# The Social Security Administration's Youth Transition Demonstration Projects: Interim Report on Transition WORKS

February 22, 2011

Thomas Fraker
Alison Black
Arif Mamun
Michelle Manno
John Martinez
Bonnie O'Day
Meghan O'Toole
Anu Rangarajan
Debbie Reed

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Submitted to:
Social Security Administration
Office of Program Development and Research
500 E St., SW, Room 905
Washington, DC 20254
Telephone: (202) 358-6509
Facsimile: (202) 358-6505
Project Officer: Joyanne Cobb

Submitted by:
Mathematica Policy Research
600 Maryland Avenue, SW
Suite 550
Washington, DC 20024-2512
Telephone: (202) 484-9220
Facsimile: (202) 863-1763
Project Director: Thomas Fraker

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## ACRONYMS

BLS = Bureau of Labor Statistics

BOCES = Erie 1 Board of Cooperative Educational Services

CDB = Childhood Disability Benefits

CEO = Community Employment Office

CDR = continuing disability review

CPI-W = consumer price index for urban wage earners and clerical workers

DI = Social Security Disability Insurance

EIE = earned income exclusion

ETO = Efforts-to-Outcomes, a management information system

GED = general educational development (or general equivalency diploma)

IDA = individual development account

IEP = individualized education program

ITT = intent to treat

MEF = Master Earnings File

MTP = Model Transition Project

NBS = National Beneficiary Survey

NLS = Neighborhood Legal Services

OLS = ordinary least squares

OMRDD = (New York State) Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities

PASS = plan for achieving self-support

RA = random assignment

SD 1 = self-determination workshop 1 (Transition WORKS)

SD 2 = self-determination workshop 2 (Transition WORKS)

SEIE = student earned income exclusion

SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

SSA = Social Security Administration

SSI = Supplemental Security Income

SVRA = state vocational rehabilitation agency

TANF = Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

TOT = treatment on the treated

TRF = Ticket Research File

VESID = (New York State) Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities

WIPA = Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (grant or project)

YTD = Youth Transition Demonstration

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Youth Transition Demonstration (YTD) is a large-scale demonstration and evaluation sponsored by the Social Security Administration (SSA) to improve understanding of how to help youth with disabilities reach their full economic potential. In particular, SSA is interested in developing and testing promising approaches for helping young people with disabilities become more self-sufficient and less reliant on disability benefits. The YTD conceptual framework, which is based on best practices in facilitating youth transition, specifies that the six projects participating in the evaluation provide employment services (emphasizing paid competitive employment), benefits counseling, links to services available in the community, and other assistance to youth with disabilities and their families. Additionally, participating youth are eligible for SSA waivers of certain benefit program rules, which allow them to retain more of their disability benefits and health insurance while they work for pay. Using a rigorous random assignment methodology, the YTD evaluation team is assessing whether these services and incentives are effective in helping youth with disabilities achieve greater independence and economic self-sufficiency.[1] The earliest of the evaluation projects began operations in 2006 and ended in 2009. The latest started in 2008 and will end in 2012.

In this report, we present first-year evaluation findings for the Transition WORKS YTD project, which served youth disability beneficiaries in Erie County, New York, including the city of Buffalo, from February 2007 to December 2009. While it will take several more years before we fully observe the transitions that youth participants make to adult life, early data from the evaluation provide rich information on how Transition WORKS operated and the differences it made in key outcomes for youth. Specifically, the report includes findings from our process analysis of Transition WORKS, including a description of the program model, how the project was implemented and services were delivered, and the project's fidelity to the YTD model. The report also includes impact findings, based on data collected 12 months after youth entered the evaluation, on the use of services, paid employment, participation in education, income from earnings and benefits, and attitudes and expectations.

In brief, we learned that Transition WORKS was a well-organized, cohesive project that broadly conformed to the YTD program model and focused on self-determination, benefits planning, employment, education, and case management. Through the process analysis, we found that the project enrolled 83 percent of eligible youth and provided most of them with some services in each of these components. The median duration of services directly delivered to participating youth was lower for the employment component than for several of the other components; however, the impact analysis found that youth who had been given the opportunity to participate in Transition WORKS were more likely to have used services to promote employment than youth in a randomly selected control group. Nevertheless, we found no impacts of the project on youth employment during the year following random assignment. Neither did we find impacts on income, expectations for the future, and a composite measure of school enrollment or high school completion.

[1] In 2005, under SSA contract #SS00-05-60084, Mathematica Policy Research, a nonpartisan firm that conducts policy research and surveys, and its partner organizations, MDRC and TransCen, Inc., were awarded a contract to design and conduct the YTD evaluation and provide technical assistance to projects as they developed and implemented their interventions. The evaluation is advised by a technical working group consisting of young adults with disabilities, providers of services to teenagers and young adults with disabilities, policy researchers, academics, and representatives of federal agencies other than SSA.

## The Youth Transition Demonstration Evaluation

The target population for the YTD evaluation is youth ages 14 through 25 who are either receiving SSA disability benefits or are at risk of receiving them in the future. The evaluation is based on a rigorous random assignment design. Youth who agree to participate in the evaluation are assigned at random to a treatment or control group. Youth in the treatment group are eligible to receive YTD services in addition to the SSA waivers, while those in the control group may receive only those services available in their communities, independent of the YTD initiative. The evaluation seeks to enroll approximately 880 youth in each of the six project sites.

We gathered information from a variety of sources to inform the findings in this report. We obtained information about project operations and the service environment through reviews of project documents, site visits, interviews with managers and staff, and focus group discussions with participating youth and their parents. We also examined data on enrollment of youth and service provision in the project's management information system. Data for the impact analysis came from a 12-month follow-up survey and SSA administrative records. The survey focused on outcomes such as service use, employment, earnings, education, and attitudes and expectations. SSA administrative records provided data on benefits and the use of SSA work incentives and waivers. We also collected baseline data prior to random assignment through a survey and SSA administrative records. The comprehensive final report on the YTD evaluation, scheduled for 2014, will use data from a survey conducted 36 months after random assignment and SSA administrative records to assess more completely the transition process and the extent to which Transition WORKS and the other five random assignment YTD projects improved transition outcomes.

