

REENGAGING NEW YORK CITY'S DISCONNECTED YOUTH THROUGH WORK

Implementation and Early
Impacts of the Young Adult
Internship Program

OPRE Report 2017-22

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Reengaging New York City's Disconnected Youth Through Work: Implementation and Early Impacts of the Young Adult Internship Program

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Overview

Introduction

This report presents implementation and early impact results from a random assignment evaluation of the Young Adult Internship Program (YAIP), a subsidized employment program for young people in New York City who have become disconnected from school and work. Operated by various provider agencies, YAIP offers disconnected youth between the ages of 16 and 24 a temporary paid internship, as well as various support services.

The YAIP evaluation is part of the larger Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration, sponsored by the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. From July 2013 to March 2014, researchers assigned nearly 2,700 young people at random to either a program group, which was offered YAIP services, or to a control group, which was not offered those services. The YAIP evaluation will measure outcomes for both groups over time to assess whether YAIP services led to better outcomes for the program group compared with those of the control group.

This report is the first of two focused on the YAIP evaluation. It provides a detailed description of the YAIP model, assesses its implementation, and examines whether the program improved young people's outcomes during the first year after study enrollment. Overall, the implementation study concluded that the YAIP program was well implemented across provider agencies and that participation rates were high. An analysis of youth outcomes indicates that program group members were more likely than control group members to receive employment and other types of support. In part due to the offer of a paid internship, the program group was also more likely to work and had higher earnings in the year following random assignment. Additional follow-up will be necessary to assess YAIP's longer-term effects on employment and earnings, as well as other key outcomes.

Primary Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- How was YAIP designed and operated?
- What impact did YAIP have on employment and earnings, education and training, and well-being relative to what would have happened in the absence of the program? Did YAIP appear to be more effective for certain subgroups of young people?
- To what extent do YAIP's costs differ from those expended on behalf of individuals randomly assigned to a control group that could not receive YAIP program services? How does this cost differential relate to the benefits associated with program impacts, if any?

Purpose

For many young people, the time between one's late teenage years and early twenties encompasses several important milestones, including graduating from high school, attending college, entering the workforce, and beginning to establish economic independence. However, 12.3 percent of young

people in the United States between the ages of 16 and 24 — 4.9 million people in total — are neither in school nor working. These “disconnected” or “opportunity” youth face serious challenges to achieving labor market success and self-sufficiency in adulthood.

YAIP is intended to help reengage youth who have fallen off track, thereby reducing their risk of long-term economic hardship. MDRC is conducting a random assignment evaluation of YAIP to determine whether the program makes a difference in the lives of the young people it serves.

Key Findings

Findings from the report include the following:

- Overall, YAIP was well implemented. The program was delivered very similarly across providers and with a high degree of fidelity to the program model as designed. Participation rates were high: Over three-fourths of young people assigned to the program group worked in a subsidized internship and 86 percent of those youth completed the internship.
- Program group members were more likely than control group members to report receiving employment support, as well as advice or support and mentorship from staff members at an agency or organization. However, substantial numbers of control group members also received help in these areas.
- The program group was more likely than the control group to have worked during the year following random assignment, but the employment rates of the two groups converged during the quarters after the YAIP internships ended. The program group also had higher earnings than the control group. While largest during the time when program group members were working in paid internships, these earnings impacts persisted throughout the follow-up period, suggesting that program group members may have obtained better jobs than control group members.

Methods

The evaluation includes an implementation study, an impact study, and a benefit-cost analysis. This report presents implementation and early impact findings (after one year). Benefit-cost findings and longer-term impact findings (after 30 months) will be presented in a future report.

The implementation study describes YAIP’s design and how the program ultimately operated. Key data sources for the implementation study include staff interviews, observations, and participation data. The implementation section of this report integrates qualitative and quantitative data from these sources to create a coherent picture of the implementation of the program.

The impact study uses a randomized controlled trial design in which individuals eligible for and interested in YAIP were randomly assigned to either a program group, which was offered YAIP services, or to a control group, which was not offered those services. The study will evaluate impacts on employment and earnings, education and training, and well-being, among other areas. Data sources for the impact study include administrative records on wages and postsecondary enrollment, subsidized employment payroll records, and surveys conducted approximately 4, 12, and 30 months after participants entered the study.

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The Authors

Executive Summary

For many young people, the time between one’s late teenage years and early twenties encompasses several important milestones, including graduating from high school, attending college, entering the workforce, and beginning to establish economic independence. For some, however, staying engaged in education or employment during the transition to adulthood can be difficult: 12.3 percent of young people in the United States between the ages of 16 and 24 — 4.9 million young people in total — are neither in school nor working. This group is commonly referred to as “disconnected youth” or “opportunity youth.” As a result of low levels of educational attainment and limited work experience, disconnected youth face serious challenges to achieving labor market success and self-sufficiency in adulthood.¹

The Young Adult Internship Program (YAIP) is intended to help reengage youth who have fallen off track, thereby reducing their risk of long-term economic hardship. The New York City Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) and the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) oversee the program and community-based provider organizations throughout the city deliver it. YAIP offers youth various services, including job-readiness workshops and activities; individual support, counseling, and assessments; case management; and follow-up services. However, the central program component is a 10- to 12-week paid internship.

This report presents interim findings from a random assignment evaluation of YAIP, which is studying the program’s implementation and “impacts,” or the difference the program makes in the lives of the youth it serves. The evaluation also includes a benefit-cost study. Young adults who enrolled in the evaluation include low-income New York City residents between 16 and 24 years of age who were neither working nor in school. The YAIP evaluation is part of a larger evaluation funded by the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) called the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration (STED), which is testing various subsidized employment strategies in several cities across the country. MDRC is conducting the STED Evaluation, along with its research partners MEF Associates, Decision Information Resources, and Branch Associates.

Background

In early adulthood, it is important to gain skills and experience through education, training, and employment in order to establish a solid foundation for future success. However, many young

¹Sarah Burd-Sharps and Kristen Lewis, *Promising Gains, Persistent Gaps: Youth Disconnection in America* (New York: Measure of America of the Social Science Research Council, 2017).

people in the United States are neither enrolled in school nor participating in the labor market. The detachment of these young people from society's larger structures of school and work poses serious costs to their future well-being, their communities, and to the country as a whole.²

There are a variety of reasons why young people may become disconnected, including a lack of support and guidance from adults; family obligations; issues with school safety, school policies, and peer influences; and the challenges of young parenthood.³ Disconnected youth may also simply have trouble finding work. In recent years, concern about at-risk, out-of-school, and out-of-work young people has grown among policymakers, service providers, and other key stakeholders. This concern has generated new policies and initiatives to better serve and reconnect this population to education, training, and employment. One example of these efforts is the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which President Obama signed into law in 2014. WIOA places increased emphasis on providing employment and training services to disconnected young people who are out of school.

Disconnected youth are a heterogeneous group in terms of the causes of their disconnection, their level of disadvantage, their educational backgrounds, and the length of their disconnection. Because of this heterogeneity, appropriate service models vary considerably in terms of the subpopulations they target, the services they provide, their level of intensity, and their underlying theories for how best to reconnect young people to school, training, or work. Programs targeting disconnected young people tend to offer different combinations of educational support, job skills training, paid or subsidized employment, case management, and other services. A number of these programs have been rigorously evaluated, with some showing positive, statistically significant effects, primarily on employment and earnings.⁴ YAIP is unique among disconnected youth programs in a few respects: it is a relatively simple model focused on work experience; it targets a more job-ready subset of disconnected youth (this point will be discussed in greater detail below); and it operates at large scale.⁵ Thus, learning about the effectiveness of YAIP will contribute to the existing research evidence regarding what works to reengage low-income disconnected young people in education and work.

²Burd-Sharps and Lewis (2017).

³Michelle Hynes, *Don't Call Them Dropouts: Understanding the Experiences of Young People Who Leave High School Before Graduation* (Washington, DC: America's Promise Alliance, 2014).

⁴Louisa Treskon, *What Works for Disconnected Young People: A Scan of the Evidence* (New York: MDRC, 2016); Farhana Hossain and Dan Bloom, *Towards a Better Future: Evidence on Improving Employment Outcomes for Disadvantaged Youth in the United States* (New York: MDRC, 2015).

⁵In fiscal year 2015 (July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2015), 18 YAIP providers across New York City served 1,821 young people.

The Young Adult Internship Program (YAIP)

Introduced in 2007, YAIP is a workforce development program designed for young New Yorkers living in poverty who are neither in school nor working, but who are believed to have the potential to benefit from a relatively brief, non-intensive intervention. In theory, the YAIP target population is not so disadvantaged that they need extensive wraparound services, but disadvantaged enough to require the support of a program to acquire the skills and experience needed to improve their labor market prospects and give them a “jump start” back into productive activity.

YAIP is a multiphase program that enrolls youth in cohorts, with a new cohort starting every four months; participants in a particular cohort move through the program together. Each community-based YAIP provider is responsible for enrolling and serving a portion of the full cohort, usually about 30 young adults each. The program’s three phases are as follows:

- **Phase 1:** The first 2 to 4 weeks of the program (duration varies by provider) are referred to as the orientation phase, wherein youth are expected to attend daily workshops facilitated by program staff at provider offices. Youth are paid minimum wage for 25 hours per week,⁶ and workshops are typically five hours per day. The goals of orientation are to prepare participants for the workplace by providing various job-readiness and personal development activities, to lay a foundation for cohort cohesion using icebreakers and group activities, and to match participants’ interests and skills with an available and appropriate internship.
- **Phase 2:** During the 10 to 12 weeks of this phase, youth are expected to work 20 hours a week in their internship placement and continue to earn minimum wage. Their earnings are fully subsidized. The goals of internship placements vary based on the particular needs of young people, but generally include work experience, development of soft or hard skills, career exploration, and potential transition from a subsidized internship to a permanent, unsubsidized position. Once a week, youth are required to return to the provider offices to attend five-hour educational workshops, for which they are also paid minimum wage. These workshops cover topics including job readiness, healthy living, money and time management, and conflict resolution.

⁶The minimum wage increased from \$7.25 to \$8 per hour in New York during the study period. As of this report’s publication, the minimum wage in New York City was \$11 per hour for employers of 11 or more employees and \$10.50 for employers of 10 or fewer employees.

- **Phase 3:** The nine months following youths' completion of their internship is the follow-up phase of YAIP. During this time, providers are expected to help participants secure and maintain an "outcome placement." Outcome placements include participation in unsubsidized employment, education, training, or the military. Providers also offer support services during this phase, including housing assistance, counseling, and transportation assistance, among other types of support.

The YAIP Evaluation

Earlier evaluations of subsidized employment programs targeting groups who struggle most in the labor market, including disconnected youth, the formerly incarcerated, welfare recipients, noncustodial parents, and others, yielded mixed results. Designed to advance the field's understanding of subsidized employment, STED is studying eight different subsidized employment program models in six cities across the country. Each model, including YAIP, is being evaluated independently in a randomized controlled trial.

The random assignment design of the YAIP evaluation is generally considered to be the most rigorous method of evaluating large-scale social service programs. This research design involves a lottery-like process that places individuals into either a program group, which is offered the services being tested, or into a control group, which is not offered those services. As a result of the random assignment process, these two groups will be comparable on both measured and unmeasured characteristics at the time of study enrollment. The evaluation includes 12 independent YAIP providers that delivered the program at 13 different locations across Brooklyn, the Bronx, Manhattan, and Queens. YAIP providers targeted individuals between 16 and 24 years of age who were neither in school nor working, among other eligibility criteria.

The YAIP evaluation enrolled a total of 2,678 young people in three consecutive cohorts, beginning with the July 2013 cohort, followed by the November 2013 cohort, and concluding with the March 2014 cohort. The research team randomly assigned 60 percent of the sample to the program group and 40 percent to the control group:

- **The program group.** The 1,638 individuals who were randomly assigned to this group were offered YAIP program services, including a paid internship, job-readiness training, case management, and follow-up services.
- **The control group.** The 1,040 individuals who were randomly assigned to this group were not offered YAIP program services, but were able to access other services that were available in the community, including other non-YAIP services offered at YAIP provider agencies.

By measuring outcomes for both groups over time, it is possible to assess whether YAIP services led to better outcomes for the program group than what would have happened in the absence of the program, as represented by the control group. Indeed, any statistically significant differences that emerge between the two randomly assigned groups provide a reliable estimate of the program’s effects, or “impacts.”

The YAIP evaluation has three components: an implementation study, an impact study, and a benefit-cost study. The primary goal of the implementation study is to describe the design of the YAIP program and how it operates. As noted above, the impact study addresses the question of whether YAIP improves key outcomes of interest for disconnected youth, including employment and earnings, education and training, psychosocial outcomes, economic and personal well-being, and involvement with the criminal justice system. Finally, the benefit-cost study will compare YAIP’s costs with its benefits. This report focuses on the results of the implementation study and early findings from the impact study (based on one year of follow-up data). Final results from the impact study (based on 30 months of follow-up data) and benefit-cost analysis will be included in a future report, expected in 2018.

Implementation of YAIP

The research team assessed YAIP’s implementation using several different data sources, including (but not limited to) interviews with key provider staff as well as YAIP management staff from DYCD and CEO, internship worksite observations, analysis of data collected from all young people when they enrolled in the study, and program participation data from the YAIP management information system.

To be eligible for YAIP, applicants must be New York City residents, between the ages of 16 and 24, and eligible to work in the United States; must neither be in school nor working; and cannot have been enrolled in school during the prior semester. In addition, all YAIP applicants are required to complete a multistage intake process designed to screen for appropriate participants — that is, the most job-ready disconnected youth, YAIP’s target population.⁷ The intake process includes a reading level assessment, a self-assessment form, and an interview. The research team randomly assigned applicants who were determined eligible at the conclusion of the assessment and intake process to one of the two research groups that comprise the YAIP study sample.

⁷Provider staff assessed job-readiness based on several criteria, including motivation level, stability of housing and child care arrangements, mental health, reading level, and availability of social support, among other factors.

The YAIP sample was 21 years of age, on average, at the time of study enrollment and is divided about evenly between men and women. The vast majority of sample members are Black, non-Hispanic (58 percent) or Hispanic (36 percent). Sixty-one percent of the sample had earned a high school diploma or equivalency certificate and nearly three-fourths of the sample had previous work experience (though the vast majority of this latter group had not worked in any job for three months or longer). The median length of time since study youth were last in school, enrolled in a high school equivalency program, or working was nine months. Only about 4 percent of the sample reported experiencing unstable housing. Finally, over one-fourth of the sample received some form of public assistance and, in addition to their limited schooling and employment histories, 42 percent of sample members faced at least one other significant barrier to employment, including limited literacy or math skills, housing instability, parenting responsibilities, a disability, or a criminal record.

- **Young people in the study sample compare favorably with the broader population of disconnected youth in New York City on various socioeconomic indicators, suggesting that YAIP providers successfully targeted a more job-ready subset of disconnected youth.**

Compared with local and national populations of disconnected youth, YAIP sample members were more likely to have a high school credential and previous work experience and less likely to receive public benefits or to live in unstable housing situations at the time of study enrollment. Thus, while the YAIP sample still faced serious challenges, providers successfully identified and enrolled the subset of disconnected youth thought best able to benefit from the program.

- **Overall, the implementation of YAIP aligns with the program model and is consistent across providers.**

DYCD allows providers some flexibility in how they operate the program, including in staffing decisions and the duration of program phases. Despite this flexibility and the range of different organizations that offered the program — each with its own focus and varying set of resources — the research team found that, overall, providers delivered the YAIP model very similarly and with a high degree of fidelity to the intended program model, as described above.

Nevertheless, program implementation faced a number of challenges. Provider staff reported difficulties with navigating the complex and lengthy recruitment and assessment process; contending with YAIP's overlapping program cycles, which required them to juggle varying responsibilities for cohorts in different phases of the program simultaneously; the challenges inherent in working with a disadvantaged group of young people, some of whom require a great deal of support even outside of regular working hours; and meeting DYCD's oversight and

performance expectations. Program managers reported that these difficulties left some staff members vulnerable to burnout, contributing to frequent staff turnover.

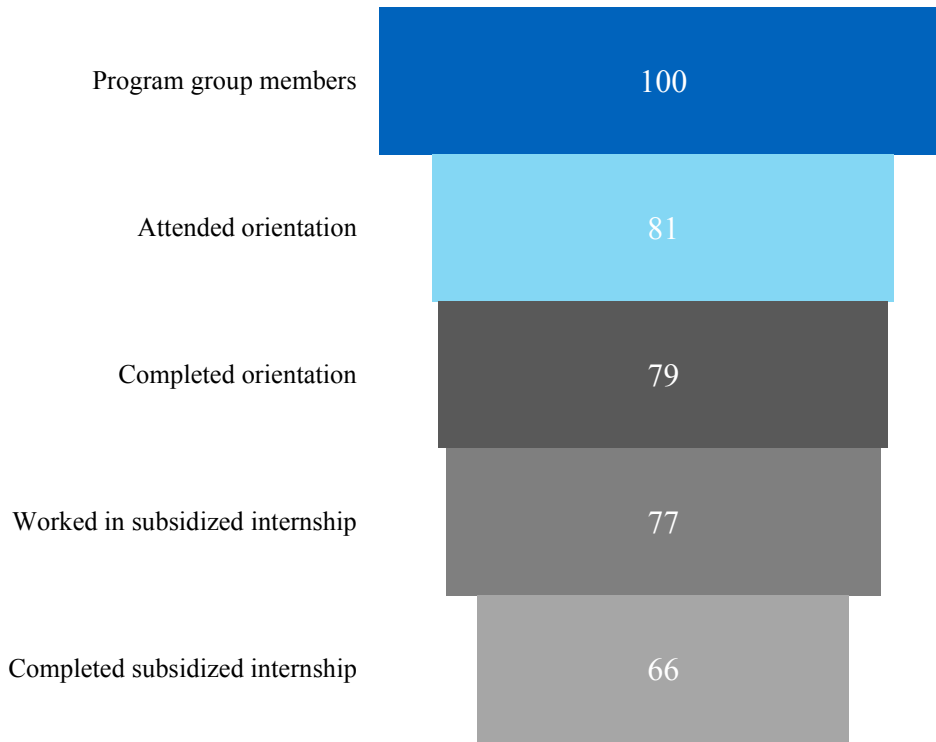
Based on data from YAIP's management information system, participation in YAIP was high. As shown in Figure ES.1, which depicts participation among 100 typical program group members, over 80 percent of the program group attended the paid orientation phase, nearly all of whom completed it. During this phase, provider staff facilitate daily group sessions at program offices to help meet the first two goals of orientation, which are preparing participants to succeed in the workplace and laying a foundation for cohort cohesion. Staff achieve the third goal of orientation, matching youth to internship sites, through a collaborative process in which staff and participants meet one-on-one to discuss participants' strengths, interests, and goals. Provider staff consider all of these dimensions, as well as the participants' personalities and the internship site's work environment and culture, in matching participants to internship placements.

- **More than three-fourths of the program group worked in a DYCD-subsidized internship. Among this group, 86 percent completed their internship.**

Internship placements are at a wide variety of worksites, running the gamut from the offices of local politicians to commercial drugstores, social service nonprofit agencies, clothing retail chains, and a local radio station. Regardless of worksite, most young people are assigned tasks that involve clerical work, customer service, or maintenance. Internships promoted the program goals in various ways, such as providing participants with employment and income, exposing them to new workplace experiences, and bolstering their résumés. Participants who worked in a subsidized internship averaged 9.2 weeks in their placement, close to the full internship length of 10 to 12 weeks. Additionally, during the internship phase, this group spent an average of about 22 hours per week in their internships and in the mandatory educational workshops, close to the expected 25 hours per week. The educational workshops, held once a week at provider offices, offered an opportunity for youth to stay in touch with members of their cohort, check in with case managers, and receive ongoing job-readiness skills development while they worked in their internships. Despite participants receiving pay for time spent in educational workshops, providers reported that attendance was often an issue.

Case managers begin "outcome planning" with their participants about halfway through the program, aiming to engage participants in one of the four DYCD-endorsed post-program placements by the end of the internship period. These preferred placements are unsubsidized employment, education, advanced training, and military service. Based on participation data, a little more than half of program group members who worked in an internship were engaged in

Figure ES.1
YAIP Participation Among 100 Typical Program Group Members



SOURCE: MDRC calculations using data from the YAIP management information system.

NOTES: The data presented in this figure are based on the 1,638 program group members in the YAIP study.

one of these outcome placements at the conclusion of their internship, the vast majority of them in unsubsidized employment, with education a distant second. Participants pursuing advanced training were far rarer, and those enlisting in military service were negligible.

Whether or not participants were engaged in a placement at the conclusion of their internship, provider staff continued to offer them follow-up support services over the next nine months. These nine months make up Phase 3 of YAIP, or the follow-up phase, when providers focus on helping participants secure or sustain a placement. This follow-up period is the longest yet least intensive phase of the program cycle, when staff work with participants mainly on an individual basis. During this phase, provider staff try to maintain contact with the young people to assist them with job leads, verify their outcome placements, help connect them to needed

services, and provide other case management and counseling support. Eighty-six percent of participants who worked in an internship received case management during this phase, and had an average of five contacts with YAIP staff.⁸ The proportion of participants engaged in a DYCD-approved placement at the nine-month mark is very similar to the proportion engaged in a placement at the end of the internship period, as is the distribution of participants across the four preferred placements. The proportion of youth in verified placements fell short of DYCD's performance benchmarks at both junctures.

YAIP was developed as a "light-touch" intervention to help reengage a subset of the most job-ready disconnected youth based on the premise that this group would not require intensive services to get back on track. However, many involved with the YAIP program, including provider staff, supervisors at internship sites, and participants themselves, disagreed with this premise and believed that participants require both a higher level of support and a longer intervention to improve their educational and labor market outcomes.

Early Impacts of YAIP

The impact study relies on data from three key sources: employment and earnings data from the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH), 4- and 12-month follow-up survey data, and postsecondary school enrollment data from the National Student Clearinghouse.⁹ For this report, follow-up data for just over one year after random assignment was available to assess differences between program and control group members.

While control group members could not enroll in YAIP, they were able to access other services that were available in the community. In New York City, services for disadvantaged young people are plentiful. Using survey data, the research team assessed the extent to which the offer of the YAIP program increased the services received by the program group over and above what the control group received. Without a meaningful service differential, statistically significant impacts on youth outcomes are unlikely.

- **Program group members were more likely than control group members to report receiving employment support as well as advice or support and mentorship from staff members at an agency or organization.**

⁸A contact was counted as any time a case manager was able to successfully reach a participant, including phone, social media, and in-person contact.

⁹Maintained by the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, the National Directory of New Hires contains quarterly earnings data collected by state workforce agencies on jobs covered by unemployment insurance.

Results show that the program group was significantly more likely than the control group to have been employed in a paid internship (60 percent versus 8 percent).¹⁰ They were also more likely to have received help finding or keeping a job (85 percent versus 53 percent), which includes participation in activities such as job search, job readiness, and career planning, as well as financial support for job-related costs. Additionally, program group members were significantly more likely than control group members to have received advice or support (70 percent versus 46 percent) and mentoring (62 percent versus 35 percent) from staff at an agency or organization. In sum, while many control group members received services, program group members received substantially more services in the key areas on which YAIP focuses.

- **YAIP increased employment in the year following random assignment, but this program effect dissipated by the end of the follow-up period. Program group members had higher earnings than control group members throughout the follow-up period.**

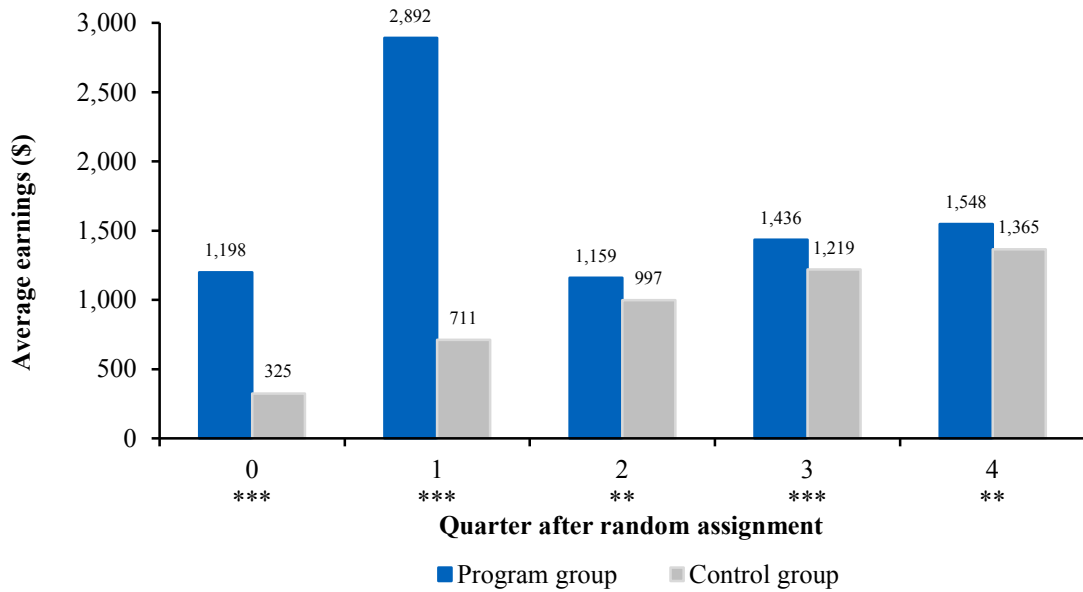
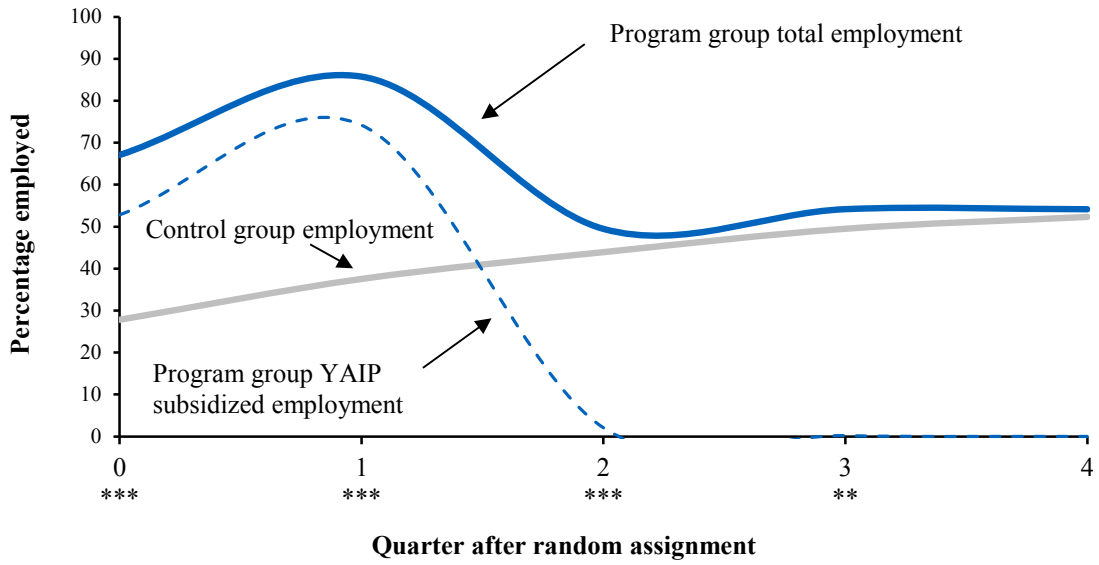
As shown in the top panel of Figure ES.2, which is based on NDNH data, program group members were more likely than control group members to work in the year following random assignment, but the quarterly employment rates of the two research groups converged shortly after the YAIP subsidized internships ended.¹¹ Turning to the bottom panel of the figure, program group members also had higher earnings than control group members, earning over \$3,433 more than control group members over the course of the year (quarter 0 through quarter 3). Statistically significant earnings impacts were observed in every quarter of the year following random assignment, although the size of the impact peaked during the first quarter after random assignment (when participation in YAIP internships was highest) and dropped steeply thereafter, remaining relatively consistent in the later quarters. The differences in earnings that persisted in the later quarters, along with data from the 12-month survey concerning participants' current employment, suggest that program group members may have been able to secure better jobs (that is, more permanent positions with full-time hours) than control group members. This possible program impact will be more fully examined later, when additional follow-up data past 12 months is available.

