risk” due to their personal history or current circumstances.

Source: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/youth/pdf/guidelines_provision_of_youth_services.pdf

Challenges with Defining Terms

“High-risk” youth generally present with significant multiple challenges. These risk factors could include the experience of violence, misuse of alcohol and drugs, risk of suicide, or danger to themselves or others, living in relative or absolute homelessness, involvement in criminal activities, ... family (or support system) instability, and failure to remain in school, work, or day programs. The history of these youth may include child abuse, severe emotional trauma, sexual exploitation, and serious behavioural, mental, emotional and physical health issues.

Source: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/youth/pdf/guidelines_provision_of_youth_services.pdf

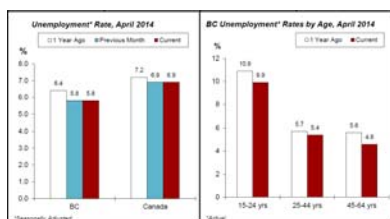
Challenges with Defining Terms

- Youth don't fit neatly into definition categories.
- Most youth can benefit from professional employment support beyond just a website.
- Why? Take a lesson from Seinfeld
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2LCgmsCXk4>



Introduction to Youth Unemployment

Youth Unemployment rate in BC



Introduction to Youth Unemployment

Factors affecting Youth unemployment

- Labour Market Changes in the past decade
- Use of Temporary Foreign Workers
- Increase in Seniors participation in the workplace
- Increase demand by employers for specialised skills and training
- Closing of Summer Youth Employment Centres



New WorkBC Model Challenges

- Reduction in the number of youth specific employment centres.
- Reduction or downsizing of Skills Link type programs that help develop pre-employment skills and provide paid employment training opportunities for “at risk” youth.



New WorkBC Model Challenges

- Increased amount of bureaucracy for staff through ICM and billing structures have lead to greater delays in immediate services. Youth tend to be very “now” oriented.
- Time lines of the system don’t always work for youth. This has a large impact on training packages and self employment programs.



New WorkBC Model Challenges

- There is no coordinated Provincial Marketing initiative for WorkBC Employment Service Centres so, most job seekers, especially youth, are unaware of our Employment Services Centres
- “WorkBC” name often gets confused with WorkSafe BC in marketing, and for job seekers that have heard of WorkBC it is mostly in relation to the WorkBC website



New WorkBC Model Challenges

- Overall result of these factor combine to get an under representation of youth seeking employment services.
- This is even more apparent in youth that have multiple barriers to employment



Components to Successful Youth Employment Programs

- **Having clear purpose and program goals.** For instance, focusing on preparing young people for the workforce by helping them develop employability skills such as reading and writing, thinking skills, and personal qualities.
- **Holistic approach:** offering a wide range of services including vocational training, counseling, life skills, career guidance, workshops and work experiences.
- **Follow-up services** to youth participants for a minimum of one year after completion of the program.



Components to Successful Youth Employment Programs

- **Qualified group of staff** who possess the knowledge and skills necessary for working with young people and who can connect to local employers.
- **Financial incentives**, such as allowances and payments, for their participants.
- Youth employment programs should not only be evaluated based upon their program completion and job placement rates, but also the competencies gained by participating youth, such as soft and hard skills.

Source: adapted from - http://whatworks.uwex.edu/attachment/whatworks_09.pdf Best Practices for Youth Employment Programs: A Synthesis of Current Research



Transitions - Connecting to Youth

- Connecting to youth once they have left school (including post secondary) or other support services is difficult – hidden market
- Avoiding gaps in services and transition planning is essential for youth to follow through **especially** for youth considered at risk
- Early outreach to Secondary Schools, Ministry programs and Post Secondary Institutions is essential

Connecting to Youth

Example: Customised Youth

- Vancouver ESC's are meeting with Vancouver School Board staff to create a seamless transition for students presently attending specialized school based employment readiness program
- By meeting with support staff, students and caregivers early in the final year of school it is hoped that it will lead to better connections to ESC's and more successful outcomes for the clients

Connecting to Youth

Example: Youth Outreach

- Vancouver ESC's outreach to Planning 10 and Graduating students in Vancouver Secondary Schools
- By presenting to youth before leaving school you have a chance to make a connection



Connecting to Youth

Example: Marketing to Youth

- Attend youth friendly events such as Youth Week activities
- Have marketing material and activities that are interactive and targeted to youth.