## The Transition WORKS Project

The Erie 1 Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), one of 37 regional public education service organizations that serve school districts throughout New York State, administered Transition WORKS. The project sought to maximize economic self-sufficiency and independence for youth with severe disabilities by improving their educational and employment outcomes. Transition WORKS was designed to fill identified gaps in existing transition services in the county. It provided training on self-determination and self-advocacy for youth and their families, transition planning, work-based experiences and other employment services, education support services, instruction on the organization of benefits-related paperwork, social and health services, and counseling on SSA benefits and waivers.

Transition WORKS was staffed by nine employees of Erie 1 BOCES and additional individuals employed by three formal partner organizations. The assistant director for school support services at Erie 1 BOCES served as the project director. Her involvement diminished over time, but she continued to provide vision to the project. A full-time assistant project director was responsible for the day-to-day management of Transition WORKS, including coordination of services provided by the project partners and administration of the project's management information system. Two full-time transition coordinators and five full-time job developers from Erie 1 BOCES provided the bulk of project services to youth, forming a closely knit team. Three full-time and three part-time staff of Neighborhood Legal Services delivered benefits counseling services. Smaller numbers of staff at the Community Employment Office and the Parent Network of Western New York provided participants with employment preparation services and their parents or guardians with training on organizing documents pertaining to SSA disability and other benefits.

Transition WORKS targeted a subset of the YTD-eligible population: youth ages 16 to 25 who were current or recent recipients of SSA disability benefits. Mathematica randomly selected Erie County youth satisfying these criteria from the SSA disability rolls and recruited them into the study starting in January 2007 and ending in March 2008. After the youth completed the baseline interview and provided written consent, we admitted them into the evaluation's research sample. Mathematica then randomly assigned members of this sample to the evaluation's treatment or control group at a six-to-five ratio, resulting in a treatment group of 459 youth and a control group of 384.

At the time of random assignment, the youth in the research sample were about 20 years old, on average. A total of 62 percent of the study participants were male, 55 percent were white, and mental illness and cognitive or developmental disabilities were the primary disabling conditions for 62 percent of the research sample. About half of the youth were in school at the time of random assignment, and about one in three reported having worked for pay during the previous year.

Transition WORKS staff at Erie 1 BOCES were responsible for enrolling treatment group members in project services. Through an intensive effort from February 2007 through May 2008, they enrolled 380 youth, or 83 percent of the treatment group members. Youth were eligible to receive services for 18 months.[2] Services were terminated in fall 2009, and the project formally ended in December 2009.

## Implementation Findings for Transition WORKS

The original design for Transition WORKS specified a school/classroom-based intervention centered on a self-determination curriculum that encompassed career exploration activities but stopped short of delivering employment services to participating youth. That design was pilot tested in 2004 through 2006. To position Transition WORKS for participation in the YTD national random assignment evaluation, Erie 1 BOCES replaced the group-focused and classroom-based structure with a more individualized approach to transition services, broadened the project's target population to include out-of-school youth, and expanded the program model to include the direct provision of employment services. The project retained its emphasis on youth empowerment through a self-determination workshop series based on the original classroom curriculum. Although the redesigned project was employment focused, the program model included an education services component in recognition of the need for some youth to participate in postsecondary or vocational education to prepare for their desired careers.

Based on a well-developed program model that encompassed all major components of the YTD conceptual framework, Erie 1 BOCES and its partners delivered a structured sequence of services to the youth participating in Transition WORKS. The services began with an assessment of each participant's level of self-determination, followed by two self-determination workshops. While youth were participating in those workshops, their parents or guardians were receiving instruction on organizing benefits-related paperwork. Upon completing the workshops, the participating youth engaged in benefits planning and general transition planning. At that point, they were considered ready to participate in education and employment-related services. As noted previously, there was considerable specialization among the partner organizations in the delivery of these services.

[2] Youth who enroll in YTD project services are eligible for the SSA waivers for four years following random assignment, or until age 22, whichever comes later. All wavier eligibility is scheduled to cease in September 2013.

Through our analysis of data from the Transition WORKS management information system, we found that nearly all (98 percent) of the youth who had agreed to participate in Transition WORKS received some project services. Two-thirds or more of them received services in each of the major program components noted above, with the exception of education services, which were not heavily emphasized by the project and were received by only 17 percent of participants. Among the youth who received any Transition WORKS services, the median number of service contacts was 10 and the median total duration of those contacts was eight hours. Half of the youth who received employment-related services had three or fewer service contacts with Transition WORKS staff for that purpose, lasting less than an hour in total. Several of the other services provided by Transition WORKS, such as self-determination training and benefits planning services, were somewhat more intense. Nearly 40 percent of the Transition WORKS participants could not recall having received project services at the time of the evaluation's 12-month follow-up survey, but most who could recall receiving services were satisfied with them.

Several aspects of the design and implementation of Transition WORKS may have limited the intensity of youth participation in services. First, the staff of the four partner organizations were not co-located; rather they were geographically dispersed by function, which may have been a barrier to participation in the full range of project services for some participants. Second, the structured sequence of project services, beginning with the workshops on self determination, meant that employment services typically were initiated about four months after youth enrolled in the project, which may have made it more challenging for staff to engage youth strongly in those services. Finally, project staff struggled to find time to serve enrollees adequately due to (1) the competing demand on their time to enroll treatment group members in the project and (2) large caseloads resulting from staff turnover and protracted staff vacancies.

## First- Year Impact Findings for Transition WORKS

We estimated the impacts of Transition WORKS on outcomes in five domains: (1) employment-promoting services, (2) paid employment, (3) education, (4) youth income, and (5) attitudes and expectations. Within each domain, we analyzed one primary outcome and a number of secondary outcomes. The results for the primary outcomes are the basis for our principal conclusions regarding the project's impacts in the year following random assignment.

### Impacts on the Use of Services

Consistent with the YTD program model, Transition WORKS increased the use of *employment-promoting services* by youth with disabilities. Two-thirds of treatment group youth reported having used any employment-promoting service in the year following random assignment (Table 1). We estimated that, in the absence of Transition WORKS, slightly more than half of these youth would have used any such service. The impact of Transition WORKS was a 14 percentage point increase in the use of employment-promoting services. This overall impact was a product of impacts on the use of a number of specific types of employment services. The largest of these were on support for resume writing and job search activities and on benefits counseling.