- **Program and control group members had similar outcomes during the first year of follow-up in other key domains.**

¹⁰These figures are based on data from the four-month follow-up survey. It is likely that the survey question regarding paid internships was subject to some reporting error, which may explain the discrepancy between these program group internship participation rates and those based on management information system data.

¹¹NDNH data are reported quarterly; thus, employment and earnings in this report cover the quarter during which random assignment occurred (quarter 0), as well as the four quarters following the quarter of random assignment, for a total of five quarters. These data include participation in paid YAIP activities.

Figure ES.2
Employment and Earnings Over Time



(continued)

Figure ES.2 (continued)

SOURCES: MDRC calculations based on quarterly wage data from the National Directory of New Hires and YAIP management information system subsidized earnings records.

NOTES: Results in this table are regression-adjusted, controlling for pre-random assignment characteristics. Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

Aside from the differences observed in the employment and earnings domain, program and control group members had similar outcomes over the first year of follow-up in the other domains where impacts were assessed. These domains include education and training, psychosocial outcomes, economic and personal well-being, and criminal involvement.

However, results of the four-month survey, which the research team administered at a point in time when many program group members were working in their paid internships, showed some positive effects on young people's happiness and perception of obstacles to achieving their goals. This result suggests that YAIP led to some level of improved well-being for young people while they were working in subsidized internships, even if these improvements do not appear to have persisted after the internships ended.

Next Steps

The YAIP evaluation is part of a larger effort to understand how best to help young people who have become untethered from the worlds of school and work to reengage in productive activity. Findings from the implementation study indicate that YAIP is a well-implemented program, operates similarly across providers with a high degree of fidelity to the program model, and serves a large swath of New York City's more job-ready disconnected youth. Rates of participation are high, a notable finding considering that many youth programs struggle to keep young people engaged in their services. Whether YAIP is having its ultimate intended effects of improving participants' labor market prospects and reducing their risk of long-term economic hardship remains an open question. The current report presents only 12-month impacts of the program. It is too early to draw any firm conclusions about whether YAIP will improve employment outcomes or outcomes in other domains in the longer term. Final impact results, with a longer-term follow-up of 30 months, will be presented in a later report, as will the results of a benefit-cost study.

Chapter 1

Introduction

For many young people, the time between one’s late teenage years and early twenties encompasses several important milestones, including graduating from high school, attending college, entering the workforce, and beginning to establish economic independence. For some, however, staying engaged in education or employment during the transition to adulthood can be difficult: 12.3 percent of young people in the United States between the ages of 16 and 24 — 4.9 million young people in total — are neither in school nor working. These young people are commonly referred to as “disconnected youth” or “opportunity youth.” As a result of low levels of educational attainment and limited work experience, disconnected youth face serious challenges to achieving labor market success and self-sufficiency in adulthood.¹

The Young Adult Internship Program (YAIP) is intended to help reengage young people who have fallen off track, thereby reducing their risk of long-term economic hardship. The New York City Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) and the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) oversee the program and community-based provider organizations throughout the city deliver it. YAIP offers youth various services, including job-readiness workshops and activities; individual support, counseling, and assessments; case management; and follow-up services. However, the central program offering is a 10- to 12-week paid internship.

This report presents interim findings from a random assignment evaluation of YAIP, which is studying the program’s implementation and “impacts,” or the difference the program makes in the lives of the youth it serves. The evaluation also includes a benefit-cost study. Young adults who enrolled in the evaluation include low-income New York City residents between 16 and 24 years of age who were neither working nor in school. The YAIP evaluation is part of a larger evaluation funded by the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) called the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration (STED), which is testing various subsidized employment strategies in several cities across the country. MDRC is conducting the STED evaluation, along with its research partners MEF Associates, Decision Information Resources, and Branch Associates.

¹Burd-Sharps and Lewis (2017).

Background and Policy Context

In early adulthood, it is important to gain skills and experience through education, training, and employment in order to establish a solid foundation for future success. However, many young people in the United States are neither enrolled in school nor participating in the labor market. The detachment of these young people from society's larger structures of school and work poses serious costs to their future well-being, their communities, and to the country as a whole.² Low levels of education and limited work experience can have long-term effects on earnings, self-sufficiency, health, and family formation. Youth disconnection is likely to affect society via lost productivity and tax contributions, increased dependence on public assistance, and higher rates of criminal activity.³

There are a variety of reasons why young people may become disconnected, including a lack of support and guidance from adults; family obligations; issues with school safety, school policies, and peer influences; and the challenges of young parenthood.⁴ Disconnected youth may also simply have trouble finding work. Young jobseekers have had a particularly challenging time in recent years following the collapse of the youth labor market during the Great Recession and its slow subsequent recovery.⁵ Youth disconnection often mirrors adult disconnection. As noted in a recent report on the subject by the Social Science Research Council, household poverty rates and the employment and educational status of adults in a community strongly correlate with youth disconnection in that community.⁶ Reflecting the higher poverty rates, lower educational attainment, and higher unemployment that characterize many minority communities, Black and Hispanic youth are overrepresented among the larger population of disconnected youth.⁷

In recent years, concern about at-risk, out-of-school, and out-of-work young people has grown among policymakers, service providers, and other key stakeholders. This concern has generated new policies and initiatives to better serve and reconnect this population to education, training, and employment. One example of these efforts is the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which President Obama signed into law in 2014. Relative to its predecessor (the Workforce Investment Act), WIOA places increased emphasis on providing employment and training services to disconnected young people who are out of school and raises the upper age limit for these services from 21 to 24. The next section describes some of

²Burd-Sharps and Lewis (2017).

³Belfield, Levin, and Rosen (2012).

⁴Hynes (2014).

⁵Sum, Khatiwada, Trubskyy, and Palma (2014); Ayres (2013).

⁶Burd-Sharps and Lewis (2017).

⁷Belfield, Levin, and Rosen (2012).

the existing service models targeting the needs of this population, as well as the research evidence regarding the effectiveness of these models.

Service Models for Disconnected Youth and Research Evidence Regarding Their Effectiveness

Disconnected youth are a heterogeneous group, in terms of the causes of their disconnection, their level of disadvantage, their educational backgrounds, and the length of their disconnection. With respect to the length of disconnection, it is important to note that disconnection is not a static condition. While some disconnected young people are considered “chronic,” or have not been enrolled in school or attached to the labor market since the age of 16, many others are “underattached,” or, despite some education or work experience, have not maintained consistent ties to either school or the labor market and may cycle in and out of disconnection.⁸ Still others may encounter temporary setbacks that leave them disengaged from school and work for some period of time before they recover and reengage in consistent productive activity.

In response to this heterogeneity, service models for these young adults vary considerably in terms of the subpopulations they target, the services they provide, their level of intensity, and their underlying theories for how best to reconnect young people to school, training, or work. Programs targeting disconnected young people tend to offer different combinations of educational support, job skills training, paid or subsidized employment, case management, and other services. A number of these programs have been rigorously evaluated, with some showing positive, statistically significant effects, primarily on employment and earnings. This section describes several interventions that serve disconnected youth.

The National Guard Youth ChalleNge program is an intensive, residential program that serves high school dropouts ages 16 to 18 who are drug free and not heavily involved with the criminal justice system. The program emphasizes positive youth development and includes education, community service, mentoring, and other components in a quasi-military setting. A random assignment study conducted by MDRC found that ChalleNge increased rates of General Educational Development (GED) certificate or high school diploma receipt and college credit receipt, as well as employment rates and earnings.⁹

Another example of a service model for disconnected young people is New York City’s Out-of-School-Youth Program (OSY), also overseen by DYCD. OSY is a yearlong program for low-income disconnected youth between the ages of 16 and 24. It provides occupational skills

⁸Belfield, Levin, and Rosen (2012).

⁹Millenky, Bloom, Muller-Ravett, and Broadus (2011).

training in several industries, including construction, food service, tourism, health care, and retail. In addition, the program offers assistance with job and college placement, GED preparation, and support services.¹⁰ OSY has not yet been rigorously evaluated.

Year Up, a training- and employment-focused model, operates in 18 cities and serves participants ages 18 to 24 who have a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. It offers participants six months of training in information technology and finance, followed by a six-month internship. Participants receive a stipend tied to a performance contract during both the training and internship phases. Additionally, staff advisers help young people with any issues they may encounter, and each participant is paired with a mentor. A small random assignment evaluation found that members of the Year Up group had higher earnings in the second year after random assignment and were more likely to be working full-time in their current or most recent job compared with members of a control group.¹¹ At the three-year mark, the program group had higher earnings than the control group, mostly as the result of higher wages. However, the program group was less likely to be attending college than the control group. The three-year follow-up findings should be interpreted with caution, as the study had a short embargo period (the period during which control group members were prevented from joining the program); nearly a third of control group members ultimately ended up participating in Year Up.¹² Efforts to learn more about the effectiveness of Year Up are under way as part of the Administration for Children and Families' Pathways for Advancing Careers and Education study; early impact results are expected in 2017.

Operating across the United States, Job Corps is primarily a residential program for disadvantaged young people ages 16 to 24. It combines GED or other high school equivalency education with job skills training and case management. Job Corps also helps participants transition to employment after the program.¹³ Results from a random assignment study of Job Corps released in 2006 found positive earnings and employment impacts in years three and four of the follow-up period, but the impacts faded after that time. The evaluation found that results were better for older youth (those ages 20 to 24, compared with those ages 16 to 19).¹⁴

YouthBuild is a national youth and community development program targeting disconnected youth. A hybrid employment and education or training program, YouthBuild offers low-income young people ages 16 to 24 (often those who did not complete high school) a variety of services for 6 to 12 months, including financial supports. Participants spend at least half of their

¹⁰New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (2016c).

¹¹Roder and Elliott (2011).

¹²Roder and Elliott (2014).

¹³Job Corps (2013).

¹⁴Schochet, Burghardt, and McConnell (2006).

work week engaged in an array of educational services, including high school equivalency, high school diploma, or college preparation. Participants generally spend much of their remaining time learning construction skills by building or rehabilitating housing for low-income or homeless people.¹⁵ The program also includes a “mental toughness” orientation that screens for motivation and other assessments, as well as leadership training, community service, counseling and support services, and job placement and follow-up services. MDRC is conducting a random assignment evaluation of Youth Build. Interim results show that the program increased participation in education and training, receipt of high school equivalency certificates, two-year college enrollment, civic engagement, and wages and earnings during the 30 month follow-up period.¹⁶

Project Rise is yet another example of a service model targeting disconnected youth. Project Rise serves 18- to 24-year-olds who lack a high school diploma or equivalency certificate and have been disconnected from school, work, and training for at least six months. Participants enroll in cohorts of 25 to 30 and engage in a 12-month sequence of activities including case management, classroom education focused on preparation for a high school diploma or equivalency certificate, and a paid part-time internship that is conditional on adequate attendance in the educational component of the program. Project Rise has been delivered in three locations in New York City; one in Newark, New Jersey; and one in Kansas City, Missouri. Though not a DYCD program, CEO and DYCD were heavily involved in the program’s inception and, as a result, many in the field view Project Rise as an enhanced version of the YAIP model that focuses on encouraging young people to earn a high school diploma or equivalency certificate in addition to securing employment. MDRC conducted an implementation study of Project Rise that assessed how the program operates and how providers engage young people in program services. The study’s results offer important lessons for policymakers, funders, and program operators; however, the study was not designed with a control or comparison group and therefore was unable to assess the program’s impacts.¹⁷

YAIP is unique among disconnected youth programs in a few respects: It is a relatively simple model focused on work experience, it targets a more job-ready subset of disconnected youth (this point will be discussed in greater detail below), and it operates at large scale.¹⁸ Thus, learning about the effectiveness of YAIP will contribute to the existing research evidence regarding what works to reengage low-income disconnected young people in education and work.

¹⁵Wiegand et al. (2015).

¹⁶Miller et al. (2016).

¹⁷Manno, Yang, and Bangser (2015).

¹⁸In fiscal year 2015, (July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2015), 18 YAIP providers across New York City served 1,821 young people.

DYCD, CEO, and the YAIP Model

Established in 1996 when the City of New York merged its Department of Youth Services and its Community Development Agency, DYCD was designed to provide community-based youth and family programming. The department is primarily responsible for administering available city, state, and federal funds to community-based organizations.¹⁹ DYCD funds a range of programs of different types, including after-school, community development, family support, literacy, youth services, and youth workforce development programs.

Launched in 2006, CEO is housed in the New York City Office of the Mayor and is tasked with ending the cycle of poverty in the five boroughs through innovative, evidence-based programs and policies that build human capital.²⁰ CEO focuses on working with city agencies and partners to create, implement, oversee, monitor, and evaluate a variety of anti-poverty programs and policies, with the stated goal of producing objective evidence to inform decisions about the expansion or elimination of city programs, both through its internal evaluation team and through partnerships with independent program evaluators. DYCD and CEO work together to administer YAIP.

Introduced in 2007, YAIP is a workforce development program designed for young New Yorkers living in poverty who are neither in school nor working, but who are believed to have the potential to benefit from a relatively brief, non-intensive intervention. YAIP participants may or may not have a high school diploma or equivalency certificate (a key difference between YAIP and Project Rise, whose participants do not have this credential). In theory, the YAIP target population is not so disadvantaged that they need extensive wraparound services, but disadvantaged enough to require the support of a program to acquire the skills and experience needed to improve their labor market prospects and give them a “jump start” back into productive activity; this more job-ready group of disconnected youth has been YAIP’s target population since the program’s inception. YAIP is a three-phase program, with the length of phases varying by provider: Phase 1 is a 2- to 4-week job-readiness training and internship matching period, Phase 2 is a 10- to 12-week paid internship (during which youth attend weekly educational workshops), and Phase 3 is a nine-month follow-up period during which staff support former interns as they pursue one of the four DYCD-endorsed outcome placements: employment, education, training, or the military. Youth are paid minimum wage for 25 hours per week during Phases 1 and 2; DYCD fully subsidizes wages. YAIP’s stated overarching goal is to increase the educational opportunities, career preparation, labor force participation, wage

¹⁹New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (2016a); New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (2016b).

²⁰New York City Center for Economic Opportunity (2017).

earnings, job retention, and level of educational attainment of disconnected youth in New York City in an effort to reduce their risk of long-term economic hardship.²¹

The YAIP Evaluation

Earlier evaluations of subsidized employment programs targeting groups who struggle most in the labor market, including disconnected youth, the formerly incarcerated, welfare recipients, noncustodial parents, and others, yielded mixed results. Designed to advance the field's understanding of subsidized employment, STED is studying eight different subsidized employment program models in six cities across the country. Each model, including YAIP, is being evaluated independently in a randomized controlled trial.²²

The random assignment design of the YAIP evaluation is generally considered to be the most rigorous method of evaluating large-scale social service programs. This research design involves a lottery-like process that places individuals into either a program group, which is offered the services being tested, or into a control group, which is not offered those services. CEO and DYCD selected 12 YAIP providers (of 17 that were operating at the time of study enrollment) across Brooklyn, the Bronx, Manhattan, and Queens to participate in the STED evaluation.²³ Providers targeted individuals between 16 and 24 years of age who were neither in school nor working.²⁴ Other key eligibility requirements included a mandatory score of at least a sixth-grade reading level on the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE), no postsecondary degree, and a semester-long waiting period for young adults who had recently graduated from high school or dropped out of high school or college. (In theory, this waiting period gives these young adults time to reengage in school or work on their own.) Additionally, providers used a multistage intake process, which included a self-assessment and interview, to screen for eligible and appropriate participants based on their levels of motivation and stability, among other factors.

²¹New York City Center for Economic Opportunity (2008).

²²For more information about STED and its partner project ETJD, see Bloom (2015); Glosser, Barden, and Williams (2016); and Redcross et al. (2016).

²³In a joint decision, CEO, DYCD, and the research team excluded YAIP providers that also operated programs very similar to YAIP because of the high likelihood that young adults assigned to the control group would access those services. In addition, the team excluded a small number of providers because CEO and DYCD determined that those providers would be unable to comply with the study requirements and run the YAIP program effectively during the study period. One provider, Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow, served two YAIP cohorts in each cycle from different locations. Thus, 12 agencies operated 13 programs in the STED evaluation of YAIP.

²⁴YAIP provider staff obtained parental consent for minors participating in the evaluation.

The YAIP evaluation enrolled a total of 2,678 young people in three consecutive cohorts, beginning with the July 2013 cohort, followed by the November 2013 cohort, and concluding with the March 2014 cohort. The research team randomly assigned 60 percent of the sample to the program group and 40 percent to the control group.²⁵

- **The program group.** The 1,638 individuals who were randomly assigned to this group were offered YAIP program services, including a paid internship, job-readiness training, case management, and follow-up services.
- **The control group.** The 1,040 individuals who were randomly assigned to this group were not offered YAIP program services, but were able to access other services that were available in the community, including other non-YAIP services offered at YAIP provider agencies.

By measuring outcomes for both the program and control groups over time, it is possible to assess whether YAIP services led to better outcomes for the program group than what would have happened in the absence of the program, as represented by the control group. Any statistically significant differences that emerge between the two groups will be considered “impacts,” or effects, of YAIP because, owing to the random assignment design, the research groups were comparable on both measured and unmeasured characteristics at the time of study enrollment.

The YAIP evaluation has three components: an implementation study, an impact study, and a benefit-cost study. The implementation study set out to describe the YAIP program, including the YAIP model as it was designed, the participants, the services that were ultimately offered to participants, the “dosage” of services that they received, and the local context and service environment in which the program operated. The implementation study relied on the following data sources:

- **Baseline data.** YAIP staff collected background data on all sample members at the time of study enrollment. These data include information about age, gender, race and ethnicity, educational attainment, employment background, parenting status, living situation, receipt of public assistance, arrest history, and barriers to employment.

²⁵In order to ensure that all open program slots were filled during the evaluation, the research team occasionally shifted the random assignment ratio to allow for a higher proportion of applicants to be assigned to the program group. For this reason, the final proportion of youth assigned to the program group is slightly above 60 percent. To adjust for small variations in random assignment ratios and sample size between providers and cohorts, the team applied proportional weights to the impact analyses. These weights ensure that estimated impacts are not biased by differences across cohorts or providers in the proportion assigned to the program group.

- **Interviews and worksite observations.** The research team visited each YAIP provider to conduct interviews with key program staff, including program coordinators, outreach workers, case managers, and job developers.²⁶ Interviews were also conducted with YAIP management staff from CEO and DYCD. Additionally, each provider arranged for the research team to visit a worksite that was hosting YAIP interns. During these visits, the team interviewed employers and observed the worksite environment and operations.
- **Program participation data.** DYCD provided data from its management information system on young people’s participation in various YAIP program components, including job-readiness training, internship placements, case management services, and follow-up services. These data also include information about the employers that hosted YAIP interns, participants’ subsidized earnings, and participants’ outcomes at the end of their internships and after a nine-month follow-up period.
- **Participant questionnaire data.** A member of the research team administered a short questionnaire to YAIP participants in two of the three study cohorts, visiting each provider during weekly educational workshops after the young people had been in their internship placements for at least one month. These questionnaires captured information about participants’ experiences at their internship placements and their level of satisfaction with those experiences. The research team collected a total of 570 completed questionnaires across all providers for an estimated response rate of 60 to 65 percent.
- **Employer or worksite supervisor questionnaire data.** In an effort to learn more about the views of employers and worksite supervisors who took on YAIP interns, the research team at MDRC administered an online questionnaire to all employers and worksite supervisors based on a list provided by DYCD. This questionnaire covered topics such as reasons for participating in YAIP, how YAIP participants compared with other entry-level workers, quality of support from YAIP providers, and the basis for hiring and termination decisions. The team obtained a total of 145 responses for an estimated response rate of 15 to 20 percent. Given the low response rate, results from this questionnaire cannot be generalized to all internship employers or worksite supervisors and should be interpreted with caution. However, this

²⁶One provider, Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow, operated the YAIP program at two different locations in Brooklyn. The research team visited the Bushwick location, but did not visit the Bedford-Stuyvesant location.

report does touch on some findings from the questionnaire to help give insight into the employer or worksite supervisor perspective on the program.

- **In-depth interviews with YAIP participants.** A member of the research team recruited eight YAIP participants from the second cohort to participate in in-depth interviews. The purpose of the interviews was to gain a deeper understanding of the obstacles disconnected young people face in engaging with school, work, or both; their reasons for participating in YAIP; their experiences with the program; and their progress after exiting the program. After a brief presentation about the in-depth interviews during orientation activities at three different provider agencies, the team member randomly selected eight participants among those who volunteered. The research team selected the three providers from which participants were recruited based on their diversity in geographical location, experience operating YAIP, and organizational context. The research team conducted the interviews in person at three different points in time: once near the beginning of the program, once while internships were in full swing, and once a few months after internship placements for the cohort ended.

As mentioned earlier, the evaluation's impact study allows the research team to assess whether YAIP improved outcomes for disconnected youth. To this end, the research team estimated the program's early impacts on key outcomes by measuring them approximately one year after participants enrolled in the study (unless otherwise specified). Selected based on a review of YAIP background materials and disconnected youth literature, these key outcomes fall into five domains: employment and earnings, education and training, psychosocial outcomes, economic and personal well-being, and criminal involvement. A later report will include longer-term impacts measured at approximately 30 months following study enrollment. The impact study relies on the following data sources:

- **Employment and earnings records.** The research team used data from the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) to measure quarterly earnings. Maintained by the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, the NDNH contains data collected by state workforce agencies for jobs covered by unemployment insurance. These jobs include most formal employment, with the main exception of independent contract employment. Gaps in unemployment insurance coverage for independent contract employment are estimated to be 13 percent or higher.²⁷

²⁷Hotz and Scholz (2002).

- **Survey data.** The survey firm Decision Information Resources fielded two different survey instruments to sample members at two different points in time relative to young people’s enrollment into the study. These surveys are referred to as the 4-month survey and the 12-month survey, in accordance with when the fielding period for each began.

Due to resource limitations, the 4-month survey was fielded only to the second study cohort and was completed by 719 of the 900 sample members in that cohort (443 program group members; 276 control group members), resulting in a response rate of 79.9 percent (80.4 percent of the program group; 79.1 percent of the control group).²⁸ The 4-month survey contained questions about employment, education, and training; mental health and self-esteem; sense of control over one’s life; life challenges; social support and role models; and social networks. Exploratory in nature, the 4-month survey was intended to capture information about the effects of working on young people’s well-being during the time period when most program group members were in their internship placements.

The 12-month survey was fielded to all three study cohorts and was completed by 2,127 of the full study sample of 2,678 (1,327 program group members; 800 control group members), resulting in a response rate of 79.4 percent (81.0 percent for the program group; 76.9 percent of the control group). The 12-month survey contained questions about service receipt; employment, education, and training; household composition, income, and material hardship; health, well-being, and psychosocial outcomes; criminal history; and social support and networks. (See Appendix A for more information about the survey samples and an analysis of the extent to which results may be biased by survey nonresponse for either survey.)

- **Postsecondary school enrollment data.** The research team collected data from the National Student Clearinghouse database, which includes information on enrollments in most two- and four-year postsecondary institutions in the United States.

The third component of the evaluation, the benefit-cost study, will assess how YAIP’s costs compare to its benefits. Findings from the benefit-cost study will be presented in a later report.

²⁸The research team chose the second cohort for the sake of convenience rather than any particular belief in a systematic difference between cohorts.

Roadmap to the Report

The remainder of this report is divided into the following chapters. Chapter 2 describes YAIP's background, sample recruitment and screening practices, and characteristics of the study sample at the time of study enrollment. Chapter 3 explains the program model and assesses its implementation. Chapter 4 presents differences in services received by program group members compared with control group members, as well as early impact findings in five key domains: employment and earnings, education and training, psychosocial outcomes, economic and personal well-being, and criminal involvement. Chapter 5 concludes the report and discusses the next steps in the YAIP evaluation.

Chapter 2

Background, Recruitment, Intake, and Sample Characteristics

The New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) developed the Young Adult Internship Program (YAIP) in order to provide workforce support services to an underserved subset of the city's more job-ready disconnected youth. This chapter describes YAIP's origins, structure, and recruitment and intake processes, as well as the background characteristics of the study sample.

Background

Nearly 180,000 New York City residents between the ages of 16 and 24 are neither working nor in school.¹ The proportion of disconnected youth in the five boroughs of New York City, at 17.2 percent, exceeds the national average of 12.3 percent.² Further, the New York City metropolitan area fares poorly on this measure relative to other large American metropolitan areas, including Boston, the District of Columbia, Chicago, Baltimore, and Los Angeles.³

Disconnection does not affect youth across New York City equally. In certain areas of the Bronx, for example, about a third of young people are disconnected from school and work, in stark contrast with areas of Manhattan, where disconnection characterizes only 3.2 percent of young adults.⁴ In line with national trends, large disparities also appear along racial and ethnic lines: In the New York City metropolitan area, the rates of disconnection among Black and Latino young people are 18.2 and 15.6, respectively, compared with a rate of 8.7 percent among whites.⁵

As discussed in Chapter 1, disconnected youth are particularly vulnerable to long-term economic hardship. In an effort to improve the future prospects of this population, DYCD developed YAIP. The origins of YAIP date back to 2005, when a team of DYCD program directors convened to develop a program that would target the many young people who they believed were underserved by the agency's two major employment programs at the time, the

¹Calculations based on data from Measure of America of the Social Science Research Council (2017).

²Calculations based on data from Measure of America of the Social Science Research Council (2017); Burd-Sharps and Lewis (2017).

³Burd-Sharps and Lewis (2017).

⁴Data2go.nyc (2014).

⁵Burd-Sharps and Lewis (2017).

Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) and the Out-of-School Youth (OSY) Program. SYEP provides young people between the ages of 14 and 24 with paid summer employment for up to six weeks in July and August, while OSY, highlighted in Chapter 1, is a yearlong occupational skills training program for low-income disconnected youth between the ages of 16 and 24. The DYCD program directors reasoned that a substantial subset of disconnected young adults could benefit from an intervention that provided more support than SYEP, but fewer services than OSY.

Borrowing and blending elements from both SYEP and OSY, the DYCD team conceived of a paid internship program that targets the most job-ready individuals among the city's disconnected young adult population. The target population for YAIP is disconnected young people who are not so disadvantaged that they need intensive wraparound services, but disadvantaged enough that they require the help of a program to reengage in school or work in order to improve their future prospects.⁶ Around the same time that DYCD developed YAIP, the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) — charged with the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the city's anti-poverty agenda — was looking to expand workforce engagement opportunities for disconnected youth. CEO agreed to allocate \$7 million to DYCD to make YAIP a reality, and since YAIP's inception, has worked closely with DYCD to administer the program. YAIP was rolled out in 2007 at 15 different community-based organizations selected through a competition and served 900 young adults across the city in its first year of operation. Today, the program operates out of 14 different provider agencies and serves about 1,800 young people each year.⁷

Program Structure

YAIP is a multiphase program that runs three overlapping program cycles each year. The program enrolls participants in cohorts, and thus members of a particular cohort move through the program together. Each YAIP provider is responsible for enrolling and serving a portion of the full cohort, usually about 30 young adults per location. In bringing together a group of disconnected young people looking to make a positive change in their lives, YAIP aims to create a new, prosocial peer network. This social network is also meant to serve as a support group whereby participants can share experiences in their internships and work through challenges together. Moreover, the cohort structure encourages a sense of accountability to the group among participants, resulting in greater investment in each other and in the program. For

⁶While usage of the term “wraparound services” may vary slightly, it is generally meant to indicate an intensive, individualized, holistic approach to service provision.

⁷DYCD was able to expand the number of program slots with additional funding from the New York City Young Men's Initiative.

YAIP staff, the cohort model allows them to get to know participants well because they work intensively with them as a group that progresses through the program concurrently.