Successful Practices Under New Model Get Youth Working

- For youth who are employment ready but may lack job experience, **Get Youth Working** has been very successful: Financial incentive for Employers and post placement follow-up for youth are key to success
- Lack of consistent funding makes it a hit or miss program for both employers and youth
- Is not designed to support pre-employment issues or youth at risk/high risk



Successful Practices Under New Model Youth Specific Employment Service Centres

- Case Study: **The Career Zone**



- **Strive Program:** To guide youth as they make the transition to independent living in order to promote quality of life and *sustainable* growth.

Working with Youth Transitioning from Foster Care

The numbers:

- 30% of the youth aging out of foster care at the age of 19, will have moved house more than four times with in the first year of independence
- 30% of youth in foster care attending high school will drop out
- \$4000 to set up your first independent living



Working with Youth Transitioning from Foster Care

Steps to be taken:

- Most foster care youth who seek help with employment at a WorkBC Employment Service Centers needed a pay cheque yesterday
- Due to lack of stable housing and the dire situation help needs to very quick and short term focused

Solution... Strive



STRIVE

A program for youth transitioning from care

VALUES

Strength-focus on future outcomes and strengths that people bring to address a challenge.
Tolerance-being open to differences. Refraining from judgments.
Resilience-adapting in stressful situations.
Independence-trusting ourselves to make choices confidently without undue influence from others.
Vision-to explore, define and plan for future goals.
Endurance-practicing perseverance and patience when challenges arise and welcome each as a learning experience.

GOALS

1. Supporting youth as they make their transition through client-specific goal planning in areas of relationship building, health and fitness, education, employment, housing, financial planning, etc.
2. Community Attachment: identify community services, volunteering, reciprocity (giving and receiving).
3. Evidence-based practice: focus groups, Strive Youth Council, pre-post questionnaires and adjusting the contents based on findings.
4. Mentorship: connecting youth with a former youth in care or a professional in the employment field.

Program Participants

Youth transitioning out of care, youth recently transitioned out of care or youth on youth agreement, 17-24 years old.

Program Cycle

8-10 participants per 12 week cycle
18 month pilot project
Cycle I: February 24, 2014

PHASE I

4 Weeks of Life Skills Workshops

- Self-Exploration and Goal Setting
- Employment and Education
- Introduction to Fitness
- Time Management
- Self-Esteem
- Self-Advocacy
- Communication Skills, Conflict Resolution, Coping Strategies
- Housing and Budgeting/Financial Planning

PHASE II

Personalized Coaching

- 1-1 case management
- 8 weeks of individual or group coaching-connecting youth to identified goals.
- Weekly individual/group check-ins to assess goals, accountability, and short-term accomplishments.

PHASE III

Maintaining Connection

- Strive will work to provide connections to community resources by using wrap around services to assist youth in building individual success.
- Follow-ups: assessing and adjusting goals, ongoing program referrals, participation in Youth Council.
- Strive will encouraging collaboration and coordination among members in the community to assist program participants.

Successful Practices

Skills Link – Barista's Program

Program participants go through five weeks of life and employability skills training delivered by PCRS which is followed by one week of basic certification training (i.e. FoodSafe, WorldHost) and a five week work experience placement as a Barista in a local Starbucks.

- Participants get high school credit
- The eleven week program helps at-risk youth build self-esteem and self-awareness, learn fundamental life and job skills
- Gain valuable work experience which often results in an offer of a paid position with Starbucks Coffee Canada.