Transition WORKS also increased youth participation in non-employment services, such as life skills training and discussions of general interests, by eight percentage points (Table 1). Considering all types of services, 86 percent of treatment group members reported having used any employment or non-employment service. In the absence of Transition WORKS, we estimated that 77 percent of them would have used any service. Transition WORKS thus increased the share of youth using any service by nine percentage points.

**Table 1. Estimated Impacts of Transition WORKS on the Use of Services (percentages)**

| | Treatment Group | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Est. Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | | P-Value |
| **Domain: Employment- Promoting Services** | | | | | |
| **Primary outcome: used any employment-promoting service** | **66.3** | **52.6** | **13.7** | ******* | **0.00** |
| Used employment-promoting services: | | | | | |
| Career counseling | 37.7 | 29.6 | 8.1 | ** | 0.02 |
| Support for resume writing and job search | 38.6 | 23.3 | 15.3 | *** | 0.00 |
| Job shadowing, apprenticeship/internship | 15.6 | 11.0 | 4.7 | * | 0.07 |
| Other employment-focused services (basic skills training, computer classes, problem solving, and social skills training) | 5.0 | 4.8 | 0.3 | | 0.87 |
| Counseling on SSA benefits and work incentives | 33.8 | 20.3 | 13.5 | *** | 0.00 |
| **Additional Service- Use Outcomes** | | | | | |
| Used any non-employment service | 81.5 | 73.1 | 8.4 | *** | 0.01 |
| Used any service (employment or non-employment) | 86.4 | 77.1 | 9.3 | *** | 0.00 |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates. We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment, using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics using sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analysis sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Appendix Table A.5 for the sample sizes for all outcomes.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

The previously mentioned positive impact of Transition WORKS on the use of benefits counseling services appears to have been reflected in greater knowledge of SSA work incentives among treatment group members. We estimated that Transition WORKS significantly increased awareness of each of five specific work incentives by between 7 and 18 percentage points (Table IV.3). However, this enhanced awareness of work incentives was not accompanied by greater

In the *domain of youth income*, we found that Transition WORKS had no impact on the primary outcome: total youth income from earnings and benefits. Furthermore, although the intervention did improve knowledge of SSA work incentives and requirements, that did not translate into treatment group youth receiving more benefits than they would have otherwise. We found no impact on the number of months of benefit receipt during the year following random assignment or on the total amount of benefits received during that year.

Finally, we found that Transition WORKS had no impact on the primary outcome in the *domain of attitudes and expectations*. Table 2 shows that about two-thirds of treatment group youth agreed that their personal goals included working and earning enough to stop receiving disability benefits. However, we estimated that this proportion would have been essentially the same in the absence of Transition WORKS.

## Conclusion

The YTD evaluation seeks to inform SSA about transitions by youth with disabilities to employment and adult life, and the ways in which they could be facilitated. More specifically, this evaluation is testing whether a well-defined set of services and enhanced SSA work incentives can increase employment and self-sufficiency among youth with disabilities. In the case of Transition WORKS, this approach did result in greater use of services to promote employment; however, the project had no impacts on youth employment, education, income, and expectations during the one-year follow-up period for this report. The structured sequence of project services, geographic dispersion of service providers by function, and large caseloads for key project staff may have made it challenging for project staff to provide participating youth with services that were sufficiently intense to result in improvements in these measures during the follow-up period.

It is important to recognize that this report has presented interim impact estimates based on data pertaining to the first year in the evaluation's multiyear follow-up period; many of the enrolled youth were still receiving project services when they completed the 12-month follow-up survey. Interim evaluation findings from the other five random assignment YTD projects will enable us to extend the initial assessments presented in this report. Interim reports on two of those projects, along with this report on Transition WORKS, will be completed in 2011, while the interim reports on the remaining three projects will be completed in 2012. As was planned, the projects vary in the mix and intensity of services while broadly adhering to the YTD program model. Therefore, we expect that the full set of six interim evaluation reports will provide SSA with a better understanding of the challenges that youth with disabilities face in making transitions and the specific types of interventions that might assist more of them to succeed. Furthermore, the YTD evaluation's comprehensive final report will present impact estimates based on 36 months of follow-up data from all six of the random assignment projects. Our analyses of those data may reveal longer-term impacts of Transition WORKS in addition to the short-term impacts reported here.

# I. INTRODUCTION

Youth with disabilities often face a particularly difficult transition to adulthood. In addition to the host of issues facing all transition-age youth, those with disabilities face special challenges related to health, social isolation, service needs, and lack of access to supports. These challenges complicate their planning for education, work, and adult life in general. Many of these youth experience poor educational and employment outcomes, high risk of dependency on public benefits, and a lifetime of poverty. Despite broad recognition of these challenges and poor outcomes (Loprest and Wittenburg 2005, 2007), little is known about how best to help transitioning youth with disabilities improve their employment and earnings opportunities in adulthood.

To understand more fully how to help youth with disabilities reach their economic potential, the Social Security Administration (SSA) initiated the Youth Transition Demonstration (YTD) evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation is to find and test the most promising service strategies for helping youth with disabilities maximize their economic self-sufficiency as they transition from school to work. The SSA also is interested in testing the effectiveness of altering certain benefit program rules as an incentive to encourage youth with disabilities to initiate work or increase their work activity to increase earnings. The target population for YTD is youth ages 14 to 25 who currently receive SSA disability benefits or are at risk of receiving such benefits.[3]

Using a rigorous random assignment methodology, the YTD evaluation examines the extent to which the various work-promoting services and incentives help youth with disabilities achieve greater economic self-sufficiency as they transition to adulthood.[4] Under YTD, SSA (with input from the evaluation contractor) selected six project sites for evaluation based on their adoption of promising strategies to support youth with disabilities. The YTD projects focus on youth empowerment, self-sufficiency, employment, and earnings, and provide employment services, benefits counseling, links to services in the broader community, and other family and youth supports. In addition, SSA has provided special waivers for YTD to improve work incentives by allowing participating youth to retain more of their disability benefits and health insurance in the short term while they work or engage in work-based experiences.