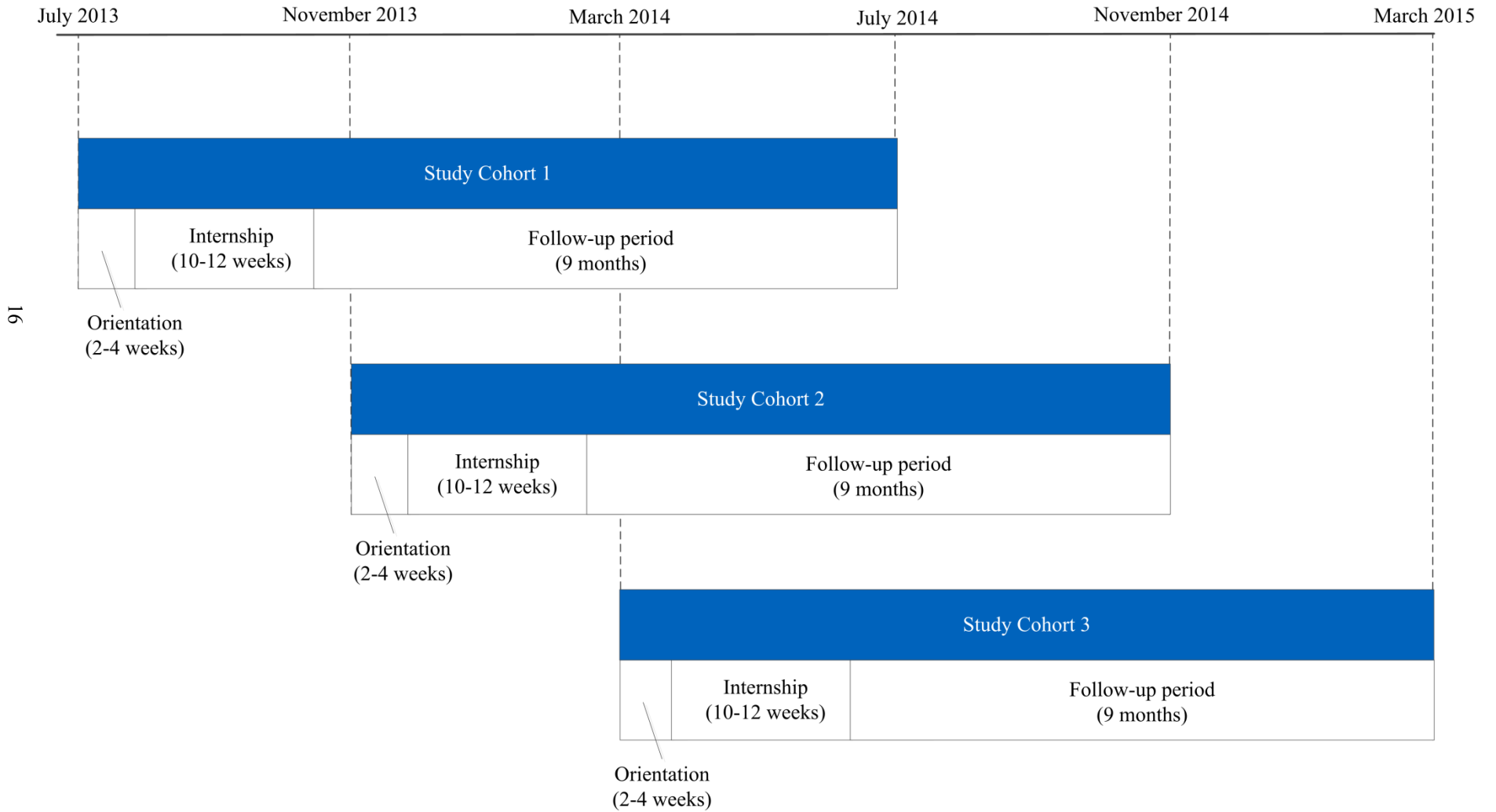
Figure 2.1 depicts the timing and flow of YAIP's overlapping program cycles during the study period. The three phases of each program cycle are summarized below:

- **Phase 1: Orientation.** The first two to four weeks of the program (the exact duration varies by provider) are referred to as the orientation phase, when participants are expected to attend daily workshops facilitated by program staff at provider offices. Participants are paid minimum wage for 25 hours per week during this phase, and workshops are typically five hours per day.⁸ The goals of orientation are to prepare participants for the workplace by providing various job-readiness and personal development activities, to lay a foundation for cohort cohesion using icebreakers and group activities, and to match participants' interests and skills with an available and appropriate internship.
- **Phase 2: Internship.** During the 10 to 12 weeks of this phase, youth are expected to work 20 hours a week in their internship and continue to earn minimum wage. DYCD fully subsidizes their earnings. Internship placements are at a wide variety of worksites, running the gamut from the offices of local politicians to commercial drugstores, social service nonprofit agencies, clothing retail chains, and a local radio station. Regardless of worksite, most young people are assigned tasks that involve clerical work, customer service, or maintenance. The goals of the internship phase vary based on the particular needs of young people, but generally include work experience, development of soft or hard skills, career exploration, and potential transition from a subsidized internship to a permanent, unsubsidized position. Once a week, youth are required to return to the provider offices to attend a five-hour educational workshop, for which they are also paid minimum wage. These workshops cover topics including job readiness, healthy living, money and

⁸The first cohort in the evaluation completed their internships in 2013, when the minimum wage in New York State was \$7.25 per hour. The second cohort's participation straddled 2013 and 2014, when the minimum wage was raised to \$8.00 per hour. The third cohort completed their internships in 2014 and earned the increased minimum wage of \$8.00 throughout their participation in the program. As of the publication of this report, the minimum wage in New York City is \$11 per hour for employers of 11 or more employees and \$10.50 for employers of 10 or fewer employees.

Figure 2.1

YAIP's Overlapping Program Cycles



time management, and conflict resolution. Weekly workshops also help nurture the cohort bonds initiated during Phase 1 and provide youth with an opportunity to speak with their case managers if they need support or guidance.

- **Phase 3: Follow-Up.** This phase covers the nine months following participants' completion of their internship. During this time, providers are expected to help participants secure and maintain an "outcome placement." Outcome placements include participation in unsubsidized employment, education, training, or the military. Staff follow-up efforts largely focus on trying to maintain contact with participants in order to share job leads, help connect them to needed services, and provide other case management and counseling support.

Eligibility

YAIP participants must be New York City residents, 16 to 24 years old, eligible to work in the United States, and neither in school nor working. In an effort to pinpoint the most job-ready disconnected young people, additional eligibility criteria were devised to screen out severely disadvantaged young adults, as well as young adults that do not need program services to improve their employability. Participants must score at least a sixth-grade reading level on the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE), which is administered as part of the application process. They cannot have a postsecondary degree and must observe a semester-long waiting period if they recently graduated from high school or dropped out of high school or college. (In theory, this waiting period gives these young adults time to reengage in school or work on their own.) Additionally, young people cannot have participated in a CEO-funded paid internship program at any point in the past.⁹

- **Among applicants who meet YAIP's formal eligibility criteria, provider staff reported favoring those who demonstrate higher levels of stability and motivation. At the same time, staff seek out young people who face significant disadvantages.**

Beyond the formal eligibility criteria, staff reported targeting certain applicant characteristics to best recruit the more job-ready subset of the disconnected youth population. Ideal applicants, according to most program staff, are motivated and eager to engage with what the program has to offer. Staff described these youth as "future-oriented," "receptive," and "looking for a change in their life." Staff also place a premium on candidates who demonstrate a certain

⁹Specifically, young people were ineligible for YAIP if they previously participated in Justice Community, NYC Justice Corps, Project Rise, or the Work Progress Program.

threshold of stability, particularly in the areas of housing and child care, which allows them to participate fully in the program.

For example, one provider observed that the most successful participants tend to be those who live at home with a parent who is mentally stable and who is working, very supportive, or both. Another provider shared an anecdote about an applicant who was a great fit for YAIP, except that the applicant did not have reliable child care for her three children. Thus, the provider deferred her application. On the other hand, staff are disposed toward young adults who have significant disadvantages. Put differently, they seek out young adults who stand to benefit the most from YAIP. Among this group are first-generation high school graduates and people with limited work experience. Program staff assess these eligibility preferences, as well as the formal eligibility criteria, through an extensive intake process, described later in this chapter.

Recruitment

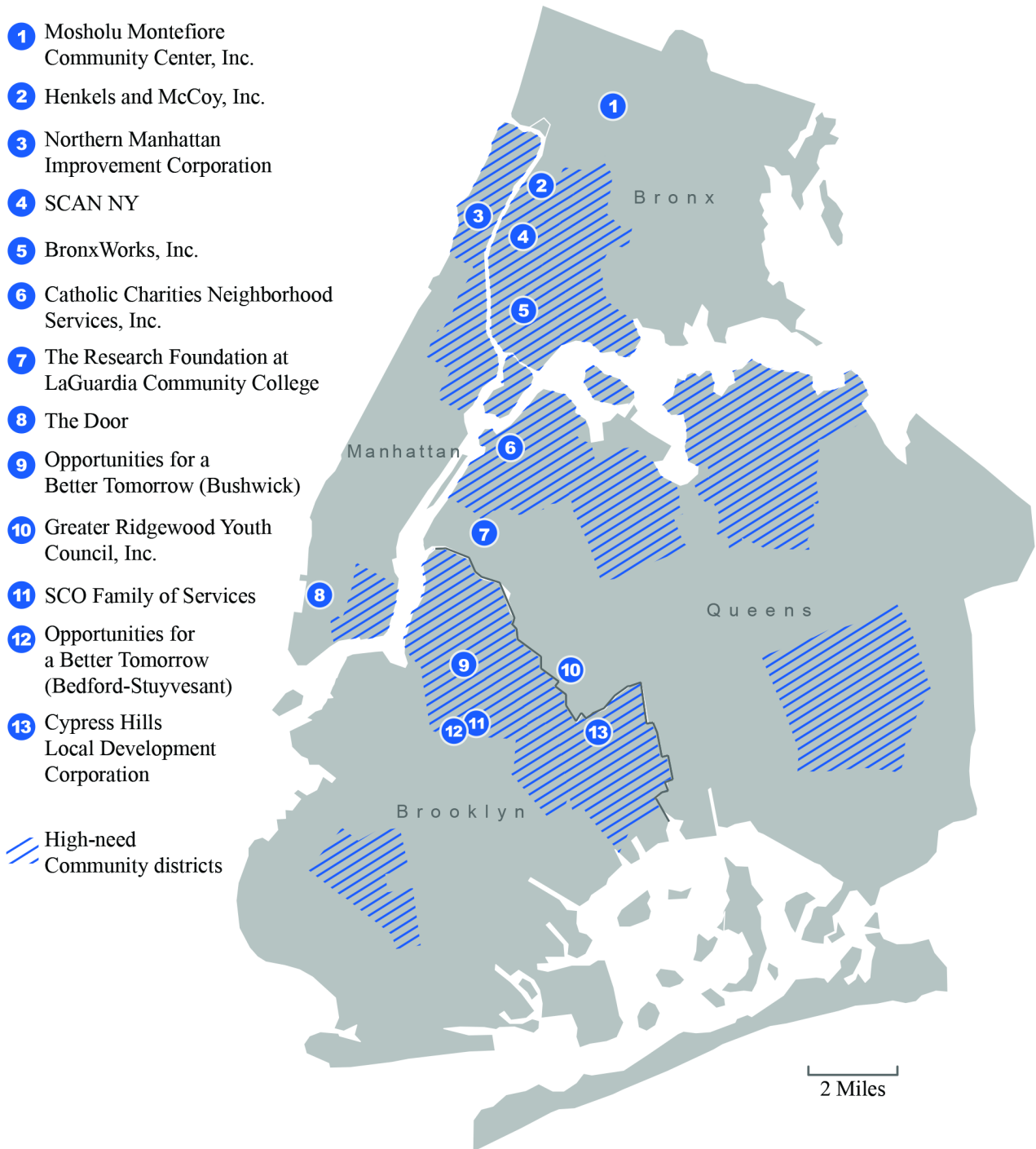
Recruitment for YAIP is ongoing — YAIP and provider agency staff are always on the lookout for future applicants, and they field referrals from individuals familiar with the program year-round. However, the full-force, active recruitment phase reaches its height in the two weeks between program cycles, when staff have more time to focus their efforts. By design, providers collect more completed applications than they have program slots. In this way, providers create a larger pool of applicants from which to choose and a buffer against the inevitable applicant attrition leading up to the program start date and continuing into the orientation phase. Ultimately, each provider enrolls enough applicants to fill a prescribed number of program slots, ranging from about 30 to 45.

Each YAIP provider recruits applicants independently, but they all use similar strategies. Staff post on bulletin boards and internet job search sites, distribute flyers, present on the program at community events, and spread the word via social media. The paid internship is a key selling point in marketing the program to potential participants. Beyond the prospect of earning a wage, applicants are attracted by the particular kinds of internships that the program offers. For example, an internship with a local radio station draws a great deal of interest. Providers also rely heavily on referrals and word of mouth. Indeed, staff reported that their best applicants are those referred to YAIP by past participants, worksite partners, or organizations such as churches or other nonprofits that are already familiar with the program. This familiarity with YAIP also likely results in some pre-screening for applicants' suitability.

YAIP providers are required to enroll at least 80 percent of participants from targeted high-need community districts, characterized by high poverty rates. Figure 2.2 presents a map

Figure 2.2

Location of YAIP Providers in the Evaluation



NOTES: CEO and DYCD identified high-need community districts based on their high rates of poverty and high concentrations of disconnected youth.

of New York City that delineates the high-need community districts. The locations of YAIP provider agencies participating in the evaluation are also marked on the map. During the study enrollment period, DYCD and CEO agreed to relax their expectations around recruiting from high-need community districts. Providers welcomed this change, as many staff members thought that the requirement made recruitment more difficult by limiting the pool of potential applicants to a certain geographic area (as opposed to the entire city) and that it did not necessarily yield candidates with greater needs.

Providers recruit most heavily from within the neighborhood or community districts they serve, but they receive applications from young adults all across the city. One provider located in the relatively isolated Washington Heights neighborhood of Manhattan, for instance, served young people who commuted from Brooklyn to participate in the program. According to staff, some participants may not be able to find the services they need in their own communities, or they intentionally look for opportunities outside of their neighborhoods. Interestingly, staff reported that participants who come from further away are highly motivated to be a part of YAIP and often wind up being the most engaged participants.

- **YAIP’s eligibility criteria and lengthy recruitment and intake processes require a high level of effort from provider staff in order to successfully enroll young people who are appropriate for the program in sufficient numbers. YAIP’s overlapping program cycles pose an additional challenge.**

YAIP providers face a number of recruitment challenges. First, the recruitment and intake process is complex and lengthy. Thus, providers find it challenging to time recruitment such that applicants will not be accepted so far in advance of orientation that they lose interest in or find an alternative to YAIP, while also not beginning recruitment so late that provider staff must struggle to meet recruitment goals. The random assignment process compounded this challenge during the study period, increasing both the complexity and the duration of the recruitment process, as well as increasing recruitment target numbers. Further, YAIP’s eligibility requirements narrowed what appeared, at first glance, to be a large potential applicant pool of disconnected youth: As described earlier, applicants must meet formal eligibility criteria and be deemed good matches for YAIP based on more subjective criteria. Finally, though staffing practices vary slightly across providers, the YAIP program at each location employs a small staff of around five people. YAIP’s overlapping program cycles result in staff members simultaneously operating the program and recruiting for the next cycle, leaving them stretched thin and unable to dedicate as much time to recruitment as they would like. Chapter 3 describes YAIP staffing in more detail.

Intake

All YAIP applicants are required to complete a multistage intake process, which is designed to screen for eligible and appropriate participants. The intake process comprises three main components. First, applicants complete the TABE and a program application, which covers basic demographic information, eligibility, and required documentation. Second, applicants complete the self-assessment form, which asks about their employment and educational history, interests, and service needs. Finally, applicants undergo an intake interview, usually conducted by a case manager or program coordinator. Typically, applicants visit the program offices at least three times to complete the three intake components. As a result, the intake process spans several days and tests applicants' motivation to enroll in the program.

YAIP providers tailor intake procedures in varied and creative ways to help assess program candidates' readiness to engage in program services. Some of the providers hold basic job-readiness workshops in the weeks leading up to enrollment. LaGuardia Community College, for example, runs a few job-readiness workshops before program orientation in which they instruct young people in cover letter writing and administer a career interest survey. These sessions serve the dual purpose of assessing young adults' level of commitment to the program and ensuring all applicants receive at least some help, even if they are not accepted into the program. Other providers, such as BronxWorks, give applicants a checklist of activities, such as obtaining a library card and finding job leads, to complete before enrollment. In line with the cohort model, several providers organize group activities or group interviews to observe how well applicants interact with their peers. In addition to helping staff assess applicants' attitudes and motivations, these activities accelerate familiarity between program staff and the young people, which makes it easier for them to make the transition into the workshop curriculum and internship matching process during the first phase of the program.

After completing the intake activities and just before the start of orientation, applicants officially enroll in YAIP. However, their continued enrollment in the program is contingent upon their demonstrated ability to successfully complete the internship, which is assessed during orientation. For example, program staff may decide to de-enroll an individual for reasons such as poor attendance or because the participant's circumstances change, making it impossible for them to fully engage in the program.¹⁰ Rather than allow program slots to go unfilled, staff replace de-enrolled participants with other eligible applicants from a waiting list. This waiting list is the result of providers' practice of recruiting a larger pool of applicants than there are program slots as a cushion against attrition, as described earlier in this chapter.

¹⁰De-enrolled applicants are not counted in the providers' performance measures, but they remain part of the program group for the purposes of the evaluation.

The Effects of the Evaluation on Recruitment and Enrollment

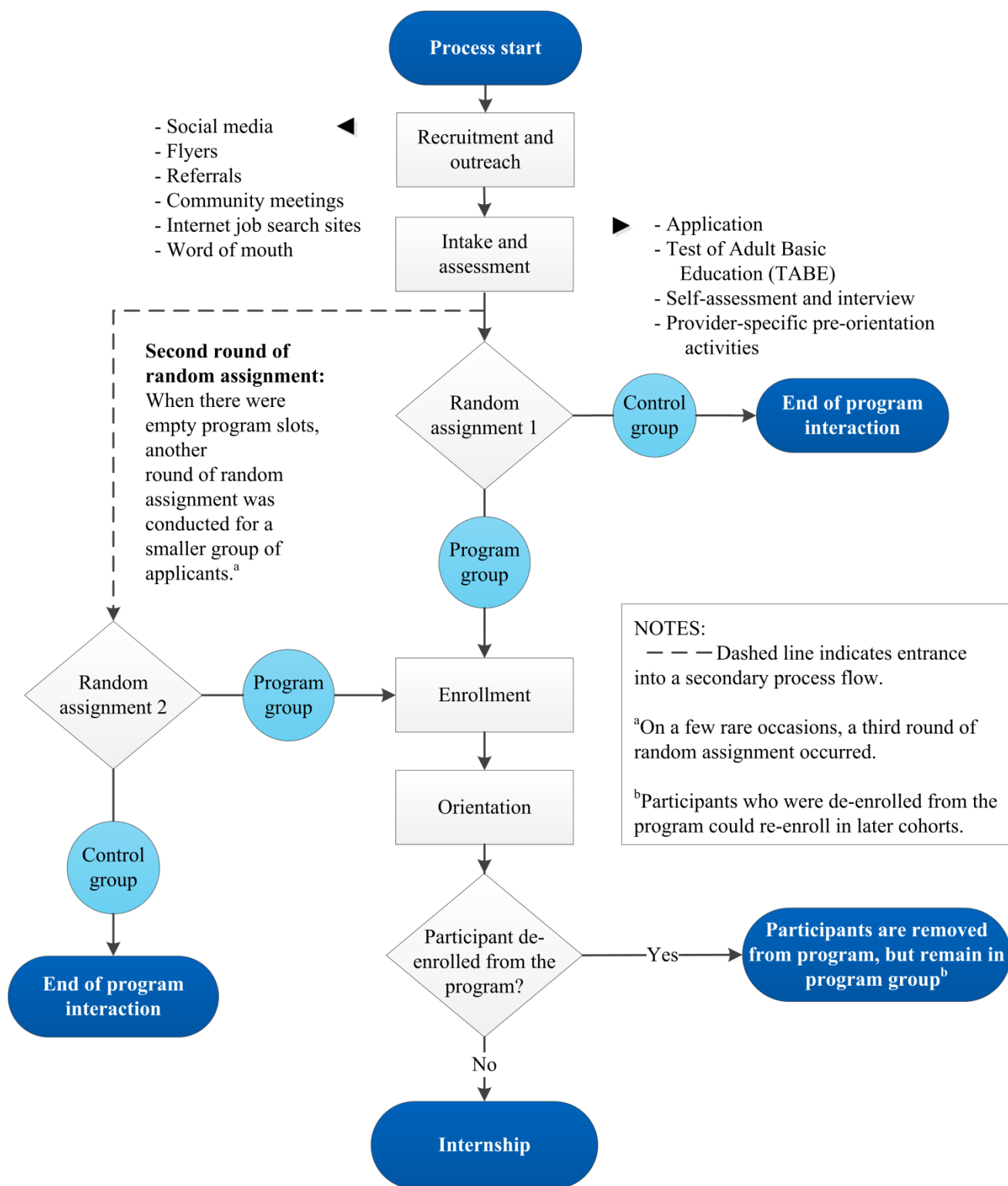
Figure 2.3 illustrates the recruitment, intake, and random assignment processes as they occurred during the evaluation. The evaluation employs a random assignment research design, which places an inevitable burden on programs and their staff. Most notably, YAIP providers were required to recruit nearly twice as many applicants given that only 60 percent of applicants were assigned to the program group. Additionally, providers had to modify their recruitment, intake, and enrollment procedures in order to accommodate the additional applicants required for the study. Conscious of the extra demands that the evaluation placed on providers, CEO awarded each participating YAIP provider up to \$37,000 in additional funds during the study's enrollment period. Most of the providers spent the money on additional staff to support the expanded recruitment and application process. DYCD also furnished providers with extra TABE materials and MetroCards (for use on public transportation) to help them accommodate the larger number of applicants. MDRC offered technical assistance regarding recruitment strategies, which some of the providers accepted.

Providers expanded their traditional catchment areas in an effort to meet their increased target numbers. Most of the YAIP providers were unable to fully implement the extensive screening procedures they typically use to select potential participants. For example, one provider did away with its pre-enrollment checklist of activities, and another provider cut its intake process from five steps to three. Moreover, staff were no longer able to handpick their participants to curate the overall intragroup dynamic, which many staff regard as an important aspect of the program model.

YAIP provider staff, DYCD, and the research team collaborated to schedule random assignment to take place for each cohort shortly before the program start date to give providers enough time to implement their usual screening procedures while ensuring that participants would begin orientation as soon as possible once they were randomly assigned to the program group. The intent was to minimize attrition by screening out less motivated applicants before random assignment and program enrollment and by promptly engaging program group members in program services. In reality, providers experienced greater attrition before (and, to a much lesser extent, during) the orientation period than anticipated. Indeed, most of the providers invited all of the applicants on their waiting list to attend orientation, which in turn required one or sometimes two more rounds of random assignment (as shown in Figure 2.3) to back-fill

Figure 2.3

Recruitment, Assessment, and Enrollment Process for the YAIP Evaluation



program slots.¹¹ As a result, 13 percent of the sample was enrolled into the study after program orientation began, meaning that some program group members missed out on some early program services.

Despite changes to the recruitment and enrollment process to accommodate the study, evidence suggests that the cohorts involved in the study did not differ meaningfully from other YAIP cohorts. An analysis of outcome placement data for all YAIP cohorts served during the program's first eight years of operation found that the outcomes for the cohorts participating in the study did not differ from those for other YAIP cohorts.

Sample Characteristics at the Time of Study Enrollment

This section describes the demographics and background characteristics of the YAIP study sample and compares the sample members with the larger population of disconnected youth in New York City and the United States, as well as Project Rise sample members, in order to situate the YAIP sample within the overall context of youth disconnection. Project Rise, another CEO program for disconnected youth, is described in Chapter 1. Table 2.1 presents selected baseline characteristics of the YAIP study sample, reported by youth at the time they enrolled into the study.¹²

Reflective of the gender makeup of the overall population of disconnected youth in New York City, the sample is divided about evenly between men and women.¹³ The vast majority of sample members are Black, non-Hispanic (58 percent), or Hispanic (36 percent). Over half of the sample is 19 to 21 years old, which is consistent with reports from provider staff that the middle of the eligibility age range of 16 to 24 is most suitable for YAIP and the age group that they prefer to serve.

¹¹During the study enrollment period, providers' waitlists were composed of applicants who had already gone through random assignment and been assigned to the program group. When waitlists were exhausted, additional rounds of random assignment were conducted for other eligible applicants. Those applicants assigned to the program group back-filled remaining empty program slots.

¹²Young people reported baseline data to YAIP providers as part of their standard intake process and providers subsequently shared these data with the research team. Therefore, provider staff did not receive any special training or guidance from the research team about recording these data, nor was data quality regularly monitored. As a result, certain measures may not be entirely reliable. In particular, educational attainment measures showed some inconsistencies.

¹³Treschan and Molnar (2008).

Table 2.1
Characteristics of Sample Members at Baseline

Characteristic	Total
Average age (years)	20.7
Age (%)	
Under 19 years old	14.3
19-21 years old	51.5
22-24 years old	34.1
Male (%)	49.1
Race (%)	
Hispanic	36.2
Black, non-Hispanic	58.1
Other	5.7
Highest degree achieved ^a (%)	
No degree	38.3
GED certificate	7.3
High school diploma	32.7
Some postsecondary education, but no postsecondary degree	21.3
Bachelor's degree or higher	0.4
Does not have high school diploma or GED certificate (%)	38.3
Among those without high school diploma or GED certificate	
Ever enrolled in GED program (%)	39.6
Among those ever in GED program, years since last enrolled	1.5
Years since last in school	2.4
Ever employed (%)	71.7
Among those ever employed, time since last employed (%)	
Six months or less	35.9
Six months to less than 12 months	26.9
One year to less than 2 years	20.4
Two years or more	16.8
Has not worked in a job for three or more months (%)	69.9
Median months since last in school, enrolled in GED program, or working	9.1
Has a child (%)	20.0
Among those with a child, number of children ^b	1.3

(continued)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Characteristic	Total
Living situation (%)	
Living with parents	59.9
Staying with someone else, such as friends or relatives	25.0
Rents or owns home	6.2
Supervised living ^c	2.1
Homeless	2.0
Other living arrangement	4.7
Receives public assistance (%)	26.3
Food stamps (SNAP)	23.2
Family assistance (TANF)	3.4
Disability (SSI)	1.9
Other income ^d	1.7
Ever arrested (%)	26.0
Has any of the following barriers to employment (%)	42.3
Limited literacy or math skills	13.0
Ever runaway, homeless, or living in temporary or emergency housing	5.9
Pregnant or has child	21.6
Has a mental or physical disability	4.3
Ever convicted of a crime	8.2
Sample size	2,678

SOURCES: MDRC calculations based on data from MDRC's random assignment system and the YAIP management information system.

NOTES: GED = General Educational Development.

TANF = Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

SSI = Supplemental Security Income.

^aStudents who obtained a high school certificate of completion but not a high school diploma or GED certificate are shown as having no degree.

^bThe largest entry permitted for number of children was "three or more." For the purpose of calculating the mean number of children among parents in the study sample, those who fell in this category were counted as having three children. Thus, the figure presented may slightly understate the actual mean.

^cSupervised housing refers to a range of living situations that are closely monitored by a public or private agency. Examples include supervised independent living, emergency housing, work-release facilities, and halfway houses.

^dOther public assistance income sources include safety net assistance, unemployment compensation, and other unspecified sources of income.

- **Young people in the study sample compare favorably to the overall population of disconnected youth in New York City on various socioeconomic indicators, suggesting that providers successfully targeted the city’s more job-ready subset of disconnected youth.**

Sixty-two percent of the YAIP study sample had earned at least a high school diploma or equivalency certificate, compared with only half of the overall population of disconnected youth in New York City.¹⁴ This somewhat higher percentage is consistent with the program’s goal of serving the most job-ready subset of the disconnected youth population. Similarly, a sizable portion of the sample (21 percent) had some college experience. Among the 38 percent of young people in the sample without a high school diploma or equivalency certificate, the average length of time since they were last in school was 2.4 years. Forty percent of them had enrolled in a GED program at some point before joining YAIP.

Nearly three-fourths of the sample had previous work experience (compared with 65 percent of the Project Rise study sample),¹⁵ but about two-thirds of this group had not been employed in over six months and nearly all had not worked in any job for three months or longer. The median length of disconnection — that is, not in school, not enrolled in a high school equivalency program, and not employed — among young people in the study sample was nine months.