Successful Practices

Skills Link – Barista's Program

- For youth who are at risk or high risk
- Contains the components identified as essential for successful youth employment
- Good connection to local employers – Starbucks
- Recent reductions in operating expenses and lack of long term reliable funding has resulted in the closing or reduction of many Skills Link programs

Barista Case Study

E is a 16 year old male who has had a rough few years. He has battled addictions since he was 12 years old. He attended a recovery program earlier this year and has continued to stay drug free. E showed up to class, on time every day, with a positive attitude. He was very well liked by his peers and made everyone feel welcome. E is currently on parole and was very nervous about his curfew hours conflicting with his work hours. He was proactive on this, and contacted his Parole Officer and got a reprieve with his time restrictions. He really wanted to work at Starbucks, bad! E has never worked before and was nervous about his first work experience. He did amazing in his placement store. The Store Manager reported that he always arrived 10-15 minutes early, never took longer than his scheduled break, and was eager to complete any task that was put upon him. He was sociable with customers, always lending a kind ear. E graduated the baristas program on June 21st and stated that "he used to be like a scared puppy" when applying for jobs, but through his experience from the program he now holds his head up high and talks and walks with confidence. E was hired by Starbucks in August and has been thoroughly enjoying his job and the partners report that he is a pleasure to work with. His long term goal is to become a Child and Youth Care Worker.

Barista Case Study:

R is an eighteen year old Aboriginal female. She is on a youth agreement for housing and constantly struggles with personal and family issues. She started her work experience at Starbucks on the wrong foot. R was nervous and unsure of herself, and during her first week was absent two days. The store manager was ready to let her go. The Program coordinator and R sat down to discuss her challenges. R stated that she really wanted a second chance and was sorry that she had got off to a bad start with her long awaited work experience, as she has never worked before. The Coordinator called the store manager and ask if she would be open to meeting with R to discuss these challenges. The store manager was more than ready to support R and it was decided that she would do her own speaking during a meeting. This was very brave of her! All went well and R was given another chance. From that moment on R was an exceptional worker, never late or missing a day. This was even more of an achievement as she still struggled with financial and personal problems. R gave 110%! R is currently attending the school to complete her grade 12, while continuing her intense job search. R says "The only real mistake is giving up! It may feel like a long journey but once you get to the top it's a beautiful scene!"

Successful Practices**BladeRunners: Description**

BladeRunners is an employment program that helps youth (ages 15-30) with multiple barriers to employment build careers in construction and other industries throughout BC. The BladeRunners program provides participating youth a three-week training course, including instruction in both soft and hard skills, and then facilitates direct job placement for program graduates. The program also provides extensive support services for participants and graduates 24 hours a day, seven days a week for an undetermined period of time after placement. The ultimate goal of the program is to develop skills and work experience that foster long-term attachment to the labour force and to support the social and community integration of young people.



Successful Practices**BladeRunners: Success Factors**

1. **Multisector partnerships** are essential to the success of the BladeRunners model.
2. **Local delivery of programming** is another key element of success of the BladeRunners model.
3. **Short-term training that is tailored to the participants needs and abilities**, and that offers the basic skills needed to rapidly enter the workplace.



Successful Practices

BladeRunners: Success Factors

- 4. Support.** The BladeRunners model would not work without the support that is offered to program participants. Off-the-job support takes many forms: referrals to various health, education and social services, financial support for obtaining stable housing, support in the form of public transportation vouchers and meals, informal counselling about further training and education, and financial support for additional training program fees.

Successful Practices Under New Model

BladeRunners: Success Factors

- 5. Contacts with employers.** It is essential that BladeRunners have a well- developed and extensive network of employers and contacts in the construction industry.

Source:
http://www.skillsforemployment.org/wcmtest4/groups/skills/documents/skpccontent/ddrf/ndk5/~edisp/wcmtest4_099648.pdf
 ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD)
 LOCAL ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT (LEED)

Review

- Transition to the new Employment model has created some challenges resulting in negative impacts on employment services for youth
- We have a good understanding of the components that result in successful employment programming for youth

Review

- Youth specific satellite sites appear to be more effective in attracting youth to come in for services
- Creative outreach marketing techniques are important to reach youth who are a hard to reach often invisible target audience
- seamless transition from other programs is especially important for youth considered at risk or high risk

Review

- We have active services and programs that are working but they need stability in the system and long term financial supports in order for our marketing and outreach efforts with business and community partners to take root.

Thank you for Attending