As part of the YTD evaluation, Mathematica Policy Research and its subcontractors are conducting site-specific interim studies to examine implementation of the intervention and assess the short-term impacts during the year after youth were offered demonstration services. In this report, we present the first set of findings for the Erie County, New York, Transition WORKS YTD project. We provide both a detailed explanation of the Transition WORKS intervention and

[3] The SSA disability population eligible for YTD includes beneficiaries of the following programs: child and adult Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (DI), and Childhood Disability Benefits (CDB). SSI is a means-tested program in which eligibility is based on severe functional limitations (for child SSI benefits) or a medically determined disability that prevents substantial gainful employment (for adult SSI benefits). DI beneficiaries are individuals with an earnings history and a disability that prevents substantial gainful employment. CDB beneficiaries must be under age 25, have a disabling condition with an onset before age 22, and a parent receiving Social Security benefits (see Rangarajan et al. 2009a, pp. 18-19).

[4] Under SSA contract #SS00-05-60084, Mathematica Policy Research, a nonpartisan firm that conducts policy research and surveys, assembled a multidisciplinary team, including key partner organizations MDRC and TransCen, Inc., to design and conduct the YTD evaluation and provide technical assistance to the projects as they develop and implement their YTD interventions. The YTD project is advised by a technical working group that has reviewed the evaluation design (Rangarajan et al. 2009a).

an in-depth discussion of how the project was implemented, including its fidelity to the intended demonstration model. We also provide estimates of the impacts of the project on the receipt of services by youth and short-term outcomes, such as increased participation in paid employment, advancement in education, higher income from earnings and benefits, and a stronger sense of self-efficacy. In this evaluation's comprehensive final report, we will assess longer-term effects of this project and the other five random assignment YTD projects on the transition to adult life, particularly in terms of improved employment and income.

We begin the report with an introduction to the YTD initiative, the YTD evaluation, and the Transition WORKS project. In Chapter II, we describe our approach to conducting the process and impact analyses, including data sources, samples, key measures, and our analytic methodology. In Chapter III, we present the analysis of program implementation. In Chapters IV through IX, we present the short-term impacts on outcomes such as service use, employment, educational experiences, income, and youths' expectations about the future. We present our conclusions from this interim research in Chapter X. In Appendices A through C, we present technical discussions and supplementary analyses.

## A. The YTD Conceptual Framework

The YTD evaluation tests whether the provision of services and new work incentives to youth with disabilities can help young people overcome the barriers they face during their transition to adulthood. Many youth with disabilities, particularly those whose impairments are sufficiently severe to qualify them for SSA disability benefits, do not reach their full potential and instead experience high rates of unemployment, poverty, and incarceration (Loprest and Wittenburg 2007).

In designing the YTD intervention, we identified several barriers to successful transitions and then drew on the existing evidence to determine promising means of addressing those barriers. In particular, earlier demonstration projects provided evidence about what has worked for serving people similar to YTD youth.[5] We also drew on the Guideposts for Success, developed by the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (2005). In the YTD evaluation design report (Rangarajan et al. 2009a), we summarize the research evidence that forms the basis of the demonstration.

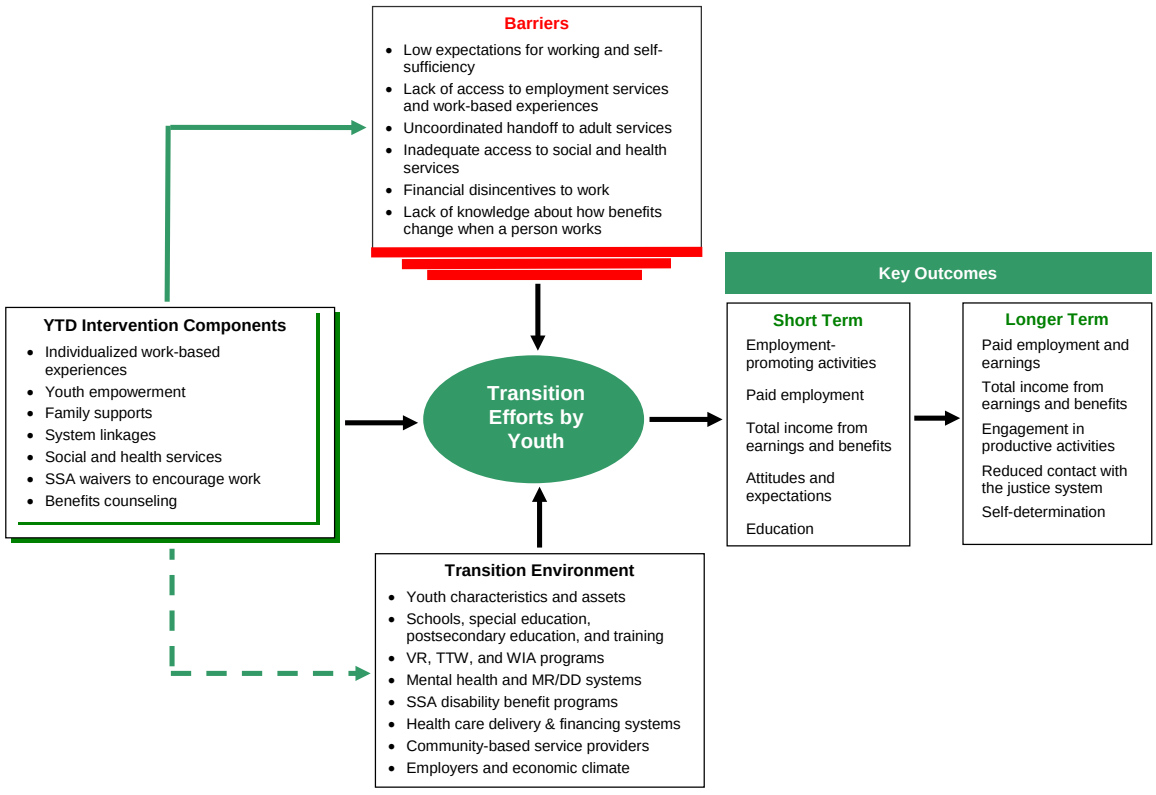
The YTD intervention design and evaluation are guided by a conceptual framework (Figure I.1) based on the research evidence and informed by SSA's goals for the intervention. The transitions to adulthood made by youth with disabilities are shaped by the youths' characteristics and their social, educational, and employment environments. However, several barriers may inhibit those transitions. The YTD intervention is intended to address the barriers and work within the environment of each demonstration site to facilitate better transitions. The evaluation assesses whether youth offered YTD services achieve improved short- and longer-term outcomes relative to youth not offered the services. In the short term, as examined in this interim report, we assess whether the planned intervention was delivered; the impact of YTD on service use; and short-term outcomes in employment, earnings, education, income, and expectations. In the longer term, we will examine whether YTD affected the key markers of a successful transition to adult life: employment, earnings,