As mentioned previously, YAIP staff consider applicants with a certain degree of stability in their lives, particularly in the areas of housing and child care, to be most appropriate for the program. Even though housing is a significant challenge among the broader population of disconnected youth — and perhaps particularly so in New York City, with its unforgiving housing market — only about 4 percent of the YAIP sample reported experiencing unstable housing at intake, reflected in the percentages in a supervised living situation or homeless. Most sample members lived with their parents (60 percent), while one-fourth reported staying with friends or other relatives. Similarly, the proportion of the sample that has children (20 percent) is smaller than in other studies of disconnected youth (figures range from 28 to 34 percent).¹⁶

Over one-fourth of the sample received some form of public assistance, most commonly from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, or formerly food stamps). As noted above, the majority of the sample was living with their parents or in someone else’s home when they enrolled in the study. For these participants, it is unclear whether reports of public assistance receipt were based on the household in which they were living or on their own

¹⁴Treschan and Molnar (2008).

¹⁵Manno, Yang, and Bangser (2015).

¹⁶Manno, Yang, and Bangser (2015); Burds-Sharp and Lewis (2017).

personal receipt of public assistance. Moreover, those who answered based on their household may not have been fully aware of the receipt of public assistance. These caveats aside, the rate of public assistance receipt among members of the YAIP study sample is relatively low compared with that among members of the Project Rise study sample. Less than 4 percent of the YAIP sample was receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families at the time of enrollment, compared with 15 percent of the Project Rise sample. SNAP receipt was also much more prevalent among the Project Rise sample (58 percent) compared with the YAIP sample (23 percent).¹⁷ These sample differences are expected given YAIP's goal of serving a less disadvantaged group of young people than those served by Project Rise.

Beyond their limited education and employment history, over 40 percent of sample members faced at least one other significant barrier to employment, such as pregnancy or parenting responsibilities (22 percent), limited literacy or math skills (13 percent), or a mental or physical disability (4 percent). Approximately one in four sample members had been arrested and 8 percent had been convicted of a crime. Again, these figures suggest that YAIP sample members, on average, encounter fewer barriers to employment than other populations of disconnected youth. For example, in the Project Rise study, almost half of the sample had a history of arrest,¹⁸ and in a nationwide sample of disconnected youth, 15 percent had a disability.¹⁹

Conclusion

CEO and DYCD created YAIP to fill a gap in services for the most job-ready disconnected youth in New York City. The program's designers carefully and intentionally crafted the program's eligibility criteria to target young adults who need a limited amount of programmatic support to reconnect with school or work. YAIP providers understand this goal and strive to be equally careful and intentional in selecting participants they believe stand to benefit most from the program.

Recruiting and enrolling young adults who are eligible and appropriate for YAIP pose significant challenges for provider staff, in part because of the program's long application process, and in part because of the program's overlapping cycles. The short period (about two weeks) between the conclusion of one cohort's internship period and the start of orientation for the next cohort requires YAIP staff to take an "all hands on deck" approach to the lengthy and involved application process. They must also recruit continuously because applicants have

¹⁷Manno, Yang, and Bangser (2015).

¹⁸Manno, Yang, and Bangser (2015).

¹⁹Burds-Sharp and Lewis (2017).

competing priorities and interests that prevent them from committing to the program. In the final days before orientation, many providers must scramble to determine whether they have the requisite number of finalized applications to fill their program slots.

The study somewhat altered the providers' screening procedures. Most providers had to condense their process in order to obtain the minimum number of candidates, and random assignment meant that staff lost their ability to curate a cohort's composition. Nevertheless, the characteristics of the study sample suggest that YAIP continued to serve its intended target population. Compared with the local and national populations of disconnected youth, as well as Project Rise sample members, YAIP sample members were more advantageously positioned on various socioeconomic indicators. They were more likely to have a high school credential and previous work experience and less likely to be raising children of their own, and very few were in unstable housing situations at the time of their enrollment into the study. Nevertheless, YAIP study sample members still faced significant challenges.

Chapter 3

The YAIP Model and Its Implementation

The Young Adult Internship Program (YAIP) provides disconnected young adults in New York City between the ages of 16 and 24 with a paid internship, educational workshops, and case management services. The goal of the program is to provide job-ready disconnected youth with supports that will lead to long-term reengagement in productive activities, such as employment, school, and training. Based on interviews with provider staff, management staff, and participants; questionnaires administered to provider staff, participants, and worksite staff; participation data from DYCD's management information system; and worksite observations by the research team, this chapter describes how provider staff implemented the program during the YAIP study period.

Program Structure and Staffing

The evaluation includes 12 YAIP providers that delivered the program in 13 locations across the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens.¹ The providers in the evaluation bring a diverse set of strengths to the program, stemming, at least in part, from the type of agency that houses YAIP and the way it staffs the program. Table 3.1 offers a basic description of these 12 providers.² Several of the provider agencies focus solely on serving young adults (for example, Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow and The Door), but more often YAIP providers are community-based organizations that offer a range of services to all members of the community, with YAIP housed in their workforce development divisions.

- **DYCD gives providers leeway in how they configure staffing for YAIP; as a result, each provider staffs the program somewhat differently.**

Each provider agency is required to fulfill the following six capacities for YAIP: recruitment, worksite development, case management, retention services, educational services, and data entry. Providers vary in how they distribute these responsibilities. For example, certain providers employ a dedicated job developer to manage worksite partnerships or a dedicated

¹One YAIP provider, Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow, operates the program in two locations and will be considered one entity when agency-level differences are paramount (for example, in discussions about provider resources) and separate entities when location-based differences take precedence (for example, in discussions about participant demographics).

²Much of the information included in this table was self-reported by provider organizations on their respective websites.

**Table 3.1
YAIP Provider Information**

Provider Name	Provider Description	Services and Programs Offered	Target Group	Size
BronxWorks, Inc.	Multiservice, nonprofit organization that supports families and individuals in the Bronx by aiming to improve their economic and social well-being	Benefit assistance, children and youth programs, immigration services, homeless services, eviction prevention, services for seniors, aid for people with chronic illnesses, and workforce development	Individuals and families of all ages with broad needs	40,000 Bronx residents served in 2015
Catholic Charities Neighborhood Services, Inc.	Faith-based organization that seeks to provide social services to struggling New Yorkers	Services for children, families, and older adults; behavioral health, developmental disability, and housing services	Children, youth, adults, seniors, individuals with developmental disabilities, individuals with mental illness, and the isolated	110,000 individuals in Brooklyn and Queens served in 2013
Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation	Nonprofit development organization helping the local residents of Cypress Hills, Brooklyn, achieve educational and economic success	Career services, professional training, adult education classes, housing and homeownership services, family and youth recreational services, after-school programs, summer camps	Residents of all ages, with many programs for youth	9,000 residents of Cypress Hills in 2015
The Door	Organization that provides comprehensive youth development services in order to empower NYC youth to reach their full potential	Crisis and mental health counseling, health services, legal assistance, high school equivalency (HSE) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, tutoring, career development services, recreational activities, nutritious meals	Disconnected youth	10,000 young people per year

(continued)

Table 3.1 (continued)

Provider Name	Provider Description	Services and Programs Offered	Target Group	Size
Greater Ridge-wood Youth Council, Inc.	Nonprofit organization that seeks to improve the quality of life for youth and their families in Queens by providing educational, recreational, cultural, and employment programs	After-school programs, summer youth employment, adult literacy classes	Neighborhood youth and their families	6,000 children and families per year
Henkels and McCoy, Inc.	National construction company that offers training services	Summer youth programs, technology and hands-on training	School-aged children and high school-aged youth	420 youth per year
Mosholu Montefiore Community Center, Inc.	Community center that aspires to support, educate, and enrich the lives of community members through education and recreational programs and services in the Bronx and Manhattan	Day care, camp, sports, teen programs, case assistance, College Bound program (free college trips, SAT preparation, college counseling)	Preschoolers, school-aged children, teens, adults, and senior citizens	35,000 Bronx and Manhattan residents per year
Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation	Community-based nonprofit that aspires to stabilize the community and help residents build a better life	Legal counseling, community organizing, adult education and workforce development, health education, domestic violence intervention, benefit assistance	Residents of the Upper Manhattan neighborhoods of Inwood and Washington Heights	12,000 residents per year
Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow	Organization that seeks to help individuals achieve self-sufficiency and financial security	Job training, academic reinforcement, HSE/General Educational Development (GED) and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, job placement and support services	Disadvantaged youth and adults	Over 900 youth and 3,000 adults served in 2015

(continued)

Table 3.1 (continued)

Provider Name	Provider Description	Services and Programs Offered	Target Group	Size
The Research Foundation at LaGuardia Community College	College serves the community by providing education in a variety of fields	Academic courses, HSE and ESL classes, various certificate and licensing programs, fatherhood program, and free job training	Young adults and adults	Approximately 45,000 enrolled in Fall 2015
SCAN NY	Nonprofit youth and family service provider in East Harlem and the South Bronx that aims to empower at-risk youth by focusing on inspiring kids to achieve positive goals	Early childhood education, substance abuse treatment, violence prevention, mental health services, academic and college test preparation, after-school activities and events, employment skills training, and résumé building.	High-risk youth and their families	7,000 children or teens and 1,000 adults each year
SCO Family of Services	Community-based human services organization in New York City and Long Island that seeks to support personal well-being and give everyone the opportunity to succeed	Early childhood education; home visits; mother-child residences; youth after-school, summer, and school day enrichment programs; counseling for LGBTQ and homeless youth, residential programs for individuals with special needs	Homeless families, struggling teenagers, at-risk individuals, disabled adults, young women, mothers, and children	60,000 New York children, youth, adults, and families each year

SOURCES: Provider websites and MDRC interviews with provider staff.

NOTE: The range and quality of resources provided to YAIP participants varied by provider and was not necessarily related to the size of the provider or the number of in-house services and programs they offered.

workshop facilitator to run the educational workshops. More commonly, YAIP employees wear many different hats, with everyone playing some role in all six areas. On average, each YAIP provider employs about five full-time staff. As shown in Figure 3.1, the YAIP line staff at each provider agency report to a YAIP program coordinator. The YAIP program coordinator is a full-time, YAIP grant-funded employee who handles the site's day-to-day management and implementation of YAIP. The program coordinator, in turn, reports to the provider agency's director of workforce programs (or someone in a similar role). Each provider operates under the supervision of one of three DYCD program managers who monitor contract compliance and support the providers in achieving the program's goals. The program managers report to the YAIP director, a DYCD employee who works closely with CEO to oversee the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the program.

YAIP providers operate their programs independently of one another. However, DYCD encourages providers to view themselves as part of the larger YAIP program and brings them all together for bimonthly meetings. Nevertheless, collaboration among providers was minimal and comparisons among them can invite competition. Some program coordinators thrive on this competition; others wish for a greater exchange of knowledge and resources.

- **DYCD's performance expectations, YAIP's structure, and the challenges associated with serving disconnected youth leave staff vulnerable to burnout. Provider staff reported that frequent turnover poses a challenge to the successful implementation of YAIP.**

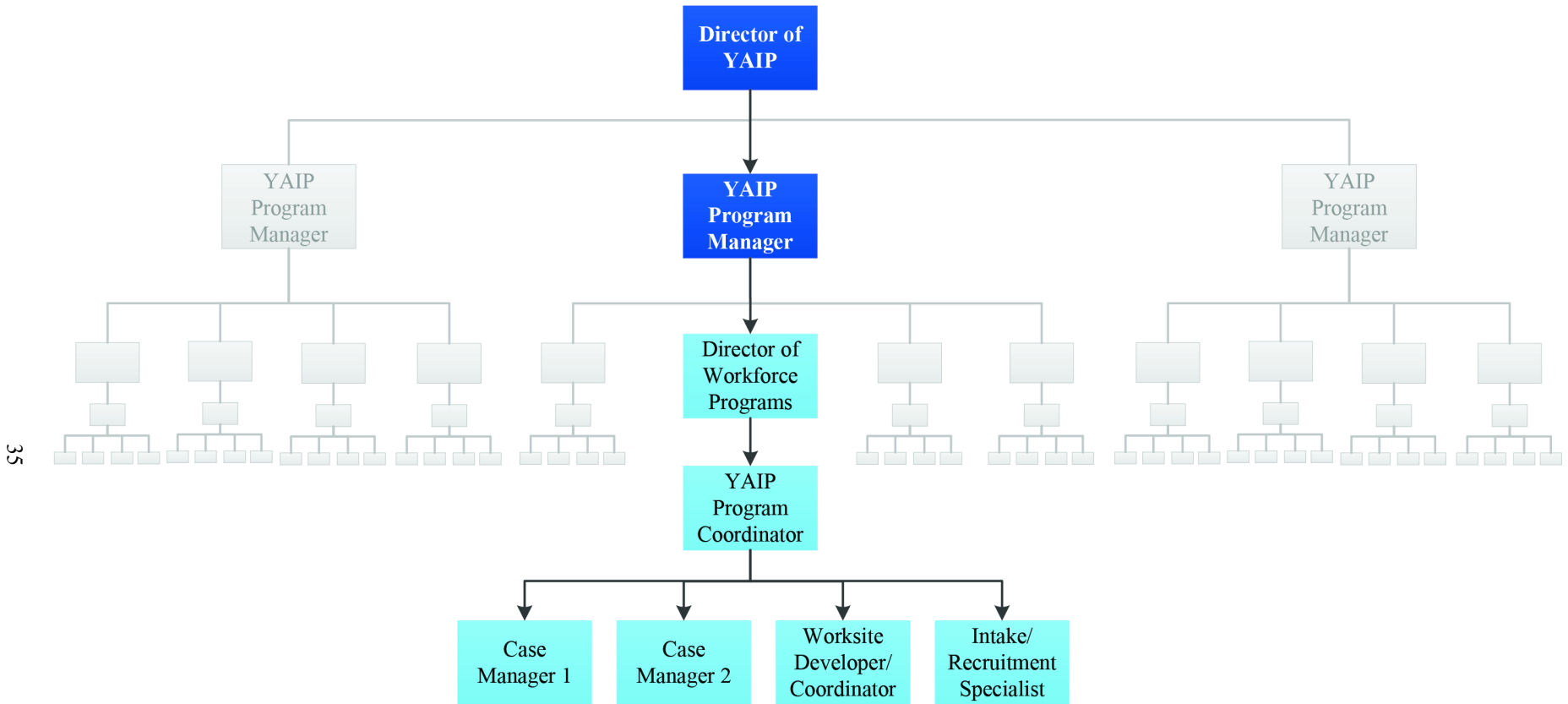
DYCD established explicit performance expectations that govern its monitoring and providers' implementation of YAIP. DYCD used contracts from another of its youth programs, the Out-of-School-Youth Program (OSY), as a model for YAIP's performance standards, adapting them to YAIP's target population, which is considered more advantaged than that of OSY. Providers that exhibit poor performance on these measures risk the termination of their contracts and put their Vendor Information Exchange System (VENDEX) rating in jeopardy.³

The first YAIP performance goal is to place 100 percent of participants who complete orientation (Phase 1) into an internship. Those who are selected for the program without being de-enrolled during the orientation phase — whether because they found employment, had poor attendance, or for some other reason — are thereafter considered “enrolled” YAIP participants.

³VENDEX is a computerized data system that the New York City government uses to assess a provider's business integrity and capacity to fully perform contract requirements, among other considerations, to justify the award of public tax dollars.


Figure 3.1


YAIP Management and Typical Staffing Structure



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NOTES:

 Blue boxes represent DYCD staff.

 Aqua boxes represent provider staff.

The organizational structure depicted by the blue and aqua boxes represents 1 of the 12 provider agencies. (Note that 1 of these agencies delivers the program in 2 separate locations, resulting in a total of 13 locations.) The configuration of line staff — or the bottom rung of the chart — varies by provider agency, and this chart presents an example of a typical configuration. DYCD requires each provider to fill the following capacities: recruitment, worksite development, case management, retention services, educational services, and data entry. On average, these roles are filled mainly by five full-time staff members (including the Program Coordinator), as shown in the bottom two rungs of the organizational chart.

The second major goal is for at least 75 percent of enrolled participants to complete the internship (Phase 2). Internship completion is defined as 245 hours of participation in the program. The third performance metric is for at least 70 percent of enrolled participants to be engaged in one of four DYCD-approved outcomes after the internship ends: advanced training (a home health aide or security guard certification program, for example), unsubsidized employment, education, or the military. The final performance expectation is for at least 60 percent of enrolled participants to be engaged in a DYCD-approved outcome by the end of the follow-up period (Phase 3), which is nine months after the internship ends.

DYCD's deadlines, policies, and reporting requirements call for staff who are both detail oriented and skilled multitaskers. YAIP staff must also be able to develop strong relationships with participants *and* excel at program administration. Recruiting staff who meet all of these criteria is a significant challenge. Additionally, many YAIP staff members reported feeling frustrated by the rigidity of the performance measures. For example, they thought that DYCD should recognize providers for engaging participants in more than one placement at the same time, such as a participant who enrolls in school while working in an unsubsidized job. Under the current system, DYCD counts such dual placements only once toward some program performance measures.⁴ Moreover, provider staff felt that the CEO and DYCD policy of only counting the placements of participants who complete their internships toward performance measures rewards internship completion at the cost of other positive outcomes. DYCD established this policy to help ensure that YAIP participants receive the maximum benefit from the program and to prevent YAIP providers from prioritizing job placement at the expense of YAIP's other program objectives. However, it leaves staff with a difficult choice: If, for example, a participant is offered a job before completing the internship, staff must either advise the participant to take the job, which may be in the best interest of the participant, or advise the participant to complete the internship, which would allow the provider to receive credit for the placement.⁵

YAIP staff are pulled in many directions at once and must divide their time and attention across three different cohorts in different stages of the program. With only two weeks between the conclusion of one cohort's internship phase and the start of the next cohort's orientation phase, staff have very little time to reflect on the past cohort and make adjustments for the next. Managers and line staff agree that working for YAIP is not a nine-to-five office

⁴For example, if a participant attends classes at a community college and works part time in an unsubsidized position, the individual is counted in both the education and employment placement categories. However, for the purposes of calculating performance metrics indicating the percentage of participants in a placement, the individual is counted only once.

⁵In response to these concerns, CEO and DYCD have revised this policy: the program now reviews early placements regardless of internship completion.

job; staff work on weekends and evenings, meeting with participants in their homes and supporting them in times of crisis. According to many staff members, working at YAIP is akin to being part of a family, which illustrates the high level of personal commitment that characterize YAIP staff. Even though YAIP targets the most job-ready disconnected youth, many staff members believe that YAIP participants need more support than the program model affords. One suggestion that came up in staff interviews is to extend the internship phase and run two program cycles per year instead of three. This change would give more time to both participants to develop soft and technical skills and staff to reassess and improve upon past performance between cohorts.

Implementation of Core Program Components

This section describes the implementation of the core program components in greater detail. The research team collected data on YAIP's implementation from each individual provider agency, but, because providers delivered the program very similarly, the analysis presented in this section examines the program as a whole. However, some provider-specific examples are included for illustrative purposes.

- **Overall, the implementation of YAIP aligns closely with the program model and is consistent across providers.**

Orientation

Daily group orientation sessions facilitated by staff at their program offices occupied the first two to four weeks of each YAIP cycle. The program pays participants the minimum wage for five hours per day, five days per week during this phase. The overarching goals of orientation are to prepare participants to succeed in the workplace, lay a foundation for cohort cohesion, and match participants to a worksite. The Young Adult Career Development Curriculum, developed for DYCD and CEO by the Workforce Professionals Training Institute, serves as the blueprint for orientation as well as the subsequent weekly educational workshops.⁶ The curriculum addresses the first two orientation goals of work readiness and cohort building. Each module begins with an icebreaker or teambuilding exercise, which accelerates cohort cohesion and allows staff to learn more about their participants, including how they interact with each other. See Box 3.1 for a complete list of the modules included in this curriculum.

⁶Workforce Professionals Training Institute is a nonprofit training and technical assistance organization devoted to strengthening the field of workforce development.

Box 3.1

Young Adult Career Development Curriculum Modules

Program introduction: program overview, norm setting, motivation to attend

Personal assessment: personality assessments and goal setting

Career planning: potential occupations and career pathways

Understanding employers: traits desired and avoided by employers

Applications and résumés: writing effective resumes and cover letters

Interviewing: interview skills and mock interviews

Finding job openings: online job search and networking techniques

Staying motivated for the job search: organizational and motivational tools for the job search

Success in the workplace: conflict resolution and workplace behavioral expectations

Time management: time management scenarios and techniques

Professional communication skills: phone and e-mail etiquette, public speaking, and customer service

“Moving On Up”: leveraging supervisory and constructive feedback, identifying advancement opportunities, entrepreneurship

Healthy living: nutrition, exercise, drugs, and sexual health

Financial literacy: budgeting, bank accounts, credit cards, and financial aid for college

Create a company competition: participants work in teams to identify, develop, and propose a business opportunity

Providers are required to cover all of the topics in the Young Adult Career Development Curriculum, but do not have to adhere to the curriculum exactly. DYCD and CEO encourage providers to treat the curriculum as a template from which to build lesson plans.

- **The degree to which each provider customized the Young Adult Career Development Curriculum varied, but all providers covered the core topics during either orientation or the weekly educational workshops.**

Several providers reported that parts of the curriculum were too childish, too “corny,” or addressed certain topics prematurely for their participants, so they modified the curriculum accordingly. One common source of variation among providers is the guest speakers they invite to their workshops. These speakers may include employers, former participants, health educators, and college representatives, among others. Providers also vary in terms of when they deliver the curriculum. For example, Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow covers the majority of the curriculum during orientation and implements its own curriculum for subsequent workshops. The Door, on the other hand, developed its own curriculum for orientation that focuses on fostering cohort cohesion and making sure participants feel safe and supported. They encourage youth to “come out of their shells” and “take pride in who they are.” For instance, participants are asked to stand up and share 15 things about themselves, such as their favorite color and middle names, with the goal of making youth more comfortable speaking about themselves, something they will likely have to do during job interviews.

The third overarching goal of orientation is to match participants with internship placements. The extensive assessment process leading up to enrollment gives staff a solid head start on this task, but orientation provides them with an opportunity to get to know participants better and to observe their conduct. According to staff, orientation is important because it offers a preview of how participants will behave at their worksites. Additionally, staff noted that participants may comport themselves differently once they have already been accepted into the program and thus feel less pressure to impress staff, or issues such as family obligations or behavior problems that were not apparent during intake may present themselves. Staff consider participants’ conduct during orientation as they match them with appropriate internship placements.

Based on participation data from YAIP’s management information system, 19 percent of program group members did not return to the program after random assignment (evidenced by the 81 percent who attended orientation). (See Table 3.2.) Another 2 percent failed to complete orientation and therefore did not continue on to the internship phase, while an additional 3 percent completed orientation but exited the program before beginning their internship, leaving a total of 77 percent of YAIP program group members who ever worked in an internship.⁷ Whether the remaining 23 percent of the program group faced significant barriers to employment that interfered with their ability to participate, found jobs on their own, or did not participate because of some other scenario, these attrition figures suggest that YAIP’s extensive

⁷Based on the very low level of drop-off between orientation completion and internship placement, YAIP providers came quite close to meeting the first DYCD performance goal of placing 100 percent of orientation completers in an internship.

Table 3.2
One-Year Participation in YAIP Subsidized Internships and Services
Among Program Group Members

Measure	Program Group
Attended orientation (%)	81.3
Completed orientation (%)	79.2
Worked in a subsidized internship (%)	76.6
Completed a subsidized internship (%)	65.5
<hr/>	
Sample size	1,638
<hr/>	
<u>Among those who worked in a subsidized internship</u>	
Completed internship (%)	85.6
Hired into unsubsidized position by internship employer (%)	16.4
Engaged in outcome placement at end of internship ^a (%)	51.4
Unsubsidized employment	39.6
Education	10.1
Training	3.0
Military service	0.0
Received case management services during nine-month follow-up period ^b (%)	85.8
Average number of contacts during nine-month follow-up period ^b	5.2
Average number of in-person meetings ^b	1.4
Average number of other contacts ^b	3.8
Engaged in outcome placement at end of nine-month follow-up period ^a (%)	48.5
Unsubsidized employment	38.8
Education	9.2
Training	1.9
Military service	0.2
Engaged in outcome placement at end of internship and end of nine-month follow-up period (%)	36.5
Hired by internship employer and engaged in unsubsidized employment at end of nine-month follow-up period (%)	13.2
<hr/>	
Sample size	1,254
<hr/>	

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using data from the YAIP management information system.

NOTES: ^aParticipants may have been engaged in more than one placement type; therefore, the percent of those engaged in each placement type may sum to more than 100 percent.

^bContacts were determined based on a search, using statistical software, of words included in the case notes written by YAIP case managers. As a result, these figures should be considered estimates.

pre-orientation assessment process — parts of which were modified to meet the requirements of the study — does not completely screen out young adults who are not appropriate for the program.

Still, YAIP’s overall participation rate was comparable to similar programs that serve disconnected young people, and retention throughout the duration of the program was higher. Like YAIP, Project Rise engaged disconnected young people in an education-focused, multi-week pre-internship phase, followed by a paid internship. Although 91 percent of enrolled program group members began the pre-internship phase (compared with 81 percent of the YAIP program group), only 68 percent of enrollees began internships (compared with 77 percent for YAIP). Similarly, in DYCD’s Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) — a paid summer internship program for New York City youth — just 67 percent of first-time applicants selected for the program in a lottery ever worked in an internship, which is 10 percentage points lower than YAIP’s internship participation rate.⁸ While neither of these programs aligns perfectly with YAIP, these figures indicate that YAIP’s retention rate after the start of the program compares favorably with other interventions targeting disconnected youth, though its initial participation rate during the evaluation was slightly lower.

An additional advantage of beginning the internship selection and placement process during orientation is that it complements the “world of work” skills taught in the Young Adult Career Development Curriculum. As participants learn about different careers and how to job search, YAIP providers present them with a diverse list of worksites from which to choose.⁹ Likewise, participants can put their newly developed interviewing skills to use when they interview for their internships, though some worksites do not require an interview and accept whomever the program refers.

- **The process of matching YAIP participants to internships involves much discussion and collaboration between provider staff, participants, and worksites to ensure the right fit based on participants’ strengths, interests, and goals, as well as the worksites’ environment, culture, and needs.**

The internship matching process is collaborative, with YAIP provider staff and participants meeting one-on-one to discuss the participant’s strengths, interests, and goals. Staff consider all of these dimensions, as well as participants’ personalities and the environment and

⁸The SYEP evaluation analyzed data from years 2006 to 2010, and the participation rate was calculated among the young people selected in the lottery in the first year they applied to the program. See Valentine, Anderson, Hossain, and Unterman (2017) for additional information.

⁹Different YAIP providers rarely share the same worksites: 92 percent of worksites are unique to each provider.

culture at a worksite, during the matching process. Most providers also administer some sort of personality assessment tool, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, and a professional assessment tool, such as CareerZone, to help facilitate conversations with participants.¹⁰ In addition to one-on-one conversations with participants, staff confer with one other and with the worksites to ensure the right fit.

Some providers invite worksite representatives to orientation to give them an opportunity to meet with all of the participants and to give participants a chance to learn more about the internships offered. Some providers supply participants with a list of worksites (for example, one site provided participants with a list of 13 worksites from which to choose, each with one to five internship slots) and a brief description of the internships available and ask the participants to rank their first few choices. Overall, provider staff reported trying to accommodate participants' preferences and usually being able to do so.

Internship

At the heart of YAIP is the paid internship, which promotes the program goals in direct ways, such as providing participants with employment and income, and in indirect ways, such as exposing participants to novel workplace experiences. The internship serves as a sort of dress rehearsal in which participants can practice the skills taught during orientation and subsequent educational workshops. Since the internship experience is subsidized (DYCD pays the participants' wages and employers do not have to commit to hiring participants), the environment allows participants some room to make and learn from workplace mistakes. Furthermore, internships expose participants to a job category, work environment, industry, and so on, giving them firsthand experience that helps them determine what career path they may want to pursue in the future. One provider shared an anecdote about a participant who said he enjoyed cooking and was therefore placed in an internship in which he could earn a food handlers certificate. However, he also worked maintenance during his internship and ultimately decided that he wanted to pursue a career in building maintenance instead of food service. At the very least, all internships provide participants with recent work history to bolster their résumés.

Several overarching worksite characteristics factor into providers' worksite development efforts. On the whole, providers tend to value worksites that demonstrate one or more of the following characteristics:

- ***Commitment to developing participants.*** This commitment refers mainly to worksite supervisors who understand that YAIP participants have a lot to

¹⁰CareerZone is a website maintained by the New York State Department of Labor whose purpose is to help people explore different career paths.