[5] The U.S. Department of Labor's Structured Training and Employment Transitional Services demonstration and SSA's Transitional Employment Training Demonstration provided valuable evidence for the design of the YTD intervention (Rangarajan et al. 2009a).

income, engagement in productive activities, reduced contact with the justice system, and self-determination.

Youth with disabilities face many barriers that can affect the success of their transition to adulthood. Some of these are the product of youths' perceptions of their impairments and opportunities, which can lead to low expectations about working and self-sufficiency. Low expectations can, in turn, lead to marginalization, isolation, and diminished expectations about a youth's abilities among family members, teachers, and employers. Other barriers arise because youth do not identify or obtain appropriate support services, and a lack of high-quality employment services and opportunities for work-based experiences can create barriers to successful entry into the adult labor market (Mank et al. 2003; Wehman 2006). Furthermore, youth with disabilities may have to deal with school support systems that have significant gaps in both student services and critical linkages to adult services. The latter can lead to an uncoordinated handoff to adult services. Program rules that often reduce cash benefits with a rise in earnings or result in possible redetermination of a youth's status as disabled may create financial disincentives to work. Finally, lack of knowledge about work incentives in SSA benefit programs and the interaction of work experiences, benefits, and SSA incentives can inhibit beneficiaries' interest in pursuing employment. Together, these barriers can lead to significant challenges in navigating the transition to adulthood successfully.

**Figure I.1. Conceptual Framework for SSA's YTD Projects**




As shown in Figure I.1, the YTD projects were designed to address each of these barriers by providing services and financial incentives directly to youth with disabilities and their families. As described in the conceptual model, the key components of the projects—services and incentives—included work experiences, youth empowerment, family support, system linkages, social and health

services, SSA waivers to encourage work, and benefits counseling. Some projects, including Transition WORKS, also provided education services. Although the YTD projects were not intended to bring about systems change, they may have improved the transition environment indirectly. For example, the YTD projects may have helped local service providers learn how better to meet the needs of youth with disabilities. The YTD evaluation does not test this potentially indirect effect (shown by the dotted arrow in the conceptual framework).

YTD was intended to help youth become as economically self-sufficient as possible as they transitioned to adulthood. Work-based experiences were a core component of the YTD intervention, and the YTD model stressed the importance of paid employment experiences. The projects offered a range of work-based service options, including career exploration, job shadowing, volunteer work, internships, apprenticeships, and paid employment. These experiences helped youth learn workplace skills, identify career preferences, and identify the workplace supports and accommodations that may be essential to employment success. The YTD intervention's various options were designed to address the lack of access to employment services and paid work experiences faced by youth with disabilities. In addition, recognizing that education is an important determinant of future work success, some YTD projects, including Transition WORKS, supported educational goals, such as completing high school, obtaining a General Educational Development (GED) credential, and enrolling in postsecondary education.

By emphasizing youth empowerment—the acquisition of skills and knowledge that enable youth to control their life choices—the YTD intervention addressed youths' low expectations associated with working and self-sufficiency. Empowerment is critical to choices about participation in services that will influence youths' education, employment, and career directions. The YTD projects facilitated empowerment by involving youth in developing person-centered plans for services that promote success in future goals. Through this process, the YTD projects identified the key barriers relevant to each youth and specified steps for addressing them.

Other important components of the YTD intervention included supporting the family with training and information to help youth make appropriate choices and navigate the service environment. Such support helped families address the barriers of low expectations and inadequate access to social and health services. In addition, to address the barriers resulting from uncoordinated service environments and inadequate access to services, the intervention emphasized linkages between systems, particularly those between academic coursework and work-based experiences, and effective coordination of social and health services after school exit.

To enhance work incentives, the YTD projects also provided SSA waivers of disability program regulations. One barrier faced by youth is the disincentive to work due to SSA program rules that reduce benefits as earnings rise, effectively reducing the extent to which employment financially benefits youth with disabilities. In response, the waivers for YTD encouraged paid employment by allowing youth to keep more of their earnings while continuing to pursue education and asset accumulation.

- Under the earned income exclusion (EIE), SSI benefits are reduced by $1 for every $2 earned above a base amount. An important SSA waiver for YTD made the EIE more generous, so that benefits were reduced by only $1 for every $4 earned above a base amount.
- For the student earned income exclusion (SEIE), which disregards up to $1,640 per month (in 2009) of a student's earnings for those age 21 and younger, a waiver extended

the earnings exclusion to all youth participating in YTD who attended school, regardless of age.

- For youth who were determined ineligible for disability insurance for medical reasons based on a continuing disability review (CDR) or age-18 medical redetermination, a waiver delayed the cessation of benefits for the duration of the other waivers.

In addition to the above waivers, SSA provided YTD participants with enhanced incentives for investing in self-sufficiency goals and accumulating savings. For youth with approved plans for achieving self-sufficiency goals (known as the "plan for achieving self-support," or PASS), SSA disregarded the funds used for the PASS from eligibility determination and adjusted benefits to compensate partially for these expenses. The YTD waiver expanded eligible PASS activities to include postsecondary education and career exploration. Finally, SSA encouraged asset accumulation in federally-funded individual development accounts (IDAs) by not including any beneficiary deposits in the calculation of earned income that would reduce benefits and disregarding matching deposits, account balances, and interest earned from eligibility determinations. For YTD participants, these exclusions were extended to IDAs that are not federally funded. In Appendix C, we provide more complete descriptions of the five SSA waivers for YTD.