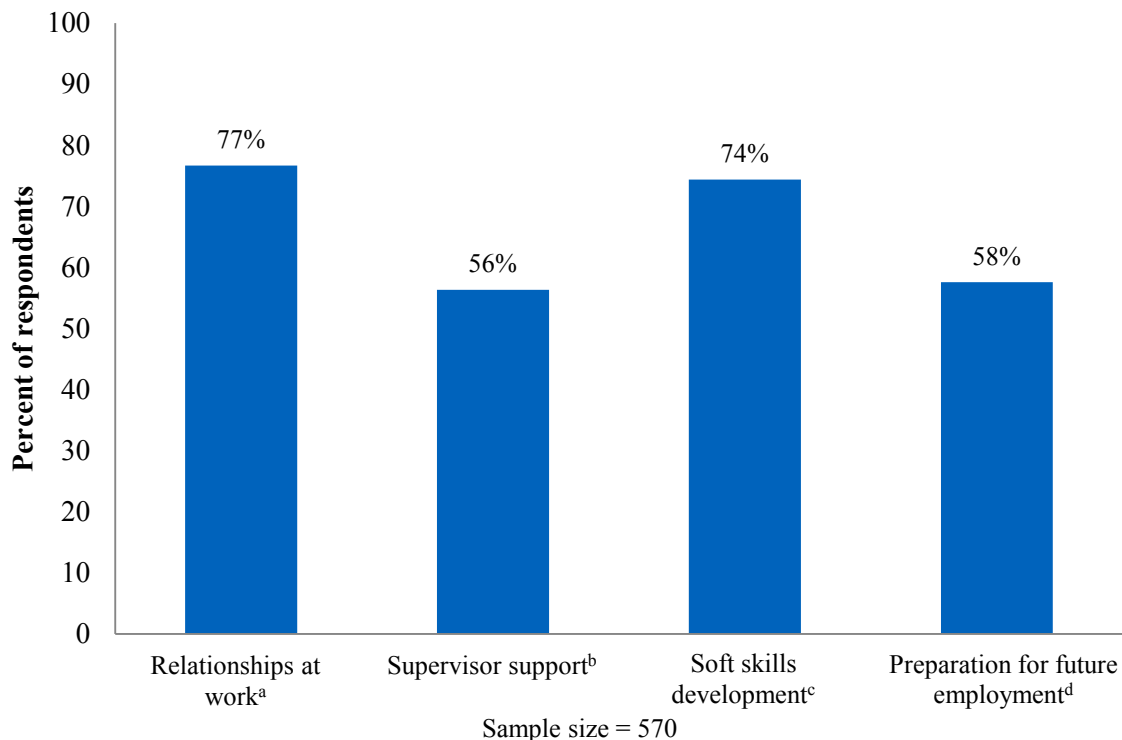
learn and are willing to take the time to guide them. Despite provider staff stressing the importance of hands-on supervision, just over half of YAIP participants who completed a participant questionnaire agreed strongly that they felt supported by their supervisors (Figure 3.2). On the other hand, about three-fourths of respondents strongly agreed that they were learning important soft skills from their internships, which aligns with worksite supervisor responses to a separate employer or worksite supervisor questionnaire in which 82 percent of respondents strongly agreed that part of their role as YAIP supervisors is to help participants learn soft skills (Appendix Table B.1).¹¹ In other words, participants believed they were learning important lessons from their worksite supervisors and supervisors understood that teaching these lessons was part of their role, but many participants would have preferred additional support. Interviews with worksite partners also revealed altruistic motivations behind participating in YAIP: Several supervisors described the gratification that comes from coaching YAIP interns.

- ***Possibility of hire.*** Some internships serve as a trial work period that may lead to unsubsidized employment. For worksites with the capacity and need for new employees, there is an expectation that they will hire high-performing participants after the internship. (However, the employer is under no obligation to do so.) As shown in Table 3.2, internship employers hired 16 percent of program group members, with the majority of hires happening in the social service; retail; and professional, legal, and financial services industries. Interestingly, 41 percent of employers who responded to the employer or supervisor questionnaire stated that one of the reasons they participated in YAIP was to test new workers without risk but with the potential to hire later (Appendix Table B.1).
- ***Unique work experiences.*** A small number of internships provide a unique experience that participants are unlikely to obtain without the program's connections. For instance, some YAIP participants intern at Goldman Sachs; the Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum; and the Children's Museum of the

¹¹It is important to note the limitations of both the participant and employer or worksite supervisor questionnaire results. An incomplete sample of participants (approximately 60 to 65 percent) and employers or worksite supervisors (approximately 10 to 15 percent) responded to their respective questionnaires. Thus, the data collected may not be representative of the views of all participants or worksite personnel.

Figure 3.2

YAIP Participants with a Favorable Impression of Internship Support and Preparation for Future Employment



SOURCE: MDRC calculations from the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration youth participant questionnaire.

NOTES: The four measures presented in this figure were created based on an exploratory factor analysis of a pool of questions. These questions asked participants about their level of agreement with a particular statement on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 indicates strong disagreement and 7 indicates strong agreement. Based on the results of the factor analysis, questions were grouped into factors and a mean score was calculated across the questions included in a particular factor; the percentages presented above represent the proportion of questionnaire respondents who averaged a score of 6 or higher on the questions in that factor, indicating a high level of satisfaction with their program experiences in that area.

Questionnaires were administered to participants during weekly educational workshops at each provider, when many participants would be available at once. Consequently, the responses obtained are from participants who attended educational workshops and are therefore likely to have been more motivated and engaged than the full sample of program participants. For this reason, the results presented in this figure are not necessarily representative of all participant experiences and should be interpreted with caution; they are likely to be more positive.

^aMeasure is based on agreement with the following statements: *I understand what is expected of me on the job; I know whom at work to ask for help when I need it; my relationships with coworkers are positive and supportive; and my coworkers understand me and want me to succeed.*

^bMeasure is based on agreement with the following statements: *I get the support or guidance that I need from my supervisor; my supervisor gives me advice about how to handle situations at work; and my supervisor helps me if personal issues come up that get in the way of working.*

(continued)

Figure 3.2 (continued)

NOTES (continued):

^cMeasure is based on agreement with the following statements: *I am learning how to work better with coworkers; I am learning how to cooperate better with supervisors; and this job has helped me learn to present myself better at work.*

^dMeasure is based on agreement with the following statements: *The kind of work I am doing will help me get a decent-paying job later; I am learning specific job skills that I will use in the future; and I have met people through this job who may help me find a job in the future.*

Arts. The Children’s Museum of the Arts is an art education facility in Manhattan where YAIP interns assist artists in facilitating workshops for young children. The internship culminates with a workshop that the intern plans and leads.

Each provider is required to maintain a portfolio of worksites that contains at least 50 work slots across several worksites (no more than five slots per worksite). At the time of the study, each provider offered participants a selection of internship placements at between 12 and 29 worksites. As shown in Table 3.3, 51 percent of worksites were in the private or for-profit sector, 42 percent were nonprofits, and about 8 percent were government entities.¹² Table 3.3 also shows the breakdown of worksites by industry.

To host a YAIP intern, worksites must submit an application that describes the workplace, the supervision that they will provide to the intern, and the tasks the intern is expected to perform. It is difficult to generalize about the nature of supervision at worksites because of their number and diversity. One aspect that is consistent across worksites and providers, however, is the mid- and end-of-cycle evaluations. Worksite supervisors rate each participant on a scale from one (unsatisfactory) to five (excellent) on 10 dimensions at the middle and end of the internship; Box 3.2 describes these dimensions. YAIP staff review these evaluations, which provides them with a way to monitor what is happening at the worksites and what they need to work on with participants.

YAIP participants are on DYCD’s payroll; thus, time sheet collection offers another formal contact point between YAIP providers and worksites. Worksite supervisors complete the timesheets and program staff review and submit them to DYCD. This procedure ensures that

¹²Among the nonprofit worksites, 49 percent were social service agencies, 15 percent were educational service agencies, and 9 percent were health care-related agencies. The remaining 27 percent of nonprofit worksites were scattered among 15 other industries.

Table 3.3
YAIP Employer Characteristics

Measure	YAIP Employers
Employer type (%)	
Private/for-profit	50.6
Nonprofit	41.8
Government	7.6
Employer industry (%)	
Accommodation and food services	5.3
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	9.4
Community or social services	21.5
Construction, manufacturing, transportation, and utilities services	3.5
Day care or day camp	4.4
Educational services	9.1
Health care	8.5
Professional, legal, and financial services	10.0
Public administration and government	5.0
Real estate and property	2.9
Retail	17.9
Other	2.4
Average number of participants per employer ^a	4.8
Number of participants per employer ^a (%)	
1 participant	28.2
2-3 participants	28.5
4-6 participants	21.5
7 or more participants	21.8
Sample size	340

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using data from the YAIP management information system.

NOTES: ^aEmployers may have taken on participants from YAIP providers not participating in the evaluation. These participants are included in these measures.

Box 3.2

YAIP Participant Mid- and End-of-Cycle Evaluation Dimensions

Work habits: displays a positive, cooperative attitude toward tasks and work assignments

Communication skills: expresses ideas clearly, both verbally and in writing; listens well; responds appropriately to workplace requests

Dependability: understands expectations of timeliness for task completion; adheres to timeframes and is punctual in completing assignments

Cooperation: works well with coworkers and supervisors; demonstrates consideration, rapport, and helpfulness

Initiative: seeks and assumes greater responsibilities; seeks out information to improve skills and performance

Adaptability: adjusts to changes in tasks and responsibilities; accepts new ideas and responds appropriately to constructive criticism; completes projects fully even when undesirable or unpleasant

Judgment: effectively analyzes problems; determines appropriate, timely, and decisive actions; thinks logically; resolves conflicts with persons of authority, coworkers, and customers in the appropriate manner

Attendance and punctuality: considers number of absences, tardiness, or both; calls supervisor when absent or late; takes and returns from breaks as scheduled

Planning and organizing: plans, organizes, and carries out assignments; coordinates with others; establishes priorities; demonstrates effective time management

Leadership skills: demonstrates effective leadership abilities; earns respect and cooperation; inspires and motivates peers

staff visit and communicate with worksites regularly. However, many program staff find the timesheet procedure to be onerous. Because DYCD uses hardcopy timesheets, staff must travel to all of the worksites every other week to collect them. This task is typically the responsibility of one to three staff members, but for staff who are already stretched thin, and with an average of 25 different worksites dispersed throughout the city, it is inconvenient and time consuming.

Aside from these biweekly site visits, most communication with worksites occurs as-needed and may be initiated by the worksite or the YAIP provider, depending on the issue. Worksite personnel who responded to the employer or worksite supervisor questionnaire reported high levels of satisfaction with providers' responsiveness and effectiveness in handling

problem situations. However, as shown in Appendix Table B.1, only about 43 percent of respondents actually reported using the YAIP provider as a resource to help resolve issues with participants.

While the worksites that host YAIP interns represent a wide range of industries and sectors, the job responsibilities of most all of the internships cluster around a few common tasks. According to participants who responded to the questionnaire (Appendix Table B.2), the tasks that most participants typically perform at their internships include clerical work (filing, making copies, and answering phones) (52 percent), computer-based work (49 percent), interacting with customers (48 percent), and maintenance work (45 percent).

- **More than three-fourths of the YAIP program group worked in a subsidized internship. Among this group, 86 percent completed their internship.**

As shown in Table 3.2, 77 percent of program group members worked in a subsidized internship and, among those who did, the vast majority completed their internships. Among the full program group, just under two-thirds completed an internship. It is important to note that DYCD's performance goals call for at least 75 percent of enrolled participants to complete their internships. Among enrolled participants in the three study cohorts, 83 percent completed an internship, exceeding the DYCD benchmark (not shown in table).

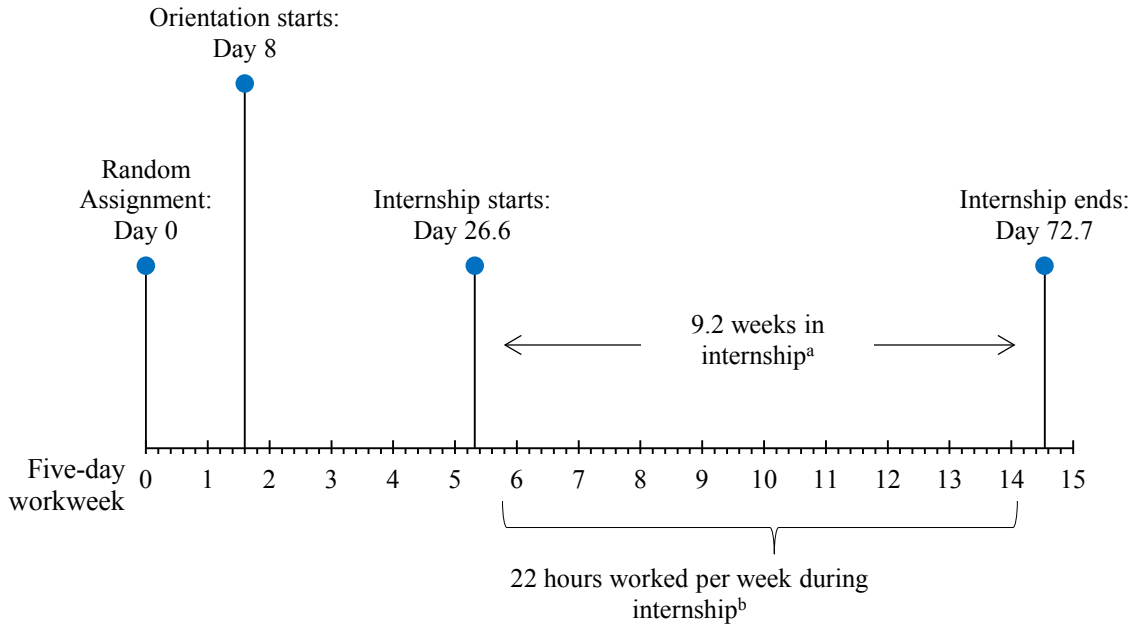
Participants earn minimum wage for working up to 20 hours per week at their internships; they also earn minimum wage for attending the program's weekly five-hour educational workshops. DYCD disburses wages electronically to a debit card issued to each participant at the beginning of the program. Participants are paid every other week for the hours documented in their timesheets. As shown in Figure 3.3, which depicts the average participation timeline during Phases 1 and 2 for participants who worked in a subsidized internship, this subset of participants averaged over nine weeks in their internships and participated in program activities for an average total of 22 hours per week, including both work in their internships and attendance at educational workshops.¹³

Participants' work schedules depend on the particular worksite, and the worksites that offer flexible hours are the most sought after by participants who must balance their internships with their roles as parents, caregivers, or students. For example, the worksite supervisor at a wholesale hardware and building supply store reported that he adjusts the interns' schedules —

¹³Due to data limitations, it is not possible to calculate the hours participants worked in an internship placement separately from the hours they spent in educational workshops.

Figure 3.3

Average YAIP Participation Timeline Among Program Group Members Who Worked in a Subsidized Internship



Sample size = 1,223

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using data from the YAIP management information system.

NOTES: This figure is based on the average participation of program group members who worked in a subsidized internship and assumes a five-day workweek. Each measure excludes 34 participants who participated in a cohort that was later than the one in which they were randomly assigned.

^aThis measure was calculated using total hours worked assuming a five-hour workday. It includes educational workshops, which were five hours per week.

^bThis measure was calculated using weeks with greater than zero hours worked. It includes educational workshops, which were five hours per week.

allowing them to arrive and depart earlier — to accommodate night school. Similarly, the worksite supervisor at a children’s art museum allows interns to work on weekends if they need to miss their regular weekday hours due to other responsibilities.

- **YAIP staff, worksite supervisors, and participants seem to agree that the internship is a positive learning experience for participants, but may not sufficiently enhance their long-term employability.**

Many staff believe that a longer internship is needed to further develop participants' skills. As shown in Appendix Table B.1, 62 percent of employer or worksite supervisor questionnaire respondents indicated that YAIP participants are less prepared than typical entry-level workers on their first day of work. However, 70 percent reported that, over the course of the internship, YAIP participants also demonstrate greater gains than the typical entry-level worker. Figure 3.2 shows that participants are also aware of the internship's limited impact, with only 58 percent strongly agreeing that their internship experience will improve their future employment prospects.

Educational Workshops

Once participants are placed in their internships, they return to the program offices once per week, as a cohort, for mandatory five-hour educational workshops.¹⁴ Providers view workshops as an opportunity to delve deeper into the same topics that they present only briefly during orientation. As they do with orientation, YAIP staff use the Young Adult Career Development Curriculum (described in Box 3.1) as a guide for the weekly workshops. Staff may also supplement the curriculum with field trips, such as college tours or a trip to one of the city's botanical gardens, as another tool to expand participants' horizons.¹⁵

- **Though participants are paid for attending mandatory weekly educational workshops, providers reported that workshop attendance was a challenge.**

Another objective of the weekly workshops is to bring the cohort back together, allowing the group to continue to gel and making it easier for staff to check in with participants. Participants intern at different worksites, many of them employed for the first time, so it is valuable for them to be able to come together to share their experiences. Participants' real-life internship experiences enrich work-readiness lessons. For example, workshop facilitators may present the cohort with a scenario, such as a disagreement with a supervisor, that someone in the cohort experienced and ask participants to discuss possible resolutions to the situation. Despite

¹⁴Some providers split the cohort into two different groups and run the same workshop with each group on different days. Providers who employed this strategy reported that it made the groups more manageable.

¹⁵Multiple providers complained that the process of getting these trips approved by DYCD — whether due to timing constraints or DYCD's assessment of their appropriateness — was a significant deterrent to organizing them.

the fact that these workshops did not conflict with participants' work schedules and that participants are paid to attend them, providers reported that attendance was often low.

Many providers offer incentives for exemplary workshop attendance, such as treating participants to dinner or giving them movie tickets. Unfortunately, due to data limitations, it is not possible to provide exact attendance rates based on data from YAIP's management information system.

Case Management

YAIP providers infuse case management throughout the program in formal and informal ways, in large part because case managers are involved in most if not all aspects of the program, from recruitment through the follow-up phase. Through consistent and frequent informal interactions, case managers develop an almost familial bond with participants. Staff members reported that a caring and trusting relationship such as this one is key to the program's success because it increases the likelihood that a participant will be receptive to the advice and life lessons that staff members offer. Similarly, if a participant has such a relationship, the young person is more likely to ask staff for help when it is needed, making the task of case management easier.

YAIP's formal case management component centers on the Individual Service Strategy Form. The form is a working document used by staff and participants to identify, monitor, and evaluate a participant's strengths, interests, and goals on an ongoing basis. Case managers complete the form over the course of the program during one-on-one meetings with participants. Each section of the form corresponds to different milestones in the program. They document participants' strengths, interests, and skills following orientation. Case managers review participants' mid-cycle worksite evaluations and self-evaluations halfway through the program, and formulate post-internship plans with participants between the seventh and tenth week. Finally, they review participants' end-of-cycle worksite evaluations and self-evaluations in the last weeks of the internship phase. The continuous assessment of goals and progress is critical for disconnected young adults. Staff reported that participants frequently change their minds about their goals and plans for the future. For example, they may apply to YAIP with the intention of entering the workforce only to realize that they want to go back to school to pursue a different career. Staff also explained that many participants struggle with long-term planning because they overlook the interim steps needed to reach the ultimate goal. By periodically revisiting participants' objectives, staff can help young adults with ambitious goals to stay on track to achieving them.

Staff also work with participants to address issues that may interfere with their attendance at their internships. According to the participant questionnaire (Appendix Table B.2), some of the most common services participants need are help managing money (58 percent of

respondents), help obtaining work-appropriate clothing (47 percent of respondents), and help with transportation (37 percent of respondents). Some programs are better positioned than others to connect their participants to needed services, typically through streamlined referrals to partner organizations or even in-house referrals. Interestingly, YAIP programs operating within multiservice agencies do not always benefit from the wide array of services offered, in part because of varying eligibility criteria and in part because agencies may offer these services at different locations from where they offer YAIP. Staff reported that participants most commonly encounter mental health and housing challenges, problems that staff frequently do not have adequate resources to address.

- **YAIP case managers sought to balance the urge to provide intensive support to participants and the desire to foster self-sufficiency.**

Case management can be somewhat of a balancing act in YAIP. Many staff members go above and beyond their job descriptions to help participants, working outside of normal business hours and coming to participants' aid in times of crisis. YAIP's case managers serve as the caring, reliable adults whom many participants lack in their lives. As one case manager put it, "so many kids have such dysfunctional homes that nobody is paying attention to them. We are an extra hand for them." On the other hand, staff try to avoid what they see as "babying" their participants in order to foster their independence and resourcefulness. Another case manager explained that while staff will impart information about available services, it is "not on us" to follow up on the referral. In other words, YAIP's case managers aim to provide participants with the tools to be self-sufficient.

Outcome Placements and Follow-Up Services

Case managers begin formulating post-internship plans with their participants about halfway through the program. As shown in Table 3.2, a little more than half of those who worked in an internship achieved one of the DYCD-approved outcome placements at the conclusion of the internship period. Fifty percent of enrolled participants did so, falling short of DYCD's performance benchmark of 70 percent (not shown in table).¹⁶

- **About half of participants who worked in an internship were engaged in a DYCD-approved outcome placement at the end of the internship period; the same was true at the end of the nine-month follow-up period. Placements in unsubsidized employment were most common.**

¹⁶The proportion of participants who achieved a DYCD-approved outcome placement is higher (59 percent) among those who completed their internships.¹⁷A contact was counted as any time a case manager was able to successfully reach a participant, including phone, social media, and in-person contact.

While YAIP is primarily a workforce development program, the program model acknowledges that labor market demand is greater for workers with at least a high school diploma or equivalency certificate and preferably some college or vocational training. Indeed, many staff believe that their participants should continue their education, but securing employment often takes priority because many cannot afford school and have a more immediate need for income. Consequently, placements in unsubsidized employment (40 percent of participants who worked in an internship) vastly outpaced education placements (10 percent of participants who worked in an internship). For participants who expressed an interest in education (45 percent of participant questionnaire respondents indicated that they had decided to go back to school), staff try to help them figure out how to manage attending school while working.

Advanced training is a relatively easy outcome for participants to achieve because application processes for training programs tend to be more straightforward than the college application process, for example, and the required commitment is generally shorter term compared with enlisting in the military, for instance. However, some providers caution participants against spending time and money on training certifications that do not necessarily improve their employability, which may explain why only 3 percent of participants enrolled in training after their internships. Military enlistment, the last DYCD-approved program outcome, was rare: No program group members enlisted in the military at the end of the internship, and only 0.2 percent of program group members were enlisted at the end of the nine-month follow-up period.

Whether or not participants were in a placement at the end of their internship, YAIP staff continued to provide follow-up support services to them over the next nine months. These nine months make up Phase 3, or the follow-up phase, when providers focus on helping participants secure or sustain a placement. This follow-up period is the longest yet least intensive phase of the program, when staff work with participants mainly on an individual basis. During this phase, provider staff try to maintain contact with participants in order to assist them with job leads, verify their outcome placements, help connect them to needed services, and provide other case management and counseling support. The participation data presented in Table 3.2 align with this description of services: 86 percent of participants who worked in an internship received case management during the nine-month follow-up, with an average of five contacts from YAIP staff.¹⁷ Motivated by their relationships with staff, their cohort, or both, some participants stay in touch of their own volition. Other participants require a great deal of persistence on the part of staff, who use any outlet available to them — phone calls, friends, family, home visits, social media — to check in with participants.

¹⁷A contact was counted as any time a case manager was able to successfully reach a participant, including phone, social media, and in-person contact.

In the study sample, 49 percent of participants who worked in an internship were engaged in an outcome placement at the nine-month mark, with a similar breakdown among placement types at the close of the internship period. However, an important caveat to this figure is that YAIP providers must submit verification of outcome placements, such as an official letter or paystub, in order to receive credit for the placement from DYCD. Given the difficulties of obtaining verification, it is possible that the proportion of participants engaged in an outcome placement at the nine-month mark is understated. These difficulties include the program likely losing touch with a number of participants during the nine-month follow-up period (about 14 percent of participants who worked in a subsidized internship did not receive case management services during the follow-up period) and still other participants likely not providing documentation of their placements.

The last of YAIP's performance expectations is to retain at least 60 percent of enrolled participants in a program-approved outcome at the end of the follow-up period. The proportion of enrolled participants in an outcome placement at the nine-month mark was about 47 percent (not shown in Table 3.2). This figure again falls short of DYCD's performance benchmark.

There are two measures in Table 3.2 that help shed light on the extent of placement continuity. The proportion of internship participants engaged in an outcome placement at the end of their internship *and* at the end of the follow-up period (37 percent) suggests that participants who were engaged in a placement after completing their internships were much more likely to be engaged in such a placement nine months later. Similarly, the 13 percent of participants hired by their worksites at the close of their internship and working in an unsubsidized job at the end of the follow-up period indicates that participants hired by their worksites (16 percent) were likely to still be employed nine months later. While these continuity measures do not capture any potential disconnection which may have occurred between the two times when placement was measured, these data points nevertheless highlight the importance of a participant's status at the end of the internship phase.

Boxes 3.3 and 3.4 offer in-depth descriptions of two different YAIP participants and their respective experiences in the program. These short vignettes, though anonymized, reflect actual participant experiences and may help to better illustrate how disconnected young people interacted with YAIP program services.

Conclusion

YAIP aims to expand positive social networks by allowing participants to develop connections with caring adults (staff), like-minded peers (members of their cohort and fellow interns), and people with stable employment (worksite supervisors). Implementation data suggest that

Box 3.3

Participant Vignette: “Tiffany”

Tiffany learned about YAIP from a career counselor at the high school equivalency (HSE) preparation program in which she was previously enrolled. Tiffany was interested in YAIP as a means of supporting her pursuit of a college education while working part time. She lived with her mother in Queens and, before YAIP, had been looking for a job on her own without success.

Tiffany joined YAIP when she was 18 years old. She had obtained her HSE certificate about five months earlier, and had no work experience. YAIP staff described her as “structured and disciplined.” Staff also described Tiffany as rebellious; she had several run-ins with the law as a teenager, though she was never convicted of a crime. Tiffany herself admits that she hung around with peers that were involved with drugs and gangs and were a bad influence on her. YAIP staff, on the other hand, attributed Tiffany’s rebelliousness to her mother’s “tough parenting,” and they felt reassured that if they encountered problems with Tiffany’s program participation, they could call home and get her mother’s support. Such action, however, turned out to be unnecessary since Tiffany’s attendance at the internship and workshops was perfect.

Tiffany was interested in a career in criminal justice, but staff prioritized other factors in determining her internship placement. They guided her toward a highly structured worksite where she would receive the extra mentoring they believed she needed. Tiffany’s internship was in the mailroom of a large publishing company. She felt pressured to accept this placement and initially wished she were placed in a simple retail job in which she would not have to work hard while she was in school. As time passed, however, she learned that she was capable of the work required and became aware of her employer’s global connections and renown, giving her a sense of pride. There were some bumps along the way that staff were able to help smooth over. For example, her worksite e-mailed YAIP staff to complain that Tiffany was not checking her e-mails in a timely manner. YAIP staff worked with Tiffany to improve her professional communication skills and nurture her confidence. Staff also helped her to apply to and enroll in community college.

At the end of the internship phase, Tiffany’s worksite hired her as a permanent employee. About a year after joining YAIP, she was still at the same job, working 40 hours per week at \$9.50 per hour, which at the time was more than the minimum wage of \$8.75. YAIP staff stayed in touch with Tiffany throughout the nine-month program follow-up phase, though they wished she were more proactive in reaching out to them.

Tiffany’s social and professional network expanded as a result of her participation in YAIP. She befriended fellow interns and coworkers, developed professional relationships with supervisors, and gained the support of YAIP staff. Of one staff person, Tiffany said, “...there were so many times I didn’t want to do something that she would make me do that wound up being for the better.”

Box 3.4

Participant Vignette: “Marvin”

Marvin learned about YAIP from his brother, who had previously participated in the program. Marvin was 24 years old and living with his mother and stepfather in Brooklyn when he enrolled in YAIP. He came to the program with entry-level, unskilled work experience in fast food, retail, and health care, but had not been employed in more than six months. Marvin also had attended some college. His goals were to return to school, find a job, and eventually pursue a career in journalism.