Finally, the YTD intervention provided benefits counseling to compensate for the lack of information about benefits and clarify the relationship between benefits and work. YTD benefits counseling assisted youth and their families in understanding the complexity of work incentives under SSA program rules.

The YTD evaluation team identified the key intervention components deemed best practices and required all projects to consider these components as part of their service models. TransCen, Inc., a subcontractor to Mathematica on the evaluation, provided the projects with training and technical assistance on the implementation of the components. However, each project enjoyed flexibility to customize its approach to service delivery in the manner determined to be most effective in improving outcomes for youth. It also should be noted that the components were delivered within the existing transition environment, and the projects, to varying degrees, leveraged services available in their communities. For these reasons, the projects differed in their service models and implementation, which in turn may have led to differential impacts on youth outcomes.

## B. The YTD Evaluation

The YTD evaluation design called for six projects to be selected for participation in the national impact evaluation. The projects were required to meet four key criteria. First, they had to offer high-quality intervention services expected to improve self-sufficiency. Second, as a group, the sites had to reflect a mix of service strategies and target populations. Third, they had to demonstrate the ability and willingness to participate in a random assignment evaluation. Finally, they had to be sufficiently large to serve 400 youth over a two- to three-year period.

In 2003, SSA entered into cooperative agreements with seven organizations to implement YTD projects that emphasized employment and youth empowerment. In 2006, SSA selected three of the seven projects for the random assignment evaluation.[6] The choice of projects, based on

[6] Among the four original YTD projects that did not participate in the random assignment evaluation, two (located in Iowa and Maryland) ceased operations in 2007 and two others (in California and Mississippi) continued providing services through 2009. Descriptions of the seven original YTD projects can be found in Martinez et al. (2010).

recommendations from the evaluation team, included those with the capacity to serve the large number of youth required by the evaluation and a willingness to use a random assignment design. The projects were the Youth WINS project in four counties in Colorado; the Transition WORKS project in Erie County, New York; and the City University of New York Youth Transition Demonstration Project in Bronx County, New York.

Also in 2006, the evaluation team conducted a nationwide search for potential new YTD projects by reaching out to organizations that either were operating strong transition programs or had the capacity to do so and met the evaluation requirements of an adequately sized target population and a willingness to implement random assignment. That search resulted in the selection of five organizations in fall 2006 to run pilot programs in 2007. Based on recommendations from the evaluation team, in November 2007 SSA selected three of the five organizations to implement their interventions fully and participate in the national impact study: The three organizations were Abilities, Inc. in Miami-Dade County, Florida; St. Luke's House in Montgomery County, Maryland; and the Human Resources Development Foundation, Inc. in 19 counties in West Virginia.[7] Descriptions of all six random assignment YTD projects can be found in Martinez et al. (2008).

The YTD evaluation is based on a multicomponent design to provide strong evidence on the extent to which the intervention led to intended changes in the transition outcomes of youth. The process analysis examines the implementation of YTD in the six projects and considers how well the intended intervention was delivered. The impact analysis is based on a rigorous random assignment design. The target number of voluntarily enrolled youth for each site was 880, with 480 randomly assigned to a treatment group and the remainder assigned to the control group. Youth in the treatment group could receive YTD services as well as the SSA waivers, while those in the control group could receive only those services available in their communities, independent of the YTD initiative. Finally, the cost analysis of the evaluation examines the costs of the intervention components so as to assess the potential benefits and costs of scaling up implementation of the intervention.

Information for the evaluation comes from a wide range of data sources. We rely on program documents, site visits, interviews with managers and staff, and focus groups with youth and parents to examine the program service model, implementation, and participation. We also examine service provision data from the evaluation's management information system, which was used by each project. Data for the impact analysis come from baseline and follow-up surveys and SSA administrative records. The follow-up surveys gather information on youth and family characteristics, as well as outcome measures such as service use, employment, earnings, and attitudes and expectations. They are conducted at one year and three years following random assignment. The administrative records provide information on earnings and benefits and a small number of individual characteristics, covering a period ranging from one year before to three to four years after random assignment.

## C. The Transition WORKS Project

The Erie 1 Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) administered Transition WORKS. Erie 1 BOCES delivers education services to 20 school districts in Erie County, New

[7] SSA funding for the two pilot projects (located in Vermont and Washington) not selected into the random assignment evaluation ceased on December 31, 2007.

York, providing academic and functional programs throughout the school year, as well as summer school activities for special education students. The Transition WORKS project sought to maximize economic self-sufficiency and independence by providing person-centered training on self-determination, transition planning, family support and instruction on organizing benefits-related documents, benefits counseling, education services, career exploration, work-based experiences, and job development. Transition WORKS served youth ages 16 to 25 who received SSA disability benefits and lived in Erie County, which includes the city of Buffalo. (Although the YTD demonstration targeted youth ages 14 to 25, sites were given the option of targeting a subset of the full range.)

Erie 1 BOCES directly delivered many Transition WORKS services but also had formal arrangements with partner organizations to provide additional services central to the intervention. Neighborhood Legal Services, located in downtown Buffalo, provided benefits planning services and assistance with the SSA waivers to Transition WORKS participants and their families. The Community Employment Office, an alliance of public and voluntary agencies in Western New York, provided employment preparation services and assisted Transition WORKS participants in identifying and linking with appropriate jobs. The Parent Network of Western New York conducted a workshop to help parents and guardians of participating youth organize important benefits documents. In addition to these formal arrangements, Transition WORKS also leveraged services from the state vocational rehabilitation agency and the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities.

In Erie County, as in four of the other five YTD sites, SSA provided Mathematica with lists of Social Security beneficiaries from which to draw a random sample of eligible youth for Transition WORKS. Mathematica conducted outreach to and recruited sample members for the study. The recruitment process extended from January 2007 until March 2008, when we obtained the target number (880) of baseline interviews and written consents for participation in the evaluation. After the initial outreach, the baseline interviews, and grants of consent, Mathematica randomly assigned youth to the treatment or control groups. Transition WORKS began enrolling treatment group youth in project services in January 2007. Services terminated in the fall of 2009 and the project formally ended in December 2009.

Following random assignment, the staff of Transition WORKS reached out to each youth in the treatment group and conducted an intake meeting. During that meeting, the youth was informed about Transition WORKS services and the YTD waivers and basic information about the youth was collected. The youth was considered to be enrolled in project services upon successful completion of the intake meeting. After a youth enrolled in the project, the next step for a typical youth was to attend a self-determination workshop, where most person-centered planning occurred. At intake, the youth also was scheduled for a transition-planning meeting and was referred to Neighborhood Legal Services for benefits planning. The family was referred to the Parent Network for a workshop on organizing benefits documents. Following the transition planning, participants were provided with employment services, including career exploration, job development, job placement, and employment follow-up services. Transition WORKS also provided education services, including support for completing high school, obtaining a GED, and enrolling in postsecondary education. Youth were eligible to receive services for 18 months.[8] In Chapter III, we provide a fuller

[8] Youth who enrolled in YTD project services are eligible for the SSA waivers for four years past random assignment or until the youth reach age 22, whichever comes later. All wavier eligibility ceases after September 2013.

description of the Transition WORKS project, the intended sequence of services for a youth who enrolled in the program, the roles of the Erie 1 BOCES staff members and their partners, and the services actually provided by the project.

## D. Research Objectives for This Report

In this interim report, we examine the services that Transition WORKS provided, assess how they were delivered and their fidelity to the proposed service model, and identify the successes and challenges associated with implementation. This analysis, known as process analysis, provides critical information for future replication or adoption of promising practices and informs policy by providing evidence of what is needed to implement programs similar to Transition WORKS. The process analysis also improves our understanding of major impacts (or the lack thereof) by examining factors such as the fidelity of implementation to the proposed design, who participated in project activities, the intensity of services received, and challenges faced by the project.

Building on the process analysis, we examine whether Transition WORKS improved short-run outcomes for youth 12 months after random assignment. If the project succeeded in engaging youth in services, we would expect that youth randomly selected to have the opportunity to participate in Transition WORKS (treatment group members) would have higher levels of service use than youth ineligible for Transition WORKS (control group members). Engaging youth in work-related activities through employment services is of particular importance for YTD, and we would expect to find an impact of Transition WORKS on receipt of such services. We also would expect youth to take advantage of at least some of the SSA waivers within the first year. Furthermore, all YTD sites emphasized youth empowerment and individual goal setting; thus, we would expect some measures of youth empowerment, such as future expectations, to improve within the first year.

Given that the YTD program model emphasized paid employment and that all YTD project sites were required to adopt an employment focus, it is important to examine short-term impacts on paid employment, earnings, and benefits. All YTD projects made some effort to place youth in employment. In light of this, the short-run impacts on employment-related measures reflect both participation in the YTD projects and the outcomes resulting from that participation. Indeed, more substantial employment impacts beyond project placements may not be subject to immediate influence, especially for youth who are under age 18 or in school. Hence, while we examine employment outcomes as part of this interim report, we will focus more attention on them in subsequent reports.

Transition WORKS was among a subset of YTD projects that also provided education services. For youth seeking to pursue education, Transition WORKS provided support for graduating from high school, entering a GED preparation program, attending individualized education program (IEP) meetings, enrolling in postsecondary education, and accessing financial aid for continuing education. Since education services are a component of the Transition WORKS service model, we also examine the short-term impact on youths' educational progress.

Before turning to the process and impact analyses, we describe our evaluation approach in Chapter II, including key outcome measures, data sources and analysis samples, and our approaches to conducting the process and impact analyses.

# II. STUDY DESIGN, METHODS, AND DATA SOURCES

Rigorous assessment of the impacts of the YTD projects is a central component of the YTD evaluation. An experimental design, often considered the gold standard for evaluations, allows us to infer with a high degree of certainty whether project services lead to any impacts on youth. As important as it is to estimate project impacts, it is also critical to describe the process by which YTD services were delivered so that others considering the development of similar interventions will benefit from an understanding of both the context for interpreting project impacts and the information on project implementation successes and challenges. In this chapter, we describe our approach for conducting the impact and process analyses.

## A. Impact Analysis

One of the hallmarks of the YTD evaluation is that it is based on a rigorous random assignment design. Youth identified as eligible for the evaluation are randomly assigned to the treatment or the control group; the treatment group is eligible to receive YTD services, while the control group has no access to YTD services but may use other services available in the community. Random assignment may lead to the creation of two groups with virtually identical pre-intervention experiences and characteristics. As a result, any observed differences in outcomes for the two groups after random assignment may be attributed with a known degree of certainty to the effects of the program.

It should be noted that participation by youth in the YTD evaluation was voluntary. Therefore, we expect that youth particularly interested in receiving employment-related services were more likely to have volunteered to participate. As a result, youth assigned to the control group and not eligible for YTD services might have been likely to seek similar types of services elsewhere in the community. Hence, the impacts of interest to the evaluation are the effects of the YTD interventions relative to other services in the community that youth may have used, not a counterfactual environment that lacked any services. The impact analysis in this interim report examines whether Transition WORKS was effective in improving the short-term outcomes of the youth who were offered project services, covering the period up to one year following random assignment.

### 1. Outcome Measures

As described in the conceptual framework in Chapter I, by providing expanded services and waiving certain disability program rules, Transition WORKS was expected to promote work and improve other outcomes for youth. If the project succeeded in implementing YTD services and work incentives, we would expect to observe greater use of employment-related services and better outcomes among youth randomly assigned to the treatment group versus those in the control group. If Transition WORKS proved effective, the most immediate impacts of the interventions should be reflected by treatment group youth through increased use of employment-focused services and more work-related experiences, more paid employment, greater income resulting from increased employment, more use of SSA work incentives as a consequence of the waivers, greater educational progress, and more positive attitudes and expectations about the future.[9]

[9] In the intermediate and longer terms, we would expect treatment group youth to increase their employment and earnings, have higher income, reduce risky behaviors, demonstrate greater self-determination and self-efficacy, and move *(continued)*

Information on these short-term impacts is based on data from the YTD evaluation's 12-month follow-up survey as well as administrative data on benefit receipt and use of SSA work incentives. In the 12-month survey, we gathered a large volume of information on outcomes for different aspects of youths' lives, particularly participation in a variety of services, educational progress, work-related experiences, understanding of work incentives, and expectations about the future.