Staff at YAIP saw in Marvin a “smart young man” who was “a bit scattered” and lacked sufficient soft skills. They believed he would benefit from interning in a city council member’s office, where he would be expected to behave and communicate professionally. Marvin initially resisted this placement, but grew to enjoy and value the experience. According to Marvin, “this whole office experience is new to me... I’m answering phones in the correct manner, doing stuff...on the computer... The job helps me. It builds me up more, ‘cause there’s some things I was lacking and, doing this job, it’s been better for me.”

Regarding what he learned from YAIP workshops, Marvin said, “I’ve learned to come out of my shell, out of my comfort zone, being able to network with people and how to properly introduce myself and properly talk with people.” The program also helped him to apply to two- and four-year colleges. While he appreciated the benefits of participating in YAIP, Marvin repeatedly expressed a strong “do-it-yourself” attitude, which may have prevented him from taking full advantage of the help available to him from program staff.

Marvin knew from the outset that his internship would not lead to an unsubsidized position. Although he enjoyed the internship, this fact did not bother him because he was not interested in a career in politics. Still, he valued the networking skills and opportunities that the internship afforded. His attendance was excellent and he felt confident that he could ask his supervisors for a strong professional reference.

Unstable housing had been a major obstacle for Marvin and his family for much of his life. Shortly after completing his internship, Marvin went to live with his brother in a neighboring state because his parents were priced out of the home he had shared with them in Brooklyn. Beyond the reach of the program’s local network, there was little YAIP staff could do to help connect him with resources, though they stayed in touch with Marvin over e-mail. At the end of the nine-month program follow-up period, Marvin was employed, but the data available did not include specific information about his employment.

participants formed relationships that could potentially help them in the future. The fact that 86 percent of participants who worked in a subsidized internship received case management services in the nine-month period following their internships — when little or no formal program services are in place — highlights the staff’s ability to connect with their partici-

pants. In addition to staff support, participants who completed their internships stand to gain a professional reference from their worksite supervisors.

Some provider staff love YAIP, citing the model's flexibility in terms of customizing the workshop curriculum and allowing participants the option of pursuing employment, education, training, or the military after the internship. At the same time, many staff are highly critical of the service model and feel restricted and overwhelmed by DYCD's performance measures and oversight. Providers reported that, as a result of these challenges, there is frequent staff turnover, which may adversely affect the quality of service delivery.

YAIP achieved high participation rates overall and participants reported that they gained important "world of work" skills as a result of the program. While the vast majority of participants who began an internship completed it, only about half were engaged in unsubsidized employment, education, or advanced training when their internships ended. Interestingly, though YAIP was developed as a "light-touch" intervention to help reengage a mostly job-ready subset of the disconnected youth population, many involved with YAIP, including provider staff, supervisors at internship sites, and young people themselves, believed that YAIP participants require both a higher level of support and a longer intervention to improve their educational and labor market outcomes. The overall inability of YAIP providers to meet DYCD's performance benchmarks for outcome placements would seem to support this belief.

Overall, YAIP providers implemented the program very similarly and with a high degree of fidelity to the intended program model, although there was some variation as a result of particular staff, worksite partnerships, and agency resources. This high level of fidelity to DYCD's and CEO's model allows for a strong test of the program's effectiveness.

Chapter 4

The Impacts of YAIP on Youth Outcomes

As discussed in earlier chapters, the goal of YAIP is to improve the labor market prospects of a population of job-ready disconnected young adults in New York City. For this report, the available follow-up period to assess outcome differences between program and control group members was just over one year after random assignment. Since this follow-up period includes the time when many program group members were engaged in internships, the early impacts shown here are likely a direct result of these placements and are not necessarily indicative of the longer-term effects of the program, which a later report will present.

The YAIP program model includes placement in a paid internship, supplemented by weekly educational workshops, along with the development of supportive peer, staff, and mentor relationships. The research team expects the program to have initial, short-term effects on employment and earnings; since many program group members participated in paid orientation and internship activities lasting about 12 to 14 weeks, they are expected to work more and earn more than control group members in the period immediately following random assignment.

The follow-up phase of YAIP focuses on supporting participants in achieving an “outcome placement” — that is, engagement in unsubsidized employment, education, training, or the military. In addition to these outcomes, the research team also examined outcomes in several other key domains, including psychosocial outcomes, economic and personal well-being, and criminal involvement. In order to assess the impact of YAIP in these various areas, the team compared the outcomes of program group members with the outcomes of control group members. While individuals in the control group did not receive YAIP services, they were free to look for jobs on their own or to seek out and receive assistance from other programs and organizations in the community. Thus, it is necessary to assess the differences in types and amount of assistance that program and control group members received in order to fully understand the two research groups’ potential outcome differences.

Impacts on Service Receipt

This section focuses on impacts on the receipt of employment and supportive services and is based on sample members’ responses to a survey administered roughly 12 months after random assignment. The next section, focused on impacts on employment and earnings, considers participation in subsidized employment.

- **Program group members were more likely to report that they received help finding or keeping a job in the year following random assignment.**

As discussed in earlier chapters, several other employment programs in New York City provide services to people seeking work, so it is not particularly surprising that over half (53 percent) of the control group reported receiving help finding or keeping a job in the year following random assignment (presented in Table 4.1). (See Box 4.1 for a detailed description of how to read the impact tables in this report.) However, 85 percent of program group members reported receiving employment assistance. While the difference between the research groups' outcomes is smaller than that found in other studies of subsidized employment programs, in which control group members had access to fewer alternative services, it still represents a substantial increase in receipt of employment-related services for program group members.

- **Program group members were more likely than control group members to report receipt of advice or support from both peers and staff, but the largest impacts were for supportive staff relationships.**

Creating supportive relationships for participants is a central component of the YAIP model, including both relationships with peers and staff members or mentors. As shown in Table 4.1, while most (95 percent) of program group members reported receiving advice or support from a peer, 85 percent of the control group also reported similar support from a peer. Though this difference is modest, the supportive peer relationships almost universally reported by program group members reflects YAIP's emphasis on developing social networks.

While both program and control group members less commonly reported receiving support, advice, or mentoring from staff, a far greater proportion of program group members reported engaging in supportive staff relationships. This impact (or difference between the program and control groups) was much larger than the impact for supportive peer relationships. This result reflects the implementation finding presented in Chapter 3 that the YAIP cohort model allows staff to form relationships and work intensely with a relatively small group of participants and provides another avenue to support disconnected young adults.

While YAIP overall had some positive impacts on program participants' receipt of services, these impacts were relatively modest since many control group members received

Table 4.1
One-Year Impacts on Service Receipt

Outcome (%)	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval
<u>Employment support</u>				
Received help related to finding or keeping a job	84.6	53.3	31.3 ***	[28.3,34.4]
Job search or job readiness ^a	79.2	43.8	35.4 ***	[32.2,38.7]
Career planning	76.2	41.5	34.7 ***	[31.3,38.0]
Unpaid work experience or internship	18.0	11.4	6.6 ***	[3.9,9.2]
Paying for job-related transportation or equipment costs	42.6	20.4	22.2 ***	[18.8,25.6]
<u>Other support and services</u>				
Received advice or support from staff member at an agency or organization	70.0	45.6	24.4 ***	[20.9,27.9]
Received advice or support from peer at an agency or organization	94.7	85.4	9.3 ***	[7.2,11.4]
Received mentoring from staff member at an agency or organization	62.3	35.0	27.2 ***	[23.7,30.8]
Received mental health assistance	9.0	8.9	0.0	[-2.0,2.1]
Received substance abuse treatment or counseling	2.0	1.3	0.7	[-0.3,1.6]
Sample size (total = 2,127)	1,327	800		

SOURCE: MDRC calculations based on responses to the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration 12-month youth survey.

NOTES: Results in this table are regression-adjusted, controlling for pre-random assignment characteristics.

Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

^aThis measure includes developing a résumé, filling out job applications, preparing for job interviews, and job readiness training.

Box 4.1

How to Read the Impact Tables in This Report

The impact tables in this report use the same format as does the table excerpt below. In this case, employment and earnings outcomes are shown for the program and the control groups. For example, the table excerpt shows that the program group earned approximately \$6,685 over the 12-month follow-up period, while the control group earned about \$3,252.

The “Difference” column in the table excerpt shows the differences between the two research groups’ earnings — that is, the program’s estimated effect, or impact, on earnings. For example, the estimated impact on earnings in Year 1 can be calculated by subtracting \$3,252 from \$6,685, yielding a \$3,433 difference.

Differences marked with asterisks are “statistically significant,” meaning that they are larger than would generally be expected if the program had no true effect; that is, they are likely attributable to the offer of YAIP services. The number of asterisks indicates whether the estimated impact is statistically significant at the 10 percent (one asterisk), 5 percent (two asterisks), or 1 percent (three asterisks) level. The lower the level (or the more asterisks), the less likely that an ineffective program could have generated the impact. For example, as shown in the second row of data, YAIP had a statistically significant impact of \$3,433 on earnings during Year 1; that is, youth who were offered YAIP services earned \$3,433 more, on average, than did youth who were not offered YAIP services. This impact is statistically significant at the 1 percent level, which means that there is less than a 1 percent probability that an ineffective program would have resulted in an estimated impact this large.

In 90 percent of experiments of this type, the true value of the impact would fall within the range shown in the “confidence interval” column. For example, in the second example row of data, there is a 90 percent chance that the true value of this impact is between \$3,112 and \$3,754.

One-Year Impacts on Employment and Earnings

Outcome	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)		90 Percent Confidence Interval
Employment (%)	95.1	66.0	29.0 ***		[26.9, 31.3]
Total earnings (\$)	6,685	3,252	3,433 ***		[3112, 3754]

services in the year following random assignment. These modest impacts also indicate that YAIP's paid internship component likely produces the most substantial difference in the services program and control group members receive.¹

Impacts on Employment and Earnings

Table 4.2 presents the employment and earnings outcomes for the program and control groups in the first year after random assignment.² The top panel (administrative employment outcomes) shows measures derived from unemployment insurance wage records, supplemented with data from DYCD on subsidized employment and earnings. Figure 4.1 depicts employment and earnings trends from these data sources. The bottom panel of Table 4.2 (self-reported employment outcomes) shows measures derived from the 12-month survey.

- **In the year following random assignment, program group members were more likely to be employed and worked in more quarters than control group members. However, program impacts on employment dissipated by the beginning of the second year after random assignment.**

About two-thirds (66 percent) of the control group was employed in a job covered by unemployment insurance at some point in the year following random assignment, but nearly all (95 percent) of the program group was employed in this period, resulting in a program impact on employment of 29 percentage points. Self-reported employment in the year following random assignment from the 12-month survey indicates a smaller, but still positive, program impact on employment (7 percentage points).³

¹Appendix Table C.1 shows that only 8 percent of control group members reported participating in a paid internship in the four months following random assignment, compared with 60 percent of program group members, based on responses to the four-month survey.

²The YAIP internship measure shown in Table 4.2 varies from the participation measures shown in Table 3.2 due to differences in the data source and the construction of the measure. In Table 3.2, data on participation in a YAIP internship is drawn from program participation data and reflects actual work in an internship. In Table 4.2, the measure is based on YAIP payroll data, and includes all program group members who participated in some paid element of the program (including orientation) even if they did not go on to work in a YAIP internship.

³The difference between administrative and self-reported employment rates for the control group is likely a reflection of the New York City labor market, which has a fairly large proportion of non-covered contingent employment related to tourism and entertainment, informal labor market employment, or both. The difference between administrative data and self-reported employment for the program group is possibly due to program group members not perceiving their participation in the program as employment (a common measurement issue in subsidized employment programs). It is important to note that only 60 percent of the program group reported employment in a paid internship (the program's term for its subsidized employment placements) in the survey that Decision Information Resources, the project's survey firm, administered during program participation. (See Appendix Table C.1.)

Table 4.2
One-Year Impacts on Employment and Earnings

Outcome	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval
<u>Administrative employment outcomes</u>				
Employment (%)	95.1	66.0	29.0 ***	[26.9,31.3]
YAIP subsidized employment (%)	80.7	--	--	
Number of quarters employed	2.6	1.6	1.0 ***	[0.9,1.1]
Employed in all quarters (%)	28.4	13.8	14.6 ***	[12.1,17.2]
Total earnings (\$)	6,685	3,252	3,433 ***	[3112,3754]
YAIP subsidized earnings (\$)	1,704	--	--	
Total earnings (%)				
\$6,000 or more	41.9	21	20.9 ***	[18.0,23.7]
\$10,000 or more	19.6	9.4	10.3 ***	[8.0,12.5]
\$14,000 or more	7.7	3.7	4.1 ***	[2.6,5.6]
Employment in first quarter of Year 2 (%)	54.1	52.3	1.8	[-1.3,5.0]
YAIP subsidized employment in first quarter of Year 2 (%)	0.0	--	--	
<hr/>				
Sample size (total = 2,678)	1,638	1,040		
<u>Self-reported employment outcomes (based on survey data)</u>				
Ever employed in one year (%)	81.9	75.2	6.7 ***	[3.7,9.7]
Currently employed (%)	53.9	51.5	2.5	[-1.2,6.1]
Full-time employment	32.4	28.4	4.0 *	[0.6,7.5]
Part-time employment	21.0	22.3	-1.3	[-4.3,1.8]
Current hourly wage (%)				
More than \$8.00	40.1	37.0	3.1	[-0.5,6.8]
More than \$10.00	16.5	15.1	1.4	[-1.4,4.1]
More than \$12.00	8.8	7.4	1.4	[-0.7,3.5]
Type of employment (%)				
Not currently employed	46.8	49.2	-2.4	[-6.1,1.3]
Permanent	42.9	37.9	5.1 **	[1.4,8.7]
Temporary, including day labor and odd jobs	10.3	12.9	-2.7 *	[-5.0,-0.3]

(continued)

Table 4.2 (continued)

Outcome	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval
Currently working in subsidized job or employment program (%)	2.3	1.4	0.8	[-0.2,1.9]
Among those currently employed ^a				
Average hours worked per week	31.0	29.9	1.1	
Average hourly wage (\$)	10.6	10.5	0.0	
Among those who have not worked since random assignment, reason not working ^b (%)				
Unable to work due to injury, illness, disability, pregnancy, or childbirth	17.2	15.6	1.6	
Family responsibilities	7.4	9.2	-1.8	
Personal issues	8.1	3.8	4.2	
Attending school	22.8	17.4	5.4	
Unable to find work	36.6	44.8	-8.2	
Not interested in working	4.1	3.8	0.3	
Other	3.8	5.4	-1.5	
Sample size (total = 2,127)	1,327	800		

SOURCES: MDRC calculations based on quarterly wage data from the National Directory of New Hires, YAIP management information system subsidized earnings records, and responses to the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration 12-month youth survey.

NOTES: Results in this table are regression-adjusted, controlling for pre-random assignment characteristics.

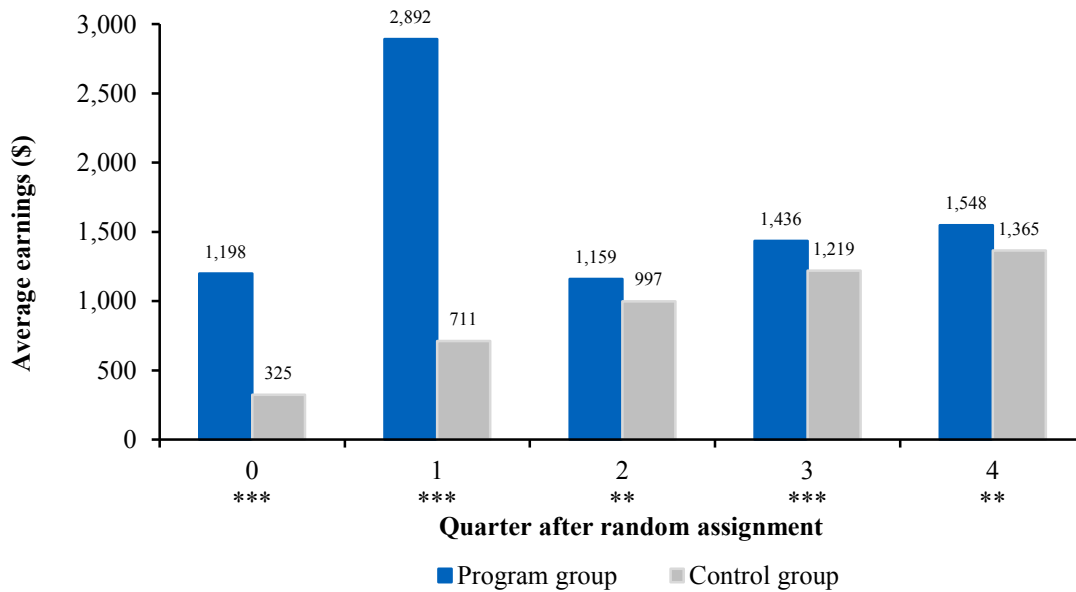
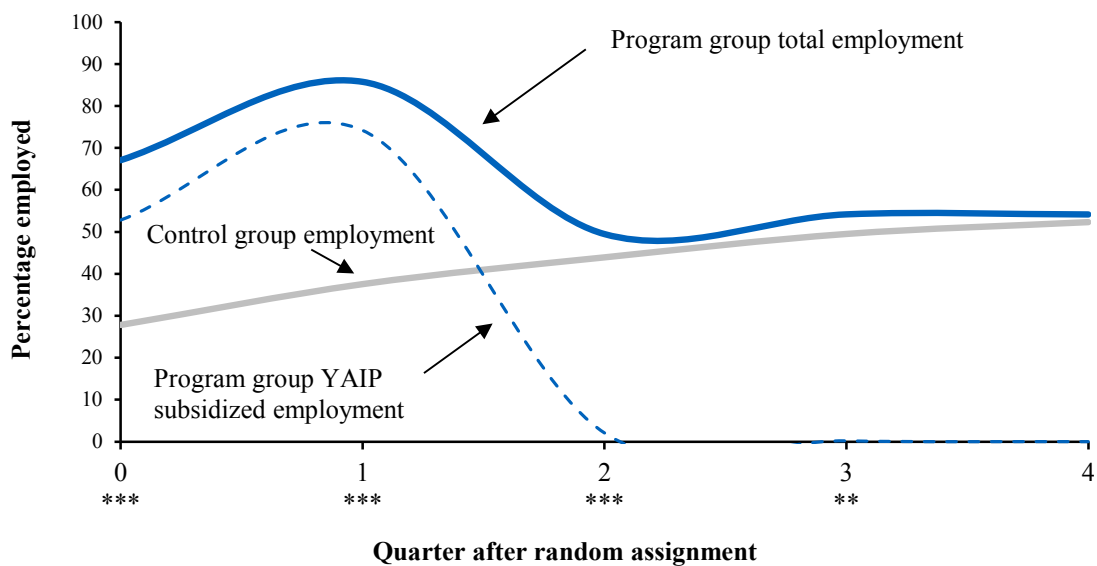
Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

^aThese measures are calculated among those employed at the time of their 12-month follow-up survey interviews; they are therefore considered nonexperimental and are not tested for statistical significance.

^bThese measures are calculated among those who had not worked during the time between random assignment and their 12-month follow-up survey interviews; they are therefore considered nonexperimental and are not tested for statistical significance.

The program group also worked more compared with the control group: The average number of quarters in which program group members were employed in the year following random assignment was 2.6 quarters, compared with 1.6 quarters for control group members. Additionally, 28 percent of the program group was employed in all four quarters following random assignment, compared with 14 percent of the control group.

Figure 4.1
Employment and Earnings Over Time



(continued)

Figure 4.1 (continued)

SOURCES: MDRC calculations based on quarterly wage data from the National Directory of New Hires and YAIP management information system subsidized earnings records.

NOTES: Results in this table are regression-adjusted, controlling for pre-random assignment characteristics. Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

The relatively high levels of employment among the control group may suggest that the study population is not very disconnected. However, as discussed in Chapter 1, disconnection is not a fixed state, thus cycling in and out of school or work is common. A measure that summarizes across time, such as ever employed since random assignment, may mask this cycling. Consideration of the employment rate in the context of the time employed (average number of quarters employed) suggests that most employment in which the control group engaged in the year following random assignment was of relatively short duration.

As Figure 4.1 depicts, the greatest difference between program and control group members' employment rates measured with administrative data occurred in the first two quarters after random assignment. Once participation in the paid internship phase of YAIP ended, the employment rates of the two groups converged. By the first quarter of the second year after random assignment, the employment rates of the program and control groups were almost the same.

- **Program group members had higher earnings in the year following random assignment than did control group members; program impacts on earnings persisted after employment rates between the two research groups converged.**

Program group members also had higher earnings in the year following random assignment, on average earning \$3,433 more than control group members. This difference is much larger than the \$1,704 that program group members earned, on average, from YAIP internships. As Figure 4.1 shows, the largest differences in earnings between the program and control groups were in the first and second quarters after random assignment (during the period when program group members were most active in YAIP internships), but there were statistically significant differences in earnings in all four quarters of the first year after random assignment. This continuing difference in earnings may be due to differences in the nature of the jobs that program and control group members held. Sample members' self-reported employment at the time of their 12-month survey interviews indicate that program group members were more likely to be working full-time hours in permanent jobs, compared with control group members.

These findings suggest that program group members may have obtained slightly higher quality employment compared with their control group counterparts.

As an initial response to the question of whether the program was more effective for some groups compared with others — or “differential impacts” —the research team tested a few critical employment and earnings outcomes for a number of subgroups including study cohort, educational status at random assignment (participants with a high school diploma or equivalency certificate versus those without), length of disconnection at random assignment (time since last employed, in school, or in a high school equivalency program), and gender. The research team chose these subgroups because they are possible moderators of program impacts. In general, the team found significant differences in program impacts on employment rates for all of the subgroups — the program impacts on employment were larger for male and less educated sample members, members of cohorts 1 and 2, and members who had been disconnected longer (see Appendix Tables D.1, D.2, D.3, and D.4). However, no differences were found in program impacts on earnings. Further analysis of differential impacts will be conducted once additional follow-up is available.⁴

Impacts on Education and Training

Table 4.3 shows education and training outcomes for the program and control groups in the first year after random assignment. The top panel of the table presents measures derived from the 12-month survey, while the bottom panel shows measures calculated using administrative data from the National Student Clearinghouse.

- **Program and control group members were fairly similar in terms of their participation in education and training in the year after random assignment.**

About a third of both program group members (36 percent) and control group members (34 percent) reported participation in education and training in the year following random assignment based on 12-month survey data. These figures include participation in General Educational Development (GED) or high school diploma classes, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes, and vocational training. Rates of

⁴These analyses will also incorporate another source of potential variation in program impacts occurring at the provider location level. Appendix E shows preliminary analysis of variation by YAIP provider location. While these preliminary analyses are at the provider location level, the research team will explore impact variation among groups of providers, with the provider grouping determined by shared methods of program operation, target population, and other characteristics.

Table 4.3
One-Year Impacts on Education and Training

Outcome (%)	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval
<u>Self-reported education outcomes (based on survey data)</u>				
Participated in education and training	36.4	33.5	2.9	[-0.6,6.3]
GED or high school diploma classes ^a	14.2	15.0	-0.9	[-3.2,1.5]
ESL classes ^b	2.2	2.0	0.2	[-0.9,1.3]
ABE classes ^c	15.0	10.0	5.0 ***	[2.5,7.5]
Vocational training	18.5	17.7	0.9	[-2.0,3.7]
Earned a high school diploma or equivalency certificate	10.6	12.8	-2.2	[-4.5,0.1]
Earned professional license or certification	13.2	12.4	0.8	[-1.7,3.2]
Sample size (total = 2,127)	1,327	800		
<u>Administrative education outcomes</u>				
Enrolled in a postsecondary institution	13.0	14.0	-1.0	[-3.1,1.1]
Enrolled in four-year college	4.6	4.5	0.0	[-1.3,1.4]
Enrolled in two-year college	8.4	9.7	-1.2	[-3.1,0.6]
Sample size (total = 2,678)	1,638	1,040		

SOURCES: MDRC calculations based on responses to the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration 12-month youth survey and postsecondary education data from the National Student Clearinghouse.

NOTES: Results in this table are regression-adjusted, controlling for pre-random assignment characteristics.

Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

^aGED = General Educational Development.

^bESL = English as a Second Language.

^cABE = Adult Basic Education.

participation in these specific types of education and training programs were modest, but program group members were more likely to report participation in ABE programs compared with control group members. Administrative data measuring enrollment in postsecondary education also indicate similar levels of participation in both two- and four-year colleges across the two research groups. Finally, program and control group members reported similar levels of receipt of high school diplomas or equivalency certificates and professional licenses or certifications.

As with the employment and earnings outcomes, the research team tested a few select education outcomes for a number of subgroups to investigate differential impacts. The team found no notable differences in impacts. (See Appendix Tables D.1, D.2, D.3, and D.4.)

Impacts on Other Outcomes

Increased engagement in productive activities can positively affect other areas of a person's life. For example, job loss and unemployment have a well-documented negative impact on well-being, both economic and personal, while income increases are associated with an uptick in positive assessments of life satisfaction. Thus, participation in YAIP and any resulting increases in engagement in productive activity may lead to positive effects on measures of well-being. Likewise, engagement in productive activity may also discourage criminal activity. Tables 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6 show measures of program and control group outcomes related to these areas (psychosocial outcomes, economic and personal well-being, and criminal involvement). All outcomes in these tables are based on the 12-month survey.

- **Program and control group members reported similar levels of well-being at one year after random assignment.**

The research team assessed a variety of different measures, and, overall, program and control group members scored similarly on nearly all of them. The team also evaluated related indicators of personal well-being for the second cohort at roughly four months after random assignment, a point in time when many program group members in this cohort were participating in YAIP. (See Appendix Table C.1.) While the program and control group outcomes were similar on most of the assessed psychosocial and personal well-being measures, there were a couple of statistically significant differences between the two research groups. Specifically, in the shorter term, YAIP appears to have had some positive effects on young people's happiness and perceptions of obstacles to achieving their goals.⁵

Conclusion

The interim impact results reported in this chapter indicate that YAIP was successful in increasing young people's access to employment services and developing or strengthening supportive relationships for them. Program group members were more likely to have been employed and

⁵Future analyses will further consider these and additional topics, including future expectations. Appendix F shows preliminary analysis of early data on these topics.

Table 4.4
One-Year Impacts on Psychosocial Outcomes

Outcome	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval
Score on self-esteem scale ^a	3.29	3.25	0.04 **	[0.01,0.07]
Score on career orientation scale ^b	3.32	3.29	0.03	[0.00,0.06]
Score on social support scale ^c	3.83	3.81	0.02	[-0.05,0.10]
Score on optimism scale ^d	2.97	2.95	0.01	[-0.02,0.05]
Believed that one or more circumstances made it difficult to achieve goals ^e (%)	42.1	41.6	0.6	[-2.9,4.0]
Sample size (total = 2,127)	1,327	800		

SOURCE: MDRC calculations based on responses to the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration 12-month youth survey.

NOTES: Results in this table are regression-adjusted, controlling for pre-random assignment characteristics.

Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

^aThe Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is a 10-item scale that assesses feelings of self-esteem. Response categories range from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 4 = "strongly agree," where higher scores indicate higher levels of self-esteem. The 10 items are averaged.

^bThe career orientation scale is a six-item scale that assesses career expectations and aspirations. Scale scores range from 1 to 4, where higher scores indicate higher levels of career orientation. The six items are averaged.

^cThe Medical Outcomes Study Social Support Survey is a seven-item scale that assesses the types of social support available to respondents. Scale scores range from 1 to 5, where higher scores indicate higher levels of social support. The seven items are averaged.

^dThe optimism scale is a six-item scale that assesses feelings of optimism. Scale scores range from 1 to 4, where higher scores indicate higher levels of optimism. The six items are averaged.

^eCircumstances include lack of a high school diploma or equivalency certificate, limited reading or math skills, limited work history, unstable housing, experience in foster care, pregnancy or child care, physical or medical disability, mental health difficulties, criminal record, alcohol or substance abuse, and family responsibilities.

worked more consistently than control group members in the year following random assignment, but quarterly employment rates converged after the end of the paid internships offered by YAIP. Program group members also had higher earnings than control group members. Earnings impacts were observed in every quarter of the year following random assignment, although the size of the impacts decreased over time. These earnings differences, along with data concerning

Table 4.5
One-Year Impacts on Economic and Personal Well-Being

Outcome (%)	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval
<u>Economic well-being outcomes</u>				
Experienced financial shortfall in past 12 months	28.5	25.9	2.6	[-0.6,5.8]
Could not pay rent or mortgage	16.4	14.9	1.5	[-1.1,4.2]
Evicted from home or apartment	3.9	3.2	0.7	[-0.7,2.1]
Utility or phone service disconnected	17.2	15.1	2.1	[-0.6,4.8]
Could not afford prescription medicine	7.2	7.6	-0.5	[-2.4,1.4]
Experienced food insufficiency in prior month	15.6	14.8	0.8	[-1.9,3.5]
Homeless or living in a shelter in prior month	2.6	3.1	-0.5	[-1.7,0.7]
Had health insurance coverage in prior month	65.6	66.6	-1.0	[-4.4,2.5]
<u>Personal well-being outcomes</u>				
Is currently in good, very good, or excellent health	88.4	88.6	-0.2	[-2.6,2.2]
Experienced serious psychological distress in past month ^a	8.0	7.6	0.5	[-1.5,2.4]
Overall happiness				
Very happy	24.1	23.0	1.1	[-2.1,4.2]
Pretty happy	59.7	60.5	-0.9	[-4.5,2.8]
Not too happy	16.2	16.4	-0.2	[-3.0,2.5]
Sample size (total = 2,127)	1,327	800		

SOURCE: MDRC calculations based on responses to the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration 12-month youth survey.

NOTES: Results in this table are regression-adjusted, controlling for pre-random assignment characteristics.

Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

^aA score of 13 or higher on the Kessler-6 Scale (K-6) is used here to define serious psychological distress. The K-6 assesses how often during the past month a respondent felt so sad that nothing could cheer the individual up, nervous, restless or fidgety, hopeless, that everything was an effort, and worthless. As a result of minor differences between the scale used to administer the K-6 in the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration 12-month youth survey and the standard K-6, the percentages presented in this table may slightly underestimate the incidence of serious psychological distress among the YAIP sample.

Table 4.6
One-Year Impacts on Criminal Involvement

Outcome (%)	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval
Arrested	10.4	10.5	-0.1	[-2.3,2.1]
Convicted of a crime	2.6	2.6	0.1	[-1.1,1.2]
Incarcerated	3.0	3.1	0.0	[-1.3,1.2]
On parole or probation	3.9	2.8	1.1	[-0.2,2.4]
Sample size (total = 2,127)	1,327	800		

SOURCE: MDRC calculations based on responses to the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration 12-month youth survey.

NOTES: Results in this table are regression-adjusted, controlling for pre-random assignment characteristics. Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

current employment, suggest that program group members may have been able to secure somewhat better jobs (permanent positions, with full-time hours) compared with control group members. The research team will examine this possible program impact more fully later, when additional follow-up data are available.

Aside from employment and earnings differences, program and control group members demonstrated similar outcomes. Their participation in education and training was comparable, and most indicators of well-being were roughly the same for both research groups. Again, further analysis of these outcomes will be reported once additional follow-up is available.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Next Steps

This report presents implementation and early impact findings from a rigorous random assignment study of the Young Adult Internship Program (YAIP), one of several programs being evaluated as part of the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration (STED). While a future report will discuss the impacts of YAIP 30 months after study enrollment, these early findings provide important insights into the implementation of a relatively “light-touch” intervention targeted to a higher functioning, but still disadvantaged, group of disconnected youth in New York City. This chapter highlights key findings from the implementation study of YAIP and summarizes the early (one-year) impacts of the program. The chapter concludes by noting next steps in the YAIP evaluation.

Key Implementation Findings

The research team assessed YAIP’s implementation using several different data sources, including (but not limited to) interviews with key provider staff as well as YAIP management staff from DYCD and CEO, internship worksite observations, analysis of data collected from all sample members when they enrolled in the study, and participation data from the YAIP management information system. Overall, YAIP was implemented as expected; nevertheless, program implementation was not without its challenges. Key findings from the implementation study are as follows:

- **YAIP providers implemented a comprehensive, multistage screening and intake process to identify their target population — New York City’s most job-ready disconnected youth — for enrollment into the study.** Compared with local and national populations of disconnected youth, YAIP sample members were better positioned on various socioeconomic indicators. They were more likely to have a high school credential and previous work experience and less likely to receive public benefits or to live in unstable housing situations. Thus, while the YAIP sample certainly still faced a number of serious challenges (for instance, the median length of time since study sample members were last in school, enrolled in a GED program, or working was nine months), providers appear to have been successful in identifying and enrolling the more advantaged subset of disconnected youth that they believed to be best able to benefit from the program.

- **While there was some variation between YAIP providers in terms of staff roles, agency resources, and the overall mission of each organization, providers delivered the YAIP model consistently and adhered very closely to the model as designed.** All YAIP providers delivered a three-phase program which included a 2- to 4- week orientation, a 10- to 12-week paid internship with mandatory weekly educational workshops, and a nine-month follow-up period during which case management and follow-up services were offered to participants. Young people were paid the minimum wage for orientation, internship placements, and weekly educational workshops.
- **Overall, participation in YAIP was high: Over three-fourths of young people assigned to the program group participated in a subsidized internship and, among this group, approximately 86 percent completed their internships.** The average length of program participation among young people who worked in a subsidized internship was 15 weeks (this figure includes time between random assignment and the orientation phase), with an average of 22 hours per week spent working in internships and attending educational workshops during the internship phase of the program.
- **Provider staff faced many challenges in recruiting participants and delivering the program, leaving them vulnerable to burnout.** Program managers reported difficulties with frequent staff turnover as a result. Staff challenges included navigating a lengthy and involved recruitment and assessment process; contending with YAIP's overlapping program cycles, which required staff to juggle varying responsibilities for cohorts in different phases of the program simultaneously; the inherent difficulties of working with a disadvantaged group of young people, some of whom require a great deal of support even outside of regular working hours; and handling DYCD's oversight and performance expectations, which many staff viewed as restrictive and unrealistic.
- **YAIP provider staff, supervisors at internship sites, and participants seemed to agree that while the internship is a positive learning experience for participants, it may not sufficiently enhance their long-term employability.** YAIP was originally conceived of as a relatively "light-touch" intervention to help reengage a more job-ready subset of the disconnected youth population based on the premise that this group would not require intensive services to get back on track. However, many of those involved with the YAIP program disagreed with this premise and believed that

youth required both a higher level of support and a longer intervention to improve their educational and labor market outcomes.

Based on the results of the implementation study, the program effectively “reconnected” many of the disconnected youth they served during the study period by placing them in paid internships. The next section presents results from an early analysis of whether reengagement improved young people’s outcomes in employment and earnings, education and training, and other areas of interest.

Early Impacts of YAIP

The impact study relies on data from three key sources: employment and earnings data from the National Directory of New Hires (NDNH), 12-month survey data, and postsecondary school enrollment data from the National Student Clearinghouse. For this report, follow-up of just over one year after random assignment was available to assess differences in outcomes between program and control group members. Early findings from the impact study are as follows:

- **There was a statistically significant service differential between program and control group members wherein the program group was more likely to have received help finding and keeping a job than the control group; however, many control group members also received help in this area.** Program group members were also more likely than control group members to have received advice or support and mentorship from staff members at an agency or organization.
- **Program group members were more likely than control group members to have worked at some point in the year following random assignment, but the quarterly employment rates of the two research groups converged shortly after the subsidized internships provided by YAIP ended.** Program group members also had higher earnings than control group members in the year following random assignment; while highest during the time when program group youth were working in paid internships, earnings impacts persisted throughout the follow-up period. Sustained earnings differences toward the end of the follow-up period combined with information from the 12-month survey concerning current employment suggest that program group youth may have been working in better jobs than control group members (that is, permanent jobs with full-time hours) at the end of the follow-up period.

- **Program and control group members had similar outcomes over the first year of follow-up in other domains where impacts were assessed.** These domains include education and training, psychosocial outcomes, economic and personal well-being, and criminal involvement.

The impacts of YAIP will be more fully examined later, when data from 30-months of follow-up are available.

Next Steps

The STED evaluation of YAIP is part of a larger effort to understand how best to help young people who have become untethered from the worlds of school and work to reengage in productive activity. Findings from the implementation study indicate that YAIP is a well-implemented program, operates similarly across providers with a high degree of fidelity to the intended program model, and serves a large swath of New York City's more job-ready disconnected youth. Rates of participation are high, a notable finding considering the many youth programs that struggle to keep young people engaged in their services. Whether YAIP is having its ultimate intended effects of improving participants' labor market prospects and reducing their risk of long-term economic hardship remains an open question. The current report presents only one-year impacts of the program. It is too early to draw any firm conclusions about whether YAIP will improve employment outcomes, or outcomes in other domains, in the longer term. Final impact results, with a longer-term follow-up period of 30 months, will be presented in a later report, as will the results of a benefit-cost study.

Appendix A

Survey Response Bias Analysis

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The YAIP evaluation includes three surveys. This analysis examines the survey response for the first two surveys, one administered at roughly four months post-random assignment (4-month survey) and the second administered roughly one year post-random assignment (12-month survey).¹ A subset of the full research sample completed each survey. Therefore, it is possible that those who participated in the surveys are not representative of the full research sample, which could introduce bias into the estimates produced from the survey data. It is not unexpected that each of the survey samples may differ slightly from the full research sample in terms of socio-demographic characteristics, since certain characteristics such as age, gender, and stability are generally associated with survey response. The main concern is differences between program and control group respondents — if there are differences between the type of program group members who responded to each survey and the type of control group members who responded to each survey, impact estimates based on the survey data may be biased.

Overall, the administration of both surveys went well. Both surveys achieved response rates of about 80 percent and nearly all interviews were completed on time (within the survey fielding window of four months). However, the 4-month survey was administered only to the second cohort of the YAIP study sample due to budget and logistical constraints. As a result, the respondent sample for that survey (n=719) is smaller than the respondent sample for the 12-month survey (n=2,127).

Despite the differences in fielded samples, the response analysis for the two surveys indicates limited evidence of issues that might introduce bias into impact estimates. There are a few small differences in the socio-demographic characteristics of the survey respondents compared with nonrespondents for both surveys, which is a typical finding of survey response analysis as certain characteristics are associated with survey response propensity. However, the baseline characteristics of the members of the two research groups are similar within the samples for both surveys. In addition, comparisons of program impacts among survey respondents with those estimated for the full research sample using administrative data show that while the magnitude of impacts varies slightly across the samples, the overall pattern of results is the same.

Response Differences

To test whether survey respondents differ from nonrespondents, the research team compared the socioeconomic characteristics of these two groups. As shown in Appendix Table A.1, the

¹Results from the third survey, administered at roughly 30 months after random assignment, will be presented in a later report, as will the response bias analysis results for that survey.

Appendix Table A.1
Selected Baseline Characteristics of Survey Respondents and Nonrespondents,
by Survey Wave

Characteristic	4-Month Survey		12-Month Survey	
	Respondents	Non-respondents	Respondents	Non-respondents
Average age (years)	20.5	20.5	20.6	20.8
Female (%)	50.7	44.2	51.9	47.2 **
Race/ethnicity (%)				
Hispanic	38.0	40.9	35.3	39.5
Black, non-Hispanic	58.8	55.2	59.1	54.3
Other, non-Hispanic	3.2	3.9	5.6	6.2
Ever employed (%)	70.0	66.9	72.1	69.9
Worked in last three months (%)	25.8	26.0	29.7	31.5
Has children (%)	18.3	21.7	19.9	20.1
Has high school diploma or GED certificate (%)	63.5	51.9 ***	63.3	55.5 ***
Serious barrier to employment ^a (%)	42.1	51.4 **	44.3	51.2 ***
Receives public assistance (%)	25.9	29.3	25.8	28.1
Ever arrested (%)	25.9	32.2 *	24.8	31.0 ***
Sample size	719	181	2,127	551

SOURCE: MDRC calculations based on data from MDRC's random assignment system and the YAIP management information system.

NOTE: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

The 4-month survey was fielded to members of the second cohort only.

^aThis measure includes homelessness or unstable housing, history of foster care, limited literacy or math skills, mental or physical disability, previous criminal conviction, and pregnancy or having a child.

respondents to both the 4-month and 12-month follow-up surveys had statistically significant differences from nonrespondents for a few characteristics. For both surveys, respondents were more likely to have a high school diploma or GED certificate, less likely to have a serious barrier to employment, and less likely to have ever been arrested. Additionally, respondents to

the 12-month survey were more likely to be female. Since comparison of a series of characteristics causes susceptibility to false positives, a global test of the relationship of these characteristics to response status was conducted.² This test is conducted by estimating a regression model predicting survey response; the test statistic reported for each characteristic indicates whether that characteristic has a statistically significant association with survey response controlling for the other characteristics, and the joint test indicates whether the characteristics collectively have a statistically significant association with survey response. Appendix Table A.2 presents the results of these tests for both surveys. For the 4-month survey, a few characteristics have significant effects, meaning that the characteristic, when controlling for the other characteristics in the model, has a significant association with survey response status; the overall joint test is not statistically significant, indicating that response status for this survey cannot be predicted using these characteristics. Several characteristics in the joint test for the 12-month survey response are also significant, and the overall test is statistically significant as well.

It is not uncommon to find baseline characteristics that are predictive of response status. These associations may indicate some level of nonresponse bias, but this bias would primarily affect level estimates rather than impact estimates, since the bias affects both program and control group members. (Generally, survey respondents tend to be more stable than nonrespondents. Thus, outcome levels for respondents may overstate positive overall outcome levels to some degree.) In regard to the estimation of program impacts, differences between respondents by research group are the primary concern. Accordingly, the research team compared socio-demographic characteristics of survey respondents by research group. As shown in Appendix Table A.3, survey respondents were fairly similar across research groups. While the joint test of the association between socio-demographic characteristics and research groups for survey respondents was not significant in either survey wave (Appendix Table A.4), one characteristic, whether the respondent had a high school diploma or GED certificate at baseline, was significant for 12-month survey respondents. This indicates that survey respondents in the program group were slightly less likely to have had a high school diploma or GED certificate at study enrollment compared with survey respondents in the control group, controlling for the other characteristics.

Impact Differences

Another way to assess possible bias from survey response is to examine differences in impacts measured with administrative data between the survey respondent samples and the full research

²As the number of individual tests conducted increases, the likelihood of finding a statistically significant difference increases.

Appendix Table A.2

Joint Test of Differences Between Survey Respondents and Nonrespondents, by Survey Wave

Characteristic	4-Month Survey	12-Month Survey
Age	0.615	1.854
Race/ethnicity	0.957	4.360
Female	2.720 *	2.446
Ever employed	0.236	1.372
Worked in last three months	0.110	0.559
Children	0.018	2.090
High school diploma or GED certificate	4.258 **	6.574 **
Serious barrier to employment ^a	1.940	5.533 **
Receives public assistance	0.386	0.264
Ever arrested	0.281	1.927
Overall test	16.224	34.539 ***
Sample size	900	2,678

SOURCE: MDRC calculations based on data from MDRC's random assignment system and the YAIP management information system.

NOTES: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

The 4-month survey was fielded to members of the second cohort only.

The joint test of differences between survey respondents and nonrespondents was conducted by estimating a regression model of response probability for each survey wave. For each characteristic, the joint test indicates whether there is an association between the characteristic and response, controlling for the other characteristics. The overall test indicates whether there is an association between survey response and all of the characteristics collectively.

^aThis measure includes homelessness or unstable housing, history of foster care, limited literacy or math skills, mental or physical disability, previous criminal conviction, and pregnancy or having a child.

Appendix Table A.3
Selected Baseline Characteristics of Survey Respondents,
by Survey Wave and Research Group

Characteristic	4-Month Survey		12-Month Survey	
	Program Group	Control Group	Program Group	Control Group
Average age (years)	20.5	20.5	20.6	20.7
Female (%)	49.5	52.6	52.2	51.3
Race/ethnicity (%)				
Hispanic	37.0	39.6	34.9	36.1
Black, non-Hispanic	58.9	58.6	59.5	58.4
Other, non-Hispanic	4.1	1.8	5.6	5.5
Ever employed (%)	71.4	67.8	71.7	73.0
Worked in last three months (%)	24.3	28.1	29.5	30.1
Has children (%)	18.5	18.1	19.6	20.5
Has high school diploma or GED certificate (%)	62.3	65.6	61.8	65.7 *
Serious barrier to employment ^a (%)	41.4	43.2	43.4	45.8
Receives public assistance (%)	25.5	26.6	25.7	26.0
Ever arrested (%)	25.2	26.9	23.7	26.6
Sample size	443	276	1,327	800

SOURCE: MDRC calculations based on data from MDRC's random assignment system and the YAIP management information system.

NOTES: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

The 4-month survey was fielded to members of the second cohort only.

^aThis measure includes homelessness or unstable housing, history of foster care, limited literacy or math skills, mental or physical disability, previous criminal conviction, and pregnancy or having a child.

sample. If the differences between the program and control groups in the survey respondent sample are not similar to those observed for the full research sample, it would indicate that the survey respondent sample is not representative, and thus survey-based impact estimates may be biased.

Appendix Table A.4
Joint Test of Differences Between Research Groups,
by Survey Wave

Characteristic	4-Month Survey	12-Month Survey
Age	0.218	0.025
Race/ethnicity	2.895	0.643
Female	1.032	0.015
Ever employed	1.481	0.213
Worked in last three months	1.654	0.000
Children	0.317	0.081
High school diploma or GED certificate	1.242	4.478 **
Serious barrier to employment ^a	0.308	0.843
Receives public assistance	0.013	0.016
Ever arrested	0.618	2.683
Overall test	8.084	8.814
Sample size	719	2,127

SOURCE: MDRC calculations based on data from MDRC's random assignment system and the YAIP management information system.

NOTES: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

The 4-month survey was fielded to members of the second cohort only.

The joint test of differences between research groups among survey respondents was conducted by estimating a regression model of response probability for each survey wave. For each characteristic, the joint test indicates whether there is an association between the characteristic and response, controlling for the other characteristics. The overall test indicates whether there is an association between survey response and all of the characteristics collectively.

^aThis measure includes homelessness or unstable housing, history of foster care, limited literacy or math skills, mental or physical disability, previous criminal conviction, and pregnancy or having a child.

Appendix Table A.5 presents selected one-year impacts based on administrative data for the research and survey respondent samples. While the magnitude of the impacts varies slightly between samples (particularly for the 4-month survey, for which impacts are more positive), the overall pattern is the same, with statistically significant increases in employment and earnings for all three samples and no statistically significant impacts on postsecondary enrollment.

A second method to assess whether impact estimates are biased due to survey nonresponse is multiple imputation. This method uses statistical modeling to predict the responses for sample members that did not participate in the survey. Multiple predictions are generated to simulate the distribution of responses from which full sample estimates are produced. In other words, this analysis provides an estimate of the survey-based impacts if the full research sample had participated in the survey. Appendix Table A.6 shows the estimated regression coefficients for the program effects for the 12-month survey respondent sample and the full research sample as estimated via multiple imputation.³ The estimates are virtually the same for both outcomes among both samples, both in terms of size and statistical significance, suggesting little difference in program impacts between survey respondents and nonrespondents.

³Estimated coefficients are analogous to program impacts as reported in the text.

Appendix Table A.5

Selected One-Year Impacts for the Research and Survey Respondent Samples

Outcome	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval
Employment (%)				
Research sample	95.1	66.0	29.0 ***	[26.9,31.3]
Respondent sample, 12-month survey	96.0	65.8	30.2 ***	[27.8,32.6]
Respondent sample, 4-month survey	97.9	60.0	38.0 ***	[33.9,42.1]
Total earnings (\$)				
Research sample	6,685	3,252	3,433 ***	[3112,3754]
Respondent sample, 12-month survey	6,815	3,225	3,591 ***	[3226,3956]
Respondent sample, 4-month survey	6,713	2,934	3,779 ***	[3136,4422]
Enrolled in postsecondary institution (%)				
Research sample	13.0	14.0	-1.0	[-3.1,1.1]
Respondent sample, 12-month survey	13.9	13.9	0.0	[-2.5,2.4]
Respondent sample, 4-month survey	14.9	10.9	4.0	[-0.1,8.1]
Sample size				
Research sample (total = 2,678)	1,638	1,040		
Respondent sample, 12-month survey (total = 2,127)	1,327	800		
Respondent sample, 4-month survey (total = 719)	443	276		

SOURCES: MDRC calculations based on quarterly wage data from the National Directory of New Hires and postsecondary education data from the National Student Clearinghouse.

NOTES: Results in this table are regression-adjusted, controlling for pre-random assignment characteristics.

Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

Employment rates and earnings include both YAIP subsidized jobs and all other jobs covered by unemployment insurance.

Appendix Table A.6

Estimated Regression Coefficients for Program Impacts for 12-Month Survey and Research Sample (Imputed)

Outcome (%)	Program Impact
Ever employed in one year	
Respondent sample, 12-month survey	7.2 ***
Research sample (imputed)	7.2 ***
Currently employed	
Respondent sample, 12-month survey	3.2
Research sample (imputed)	3.3
Respondent sample, 12-month survey	2,127
Research sample (imputed)	2,678

SOURCE: MDRC calculations based on data from MDRC's random assignment system, the YAIP management information system, and responses to the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration 12-month youth survey.

NOTES: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

The multiple imputation results presented here estimate the program impacts on survey-based outcomes by performing multiple imputations of probable responses for survey nonrespondents.

Appendix B

**YAIP Employer/Supervisor and Participant Program
Experiences**

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Appendix Table B.1
Employer and Worksite Supervisor Perspectives on YAIP

Measure (%)	Respondents
Reasons for participating in YAIP ^a	
Help participants upgrade skills and training	86.2
Help struggling community with new jobs	48.3
Test new workers for potential permanent hire	40.7
Short-term labor	20.0
Test a partnership for job placement services	17.2
Other	4.1
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Sample size	145
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<u>Among those identified as internship worksite supervisors</u>	
Believes part of role is to help participants learn soft skills ^b	81.6
Believes part of role is to help participants learn hard skills ^b	53.9
Uses YAIP staff as a resource to help resolve problems with participants ^b	42.5
Preparation of participants for first day compared with typical entry-level workers	
More	9.2
About the same	29.4
Less	61.5
Performance improvement of participants compared with typical entry-level workers	
More	69.7
About the same	22.0
Less	8.3
<hr/>	
Sample size	115

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration employer or worksite supervisor questionnaire.

NOTE: Among the full sample of 145 respondents, 115 held dual roles as both employers and direct supervisors of YAIP interns. The remaining 30 respondents were employers only.

^aRespondents selected their top three reasons from this list. For this reason, the percent of employers selecting each reason sum to more than 100 percent.

^bRespondents were asked about their level of agreement with the statement on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 indicates strong disagreement and 7 indicates strong agreement. The figure shown represents the percent of respondents who selected a 6 or 7 on the scale.

Appendix Table B.2
YAIP Participant Program Experiences

Measure (%)	Participants
Typical tasks completed at internship ^a	
General office work ^b	52.4
Computer-based work	49.4
Interacting with customers	47.8
Cleaning or maintaining work spaces	45.2
Answering or making telephone calls	42.7
Services received from YAIP ^c	
Career planning or job search assistance ^d	79.0
Help forming educational or career goals	71.7
Money management support	57.9
Help obtaining work-appropriate clothing	46.9
Transportation assistance	37.4
Decided to go back to school because of YAIP participation	45.3
Sample size	570

SOURCE: MDRC calculations from the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration youth participant questionnaire.

NOTES: ^aParticipants selected all that applied from among 16 unique task categories; the five most commonly selected categories are displayed here.

^bThis category includes activities such as filing and making copies.

^cParticipants selected all that applied from among 18 unique service categories; the five most commonly selected categories are displayed here.

^dThis category includes résumé writing and job interview preparation.

Appendix C

**Four-Month Impacts on Employment, Psychosocial
Outcomes, and Personal Well-Being**

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Appendix Table C.1
**Four-Month Impacts on Employment,
 Psychosocial Outcomes, and Personal Well-Being**

Outcome	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval
<u>Employment</u>				
Ever employed since random assignment (%)	71.5	37.7	33.8 ***	[27.9,39.7]
Ever employed in a paid internship (%)	60.2	8.1	52.1 ***	[46.7,57.4]
Currently employed (%)	50.2	22.2	28.0 ***	[22.0,33.9]
Full-time employment	7.2	9.8	-2.5	[-6.1,1.0]
Part-time employment	42.7	12.2	30.6 ***	[25.0,36.2]
Among those currently employed, average hours worked per week ^a	24.2	30.0	-5.7	
<u>Psychosocial outcomes</u>				
Average score on self-esteem scale ^b	3.3	3.3	0.0	[0.0,0.1]
Average score on career orientation scale ^c	3.4	3.5	0.0	[-0.1,0.0]
Average score on social support scale ^d	3.8	3.8	0.0	[-0.1,0.1]
Average score on locus of control scale ^e	5.4	5.4	0.0	[-0.1,0.1]
Believed that one or more circumstances made it difficult to achieve goals ^f (%)	49.2	58.7	-9.5 ***	[-15.5,-3.5]
Has someone who could complete a small favor (%)	84.2	87.8	-3.6	[-8.1,0.8]
Has someone who could lend them \$250 (%)	68.2	67.4	0.8	[-5.1,6.6]
Has a... (%)				
Mentor	67.0	63.5	3.4	[-2.6,9.5]
Role model	47.4	45.5	1.9	[-4.5,8.3]
Friend attending or who graduated from college	72.6	73.5	-0.9	[-6.5,4.8]
Friend earning more than \$30,000 per year	34.1	37.7	-3.6	[-10.1,2.9]

(continued)

Table C.1 (continued)

Outcome	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval
Personal well-being (%)				
Experienced serious psychological distress in past month ^g	6.4	6.9	-0.5	[-3.7,2.6]
Overall happiness				
Very happy	28.1	17.6	10.4 ***	[4.9,15.9]
Pretty happy	61.1	60.4	0.6	[-5.6,6.9]
Not too happy	10.9	21.9	-11.1 ***	[-15.6,-6.5]
Sample size (total = 719)	443	276		

SOURCE: MDRC calculations based on responses to the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration 4-month youth survey.

NOTES: Results in this table are regression-adjusted, controlling for pre-random assignment characteristics.

Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

Only members of Cohort 2 completed the four-month survey.

^aThese measures are calculated among those employed at the time of their 4-month survey interviews; they are therefore considered nonexperimental and are not tested for statistical significance.

^bThe Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is a 10-item scale that assesses feelings of self-esteem. Response categories range from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 4 = "strongly agree," where higher scores indicate higher levels of self-esteem. The 10 items are averaged.

^cThe career orientation scale is a six-item scale that assesses career expectations and aspirations. Scale scores range from 1 to 4, where higher scores indicate higher levels of career orientation. The six items are averaged.

^dThe Medical Outcomes Study Social Support Survey is a seven-item scale that assesses the types of social support available to respondents. Scale scores range from 1 to 5, where higher scores indicate higher levels of social support. The seven items are averaged.

^eThe locus of control scale is a five-item scale that assesses the feelings of control over one's life circumstances. Scale scores range from 1 to 6, where higher scores indicate higher locus of control. The five items are averaged.

^fCircumstances include lack of a high school diploma or equivalency certificate, limited reading or math skills, limited work history, unstable housing, experience in foster care, pregnancy or child care, physical or medical disability, mental health difficulties, criminal record, alcohol or substance abuse, and family responsibilities.

^gA score of 13 or higher on the Kessler-6 Scale (K-6) is used here to define serious psychological distress. The K-6 assesses how often during the past month a respondent felt so sad that nothing could cheer the individual up, nervous, restless or fidgety, hopeless, that everything was an effort, and worthless. As a result of minor differences between the scale used to administer the K-6 in the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration 12-month youth survey and the standard K-6, the percentages presented in this table may slightly underestimate the incidence of serious psychological distress among the YAIP sample.

Appendix D

One-Year Impacts on Key Outcomes by Subgroup

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Appendix Table D.1

One-Year Impacts on Primary Outcomes, by Cohort

Outcome	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval	Difference Between Subgroup Impacts ^a
<u>Cohort 1</u>					
<u>Education (%)</u>					
Earned high school diploma or equivalency certificate (based on survey)	11.7	12.9	-1.3	[-5.5,2.9]	
Enrolled in a postsecondary institution	7.8	11.8	-4.0 **	[-7.2,-0.8]	†
Enrolled in four-year college	3.0	4.2	-1.2	[-3.3,0.9]	
Enrolled in two-year college	4.7	8.0	-3.2 *	[-5.9,-0.5]	†
<u>Employment and earnings</u>					
Employment (%)	96.0	64.6	31.3 ***	[27.5,35.1]	†††
YAIP subsidized employment (%)	81.8	--	--		
Average total earnings (\$)	6,755	3,054	3,701 ***	[3110,4292]	
Average number of quarters employed	2.7	1.6	1.1 ***	[1.0,1.3]	†††
Average quarterly employment (%)	68.4	40.4	28.1 ***	[24.5,31.6]	†††
Employment in first quarter of Year 2 (%)	56.2	52.6	3.6	[-2.1,9.3]	
Currently employed (based on survey) (%)	53.5	50.4	3.1	[-3.4,9.6]	
<hr/>					
Sample size (total = 868)	534	334			
<hr/>					
<u>Cohort 2</u>					
<u>Education (%)</u>					
Earned high school diploma or equivalency certificate (based on survey)	11.2	15.1	-3.9	[-8.1,0.3]	
Enrolled in a postsecondary institution	13.9	11.5	2.4	[-1.2,6.0]	†
Enrolled in four-year college	3.4	3.1	0.2	[-1.8,2.2]	
Enrolled in two-year college	10.5	8.3	2.2	[-1.1,5.4]	†
<u>Employment and earnings</u>					
Employment (%)	95.9	59.8	36.0 ***	[32.2,39.9]	†††
YAIP subsidized employment (%)	79.6	--	--		
Average total earnings (\$)	6,419	3,059	3,360 ***	[2780,3940]	
Average number of quarters employed	2.7	1.4	1.3 ***	[1.2,1.5]	†††
Average quarterly employment (%)	68.1	34.5	33.6 ***	[30.2,37.0]	†††
Employment in first quarter of Year 2 (%)	53.5	50.5	3.0	[-2.4,8.5]	
Currently employed (based on survey) (%)	57.0	50.2	6.7 *	[0.4,13.0]	
<hr/>					
Sample size (total = 900)	551	349			

(continued)

Appendix Table D.1 (continued)

Outcome	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval	Difference Between Subgroup Impacts ^a
<u>Cohort 3</u>					
<u>Education (%)</u>					
Earned high school diploma or equivalency certificate (based on survey)	9.2	10.6	-1.5	[-5.2,2.3]	
Enrolled in a postsecondary institution	17.1	18.4	-1.3	[-5.4,2.8]	†
Enrolled in four-year college	7.3	5.9	1.4	[-1.4,4.1]	
Enrolled in two-year college	9.8	12.7	-2.9	[-6.4,0.6]	†
<u>Employment and earnings</u>					
Employment (%)	93.8	73.2	20.5 ***	[16.9,24.2]	†††
YAIP subsidized employment (%)	80.6	--	--		
Average total earnings (\$)	6,739	3,847	2,892 ***	[2416,3368]	
Average number of quarters employed	2.2	1.8	0.5 ***	[0.3,0.6]	†††
Average quarterly employment (%)	56.0	44.2	11.8 ***	[8.6,14.9]	†††
Employment in first quarter of Year 2 (%)	52.8	53.8	-1.0	[-6.4,4.4]	
Currently employed (based on survey) (%)	51.4	53.5	-2.1	[-8.4,4.2]	
Sample size (total = 910)	553	357			

SOURCES: MDRC calculations based on quarterly wage data from the National Directory of New Hires, postsecondary education data from the National Student Clearinghouse, and responses to the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration 12-month youth survey.

NOTES: Program impacts were calculated separately for each subgroup, using an ordinary least squares model and adjusting for pre-random assignment characteristics. Impact estimates were then examined for statistically significant differences across subgroups.

Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

^aWhen comparing impacts between two subgroups, an H-statistic is generated. The H-statistic is used to assess whether the difference in impacts between the subgroups is statistically significant. Statistically significant differences between subgroups are indicated as: ††† = 1 percent; †† = 5 percent; † = 10 percent.

Appendix Table D.2

One-Year Impacts on Primary Outcomes, by Educational Status at Baseline

Outcome	Has High School Diploma or GED Certificate				Does Not Have High School Diploma or GED Certificate				Difference Between Subgroup Impacts ^a
	Program Group		Control Group		Program Group		Control Group		
	90 Percent Confidence Interval	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval	Difference (Impact)	
<u>Education (%)</u>									
Earned high school diploma or equivalency certificate (based on survey)	8.6	11.0	-2.4	[-5.0,0.3]	14.2	15.1	-0.9	[-5.2,3.3]	
Enrolled in a postsecondary institution	18.8	20.4	-1.6	[-4.7,1.6]	3.9	4.4	-0.5	[-2.5,1.6]	
Enrolled in four-year college	6.6	6.1	0.5	[-1.5,2.4]	0.9	1.8	-0.9	[-2.0,0.3]	
Enrolled in two-year college	12.2	14.5	-2.4	[-5.1,0.4]	3.0	2.6	0.4	[-1.4,2.2]	
<u>Employment and earnings</u>									
Employment (%)	97.0	71.4	25.6 ***	[23.0,28.2]	92.0	57.0	35.1 ***	[31.2,39.0]	†††
YAIP subsidized employment (%)	82.4	--	--		77.7	--	--		
Average total earnings (\$)	7,406	3,777	3,629 ***	[3242,4017]	5,569	2,428	3,141 ***	[2591,3692]	
Average number of quarters employed	2.7	1.8	1.0 ***	[0.9,1.1]	2.3	1.3	1.0 ***	[0.9,1.2]	
Average quarterly employment (%)	68.0	44.1	23.8 ***	[21.4,26.3]	58.1	32.4	25.7 ***	[22.4,28.9]	
Employment in first quarter of Year 2 (%)	60.3	56.2	4.1 *	[0.1,8.1]	44.6	46.2	-1.7	[-6.9,3.6]	
Currently employed (based on survey) (%)	58.8	54.5	4.3	[-0.2,8.9]	46.2	47.9	-1.7	[-7.9,4.5]	
Sample size (total = 2,666)	988	656			644	378			

SOURCES: MDRC calculations based on quarterly wage data from the National Directory of New Hires, postsecondary education data from the National Student Clearinghouse, and responses to the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration 12-month youth survey.

NOTES: Program impacts were calculated separately for each subgroup, using an ordinary least squares model and adjusting for pre-random assignment characteristics. Impact estimates were then examined for statistically significant differences across subgroups.

Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

^aWhen comparing impacts between two subgroups, an H-statistic is generated. The H-statistic is used to assess whether the difference in impacts between the subgroups is statistically significant. Statistically significant differences between subgroups are indicated as: ††† = 1 percent; †† = 5 percent; † = 10 percent.

Appendix Table D.3

**One-Year Impacts on Primary Outcomes, by Length of Time
Disconnected from Work and School at Baseline**

Outcome	Nine Months or More				Less Than Nine Months				Difference Between Subgroup Impacts ^a
	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval	
Education (%)									
Earned high school diploma or equivalency certificate (based on survey)	10.7	11.8	-1.0	[-4.3,2.3]	10.1	14.9	-4.8 **	[-8.2,-1.4]	
Enrolled in a postsecondary institution	10.6	12.6	-2.0	[-4.9,0.8]	15.4	14.8	0.6	[-2.5,3.8]	
Enrolled in four-year college	3.8	3.7	0.1	[-1.7,1.8]	5.2	5.3	-0.1	[-2.1,1.9]	
Enrolled in two-year college	6.8	8.9	-2.1	[-4.5,0.4]	10.2	9.9	0.2	[-2.5,3.0]	
Employment and earnings									
Employment (%)	94.5	58.8	35.7 ***	[32.4,38.9]	95.9	73.2	22.7 ***	[19.8,25.6]	†††
YAIP subsidized employment (%)	83.0	--	--	--	79.5	--	--	--	
Average total earnings (\$)	6,255	2,530	3,726 ***	[3343,4109]	7,126	3,891	3,235 ***	[2723,3747]	
Average number of quarters employed	2.4	1.3	1.1 ***	[1.0,1.2]	2.7	1.8	0.9 ***	[0.8,1.0]	††
Average quarterly employment (%)	52.9	39.2	13.7 ***	[11.1,16.3]	67.3	45.6	21.7 ***	[18.9,24.6]	††
Employment in first quarter of Year 2 (%)	46.9	47.3	-0.4	[-4.9,4.1]	60.5	57.3	3.2	[-1.3,7.8]	
Currently employed (based on survey) (%)	47.9	46.6	1.3	[-4.0,6.5]	59.8	56.1	3.7	[-1.6,9.0]	
Sample size (total = 2,605)	788	521			810	486			

SOURCES: MDRC calculations based on quarterly wage data from the National Directory of New Hires, postsecondary education data from the National Student Clearinghouse, and responses to the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration 12-month youth survey.

NOTES: Program impacts were calculated separately for each subgroup, using an ordinary least squares model and adjusting for pre-random assignment characteristics. Impact estimates were then examined for statistically significant differences across subgroups.

Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

^aWhen comparing impacts between two subgroups, an H-statistic is generated. The H-statistic is used to assess whether the difference in impacts between the subgroups is statistically significant. Statistically significant differences between subgroups are indicated as: ††† = 1 percent; †† = 5 percent; † = 10 percent.

Appendix Table D.4

One-Year Impacts on Primary Outcomes, by Gender

Outcome	Female				Male				Difference Between Subgroup Impacts ^a
	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval	Program Group	Control Group	Difference (Impact)	90 Percent Confidence Interval	
Education (%)									
Earned high school diploma or equivalency certificate (based on survey)	8.8	11.3	-2.5	[-5.5,0.6]	13.4	14.8	-1.4	[-5.0,2.2]	
Enrolled in a postsecondary institution	14.0	13.5	0.6	[-2.4,3.6]	11.4	14.7	-3.3 *	[-6.2,-0.3]	
Enrolled in 4-year college	5.5	4.3	1.2	[-0.7,3.2]	3.6	5.1	-1.5	[-3.4,0.3]	†
Enrolled in 2-year college	8.5	9.4	-0.9	[-3.4,1.7]	7.9	9.9	-2.0	[-4.6,0.6]	
Employment and earnings									
Employment (%)	95.2	70.3	25.0 ***	[22.1,27.9]	95.0	61.8	33.2 ***	[30.0,36.4]	†††
YAIP subsidized employment (%)	79.8	--	--		81.4	--	--		
Average total earnings (\$)	6,485	3,108	3,377 ***	[2975,3778]	6,896	3,452	3,444 ***	[2943,3945]	
Average number of quarters employed	2.6	1.7	0.9 ***	[0.8,1.0]	2.6	1.5	1.1 ***	[1.0,1.2]	††
Average quarterly employment (%)	64.0	42.3	21.7 ***	[19.0,24.4]	64.3	37.2	27.1 ***	[24.3,30.0]	††
Employment in first quarter of year two (%)	55.2	54.8	0.4	[-4.0,4.9]	53.3	50.0	3.3	[-1.2,7.8]	
Currently employed (based on survey) (%)	53.5	50.1	3.4	[-1.7,8.5]	54.1	52.9	1.2	[-4.0,6.5]	
Sample size (total = 2,669)	833	526			799	511			

SOURCES: MDRC calculations based on quarterly wage data from the National Directory of New Hires, postsecondary education data from the National Student Clearinghouse, and responses to the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration 12-month youth survey.

NOTES: Program impacts were calculated separately for each subgroup, using an ordinary least squares model and adjusting for pre-random assignment characteristics. Impact estimates were then examined for statistically significant differences across subgroups.

Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

^aWhen comparing impacts between two subgroups, an H-statistic is generated. The H-statistic is used to assess whether the difference in impacts between the subgroups is statistically significant. Statistically significant differences between subgroups are indicated as: ††† = 1 percent; †† = 5 percent; † = 10 percent.

Appendix E

**Variation in Key Baseline Characteristics, Participation
Outcomes, and Participant Program Experiences, by
YAIP Location**

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As discussed in the main body of this report, while the multiple YAIP locations generally offered the same services, there were some differences in target populations, service methodologies, and other factors that may moderate program impacts. The effect of provider approach on program impacts will be considered in a later report, but some preliminary analysis regarding variation by YAIP location is provided here as it may be of interest to readers of this report. These initial results present the distribution of provider locations for a variety of measures in the form of a vertical dot plot showing the values for the individual (anonymized) provider location in relation to the median value among the 13 provider locations that were part of the study.

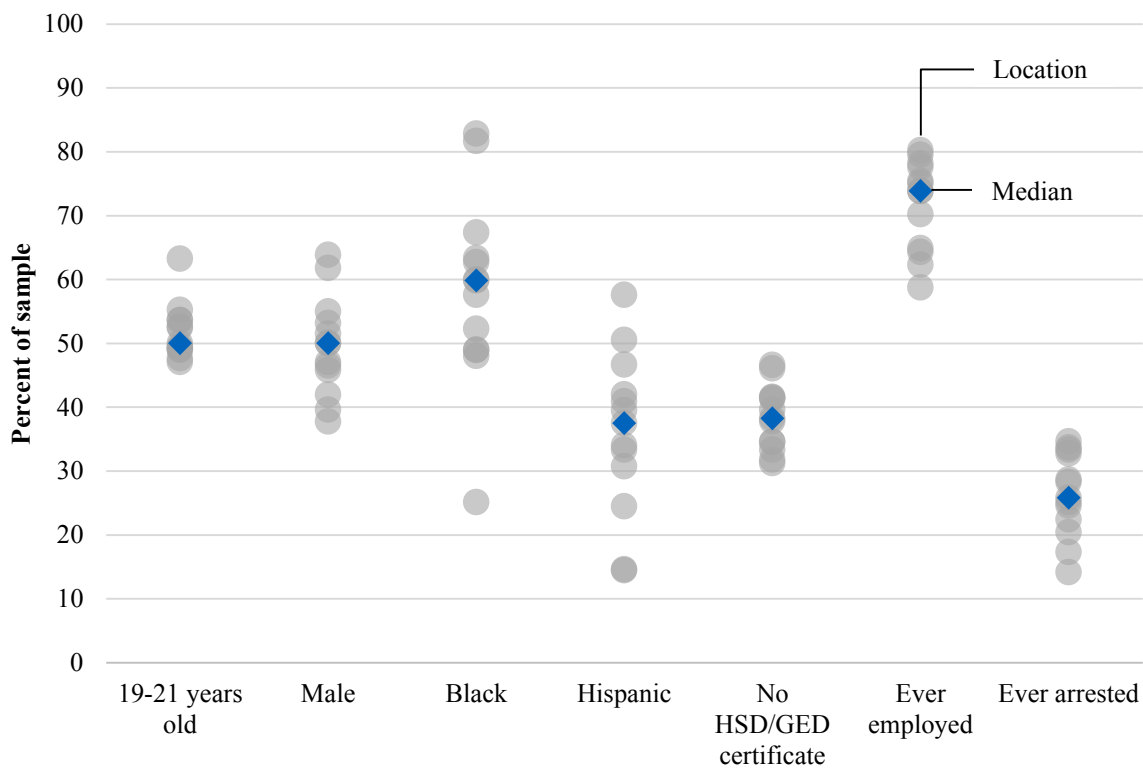
Appendix Figure E.1 shows the variation in the baseline characteristics of study sample members by location. The largest variation by location in terms of baseline characteristics is race/ethnicity — while all locations served a diverse set of young people, some had greater numbers of Hispanic sample members while others had more Black, non-Hispanic sample members. In contrast, most locations' sample members were similar in terms of age and educational attainment, consistent with YAIP's overall target population.

Appendix Figure E.2 shows variation in terms of several participation milestones. The provider locations had fairly similar percentages for the early milestones (attended orientation, worked in an internship) but had more variation for the later outcomes such as completed internship or engagement in a program outcome.

Appendix Figure E.3 shows the assessment of a portion of YAIP participants regarding various aspects of their program experience. While there was cross-location agreement on several aspects of the program, the participants varied considerably across locations as to whether they thought their participation was helpful in preparing them for future employment.

Appendix Figure E.1

Characteristics of Sample Members at Baseline, by Location



SOURCES: Calculations based on data from MDRC's random assignment system and the YAIP management information system.

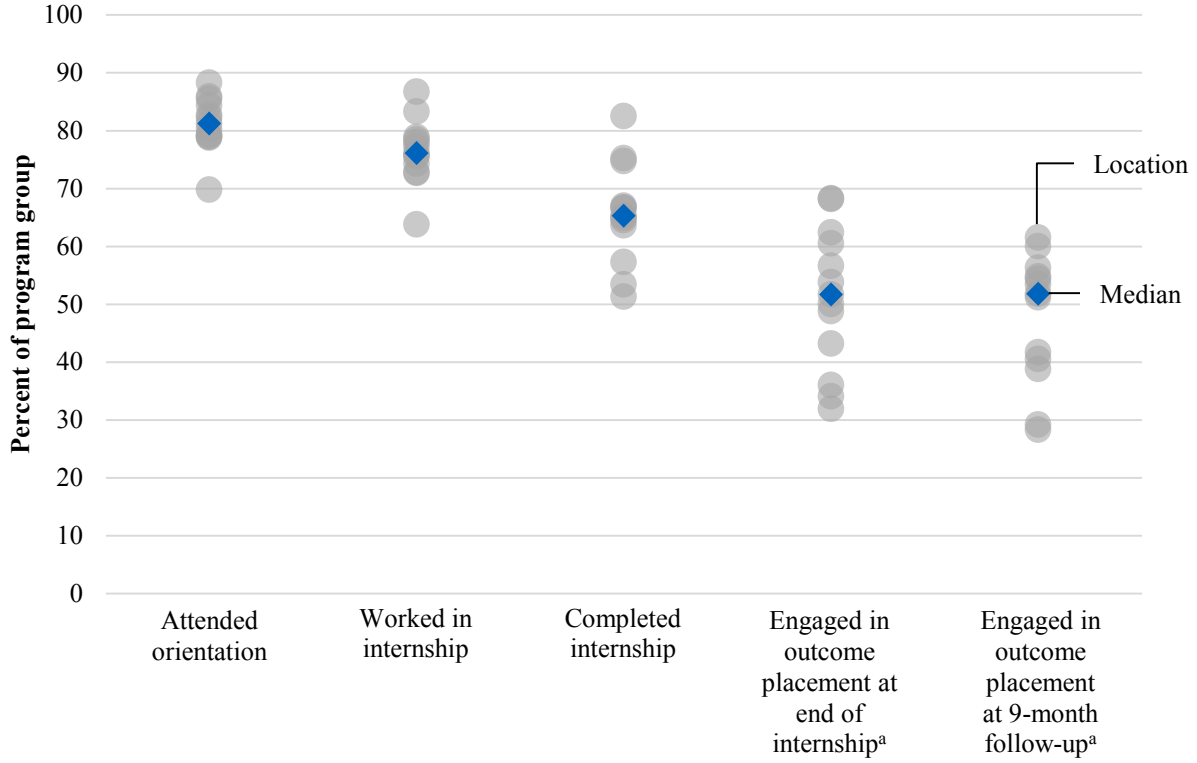
NOTES: Each dot in a column represents one of the 13 YAIP locations that participated in the evaluation. The blue diamond represents the median value across locations.

HSD = high school diploma.

GED = General Educational Development.

Appendix Figure E.2

One-Year Participation in YAIP Subsidized Internships and Services Among Program Group Members, by Location



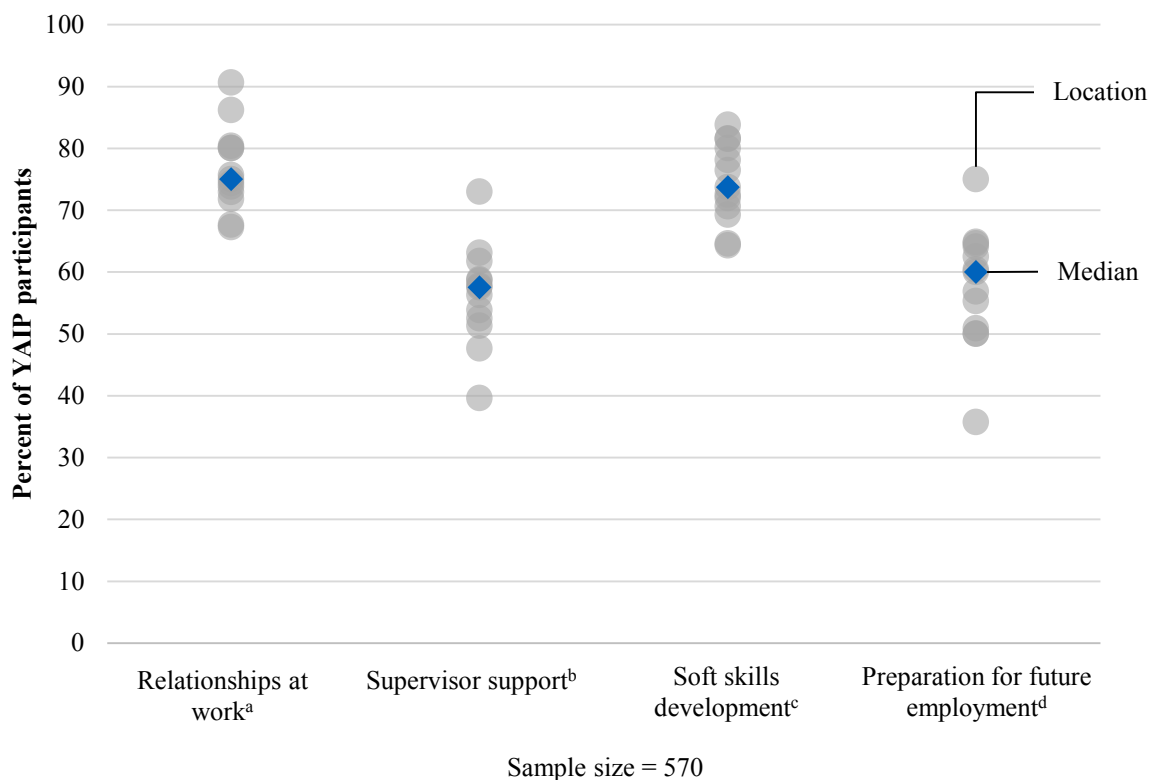
SOURCES: Calculations based on data from MDRC's random assignment system and the YAIP management information system.

NOTES: Each dot in a column represents 1 of the 13 YAIP locations that participated in the evaluation. The blue diamond represents the median value across locations.

^aMeasure is calculated among program group members who ever worked in an internship.

Appendix Figure E.3

YAIP Participants with a Favorable Impression of Internship Support and Preparation for Future Employment, by Location



SOURCE: MDRC calculations from the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration youth participant questionnaire.

NOTES: Each dot in a column represents one of the 13 YAIP locations that participated in the evaluation. The blue diamond represents the median value across locations.

The four measures presented in this figure were created based on an exploratory factor analysis of a pool of questions. These questions asked participants about their level of agreement with a particular statement on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 indicates strong disagreement and 7 indicates strong agreement. Based on the results of the factor analysis, questions were grouped into factors and a mean score was calculated across the questions included in a particular factor; the percentages presented above represent the proportion of questionnaire respondents who averaged a score of 6 or higher on the questions in that factor, indicating a high level of satisfaction with their program experiences in that area.

Questionnaires were administered to participants during weekly educational workshops at each provider, when many participants would be available at once. Consequently, the responses obtained are from participants who attended educational workshops and are therefore likely to have been more motivated and engaged than the full sample of program participants. For this reason, the results presented in this figure are not necessarily representative of all participant experiences and should be interpreted with caution; they are likely to be more positive.

^aMeasure is based on agreement with the following statements: *I understand what is expected of me on the job; I know whom at work to ask for help when I need it; my relationships with coworkers are positive and supportive; and my coworkers understand me and want me to succeed.*

(continued)

Figure E.3 (continued)

NOTES (continued):

^bMeasure is based on agreement with the following statements: *I get the support or guidance that I need from my supervisor; my supervisor gives me advice about how to handle situations at work; and my supervisor helps me if personal issues come up that get in the way of working.*

^cMeasure is based on agreement with the following statements: *I am learning how to work better with coworkers; I am learning how to cooperate better with supervisors; and this job has helped me learn to present myself better at work.*

^dMeasure is based on agreement with the following statements: *The kind of work I am doing will help me get a decent-paying job later; I am learning specific job skills that I will use in the future; and I have met people through this job who may help me find a job in the future.*

Appendix F

**Control Group Members' Future Expectations and
Perspectives on Obstacles Preventing Goal Achievement**

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Appendix Figure F.1 Control Group Members' Future Expectations

Will I be living in the same place in one year?



Will I be attending a regular school in one year?



Will I be attending school and working at least 20 hours per week in one year?



Will I be working at least 20 hours per week in one year if I am not attending school?



Will I become pregnant or get someone pregnant within one year?



Will I be arrested within one year?



Will I have a four-year college degree by age 30?



Will I be working at least 20 hours per week by age 30?



Very unlikely
 Unlikely
 Likely
 Very likely

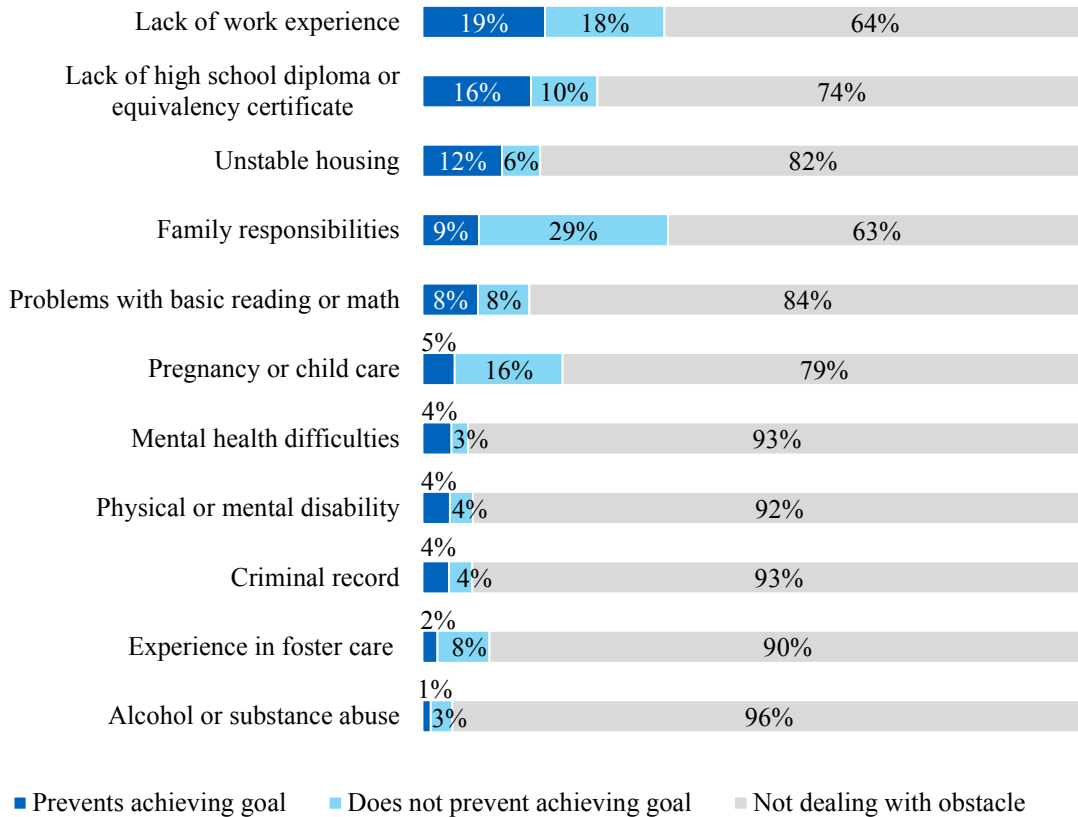
SOURCE: MDRC calculations based on responses to the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration 12-month youth survey.

NOTE: Sample size = 800.

Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in calculating sums and differences.

Appendix Figure F.2

Control Group Members' Experiences with Obstacles and Beliefs About Whether Obstacles Prevent Them from Achieving Their Goals



SOURCE: MDRC calculations based on responses to the Subsidized and Transitional Employment Demonstration 12-month youth survey.

NOTE: Sample size = 800.

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