While all of the above outcomes are important and it is useful to assess the intervention's impacts on each one, we must be mindful of the statistical problem of "multiple comparisons."[10] This problem arises when we estimate impacts on a large number of outcomes such that at least a few of the estimates likely will be statistically significant by chance, even if no true impacts occurred. We addressed the problem by specifying, a priori, a small number of domains or areas in which we expected to see program impacts and identifying a primary outcome to be tested in each domain.[11] Our goal was to be as parsimonious as possible in defining the domains and primary outcomes while capturing the major areas in which the intervention might produce impacts. The primary outcomes were the basis for the tests of our main hypotheses. In addition, we examined several supplementary outcomes to help explain impacts on the primary outcomes. We highlighted the findings for the supplementary outcomes only if we found statistically significant impacts on the primary outcomes.

Guided by the conceptual framework in Figure I.1, our evaluation design report identified the primary domains and outcomes to be examined in our impact analyses (Rangarajan et al. 2009a). In Table II.1, we show the domains for which we expected Transition WORKS to have short-term impacts and describe the primary outcomes examined as part of each domain. Also in this table, we describe the supplementary outcomes related to these domains.

**Employment-Promoting Services.** Through individualized employment-related services and case management support, Transition WORKS was expected to improve youths' employability. The primary outcome measure in the domain of employment-promoting services is whether a youth received any such services. This composite measure indicates whether the youth received career counseling, support for resume writing and job search activities, job shadowing and apprenticeships, other employment services, and counseling on SSA benefits and work incentives during the year following random assignment.

**Paid Employment.** One of the core components of the YTD initiative was to help youth find paid employment in the short term and put them on a path to consistent paid employment in the longer term. Hence, paid employment was an important domain for the evaluation. The primary outcome in the domain is whether a youth was ever employed on a paid job in the year following random assignment. Paid employment in the year following random assignment is, in part, a

*(continued)*
toward independent living. The longer-term outcomes will cover a period from three to four years following random assignment for youth in the study and will be based on data from the 36-month follow-up survey and administrative records.

[10] This discussion and our approach to addressing the multiple comparisons problem are summarized from Schochet (2008).

[11] We specified all outcomes a priori in an analysis plan (Rangarajan et al. 2009b). However, we determined the specific measures for some outcomes after examining distributions in the data and the extent of missing information (with treatment and control groups combined). For example, we specified in the analysis plan that we would examine the degree of employment. Subsequently, based on preliminary data analysis of the full sample (treatment and control cases combined), we determined that ever employed on a paid job in the year following random assignment was the best measure the degree of employment.

**Table II.1. Primary and Supplementary Outcomes**

| Outcome Measure | Description of Measure |
|---|---|
| **Employment- Promoting Services** | |
| Primary outcome | Receipt of any employment-promoting services (including career counseling, support for resume writing and job search activities, job shadowing and apprenticeships, benefits and waivers counseling, and other employment services) |
| Supplementary outcomes | Receipt of individual employment-promoting and non-employment services; knowledge of SSA work incentives; type of service provider; amount of service utilization (number of months of services received, total number of contacts, total hours of services, number of providers); and unmet service needs |
| **Paid Employment** | |
| Primary outcome | Ever employed on a paid job in the year following random assignment |
| Supplementary outcomes | Employment status at the time of the 12-month survey, ever employed in a paid or unpaid job in the year following random assignment, percent of weeks employed, number of jobs held, time pattern of employment by month after random assignment, hours worked per week, total hours worked, annual earnings, earnings per month, and job characteristics |
| **Educational Progress** | |
| Primary outcome | Ever enrolled in school in first year following random assignment or completed high school by the time of the 12-month survey |
| Supplementary outcomes | Enrolled in school in first year following random assignment, completed high school by the time of the 12-month survey, type of school attended, number of months in school |
| **Youth Income** | |
| Primary outcome | Total income from earnings and benefits during first year following random assignment |
| Supplementary outcomes | Fraction of annual income from earnings, number of months of benefit receipt in the year following random assignment, amount of SSA benefits, use of SSA work incentives, health insurance coverage, and receipt of public assistance |
| **Attitudes and Expectations** | |
| Primary outcome | Youth agrees that personal goals include working and earning enough to stop receipt of SSA benefits |
| Supplementary outcomes | Independent living expectations, educational expectations, employment expectations, internal and external locus of control, independent activities, decision making, and social interactions |
| **Exploratory Analysis: Training and Productive Activity** | |
| Primary outcome | None |
| Supplementary outcomes | Ever enrolled in a training program in the first year following random assignment, number of months in a training program, and participation in any productive activity in the year after random assignment |

measure of receipt of services, as the YTD interventions are intended to emphasize experiences in paid employment.

**Educational Progress.** Transition WORKS provided education services to youth who sought to further their education. Thus, one of the important outcomes for examination is a composite measure of enrollment in school at any time during the year following random assignment or completion of high school by the time of the 12-month survey.

**Youth Income.** The YTD initiative was expected to improve the income of participants by increasing earnings and offering work incentives that permitted youth to retain more of their benefits as their earnings increased. Thus, one of the important outcomes for examination is total income received by youth from earnings and SSA disability benefits in the first year following random assignment.

**Attitudes and Expectations.** A key component of Transition WORKS was training and services to improve youth self-determination. Project staff provided self-determination workshops and developed a person-centered transition plan for each youth. Thus, Transition WORKS was expected to improve outcomes related to youths' attitudes and beliefs about themselves. The primary outcome for the attitudes and expectations domain was whether youth agreed with the statement that their "personal goals include working and earning enough to stop receiving SSA benefits."

**Exploratory Analysis: Training and Any Productive Activity.** As a supplementary analysis, we explored whether Transition WORKS had an impact on job training activities. We also estimated the impact on a composite measure of productive activities, including enrollment in school, job training, paid employment, and unpaid employment.

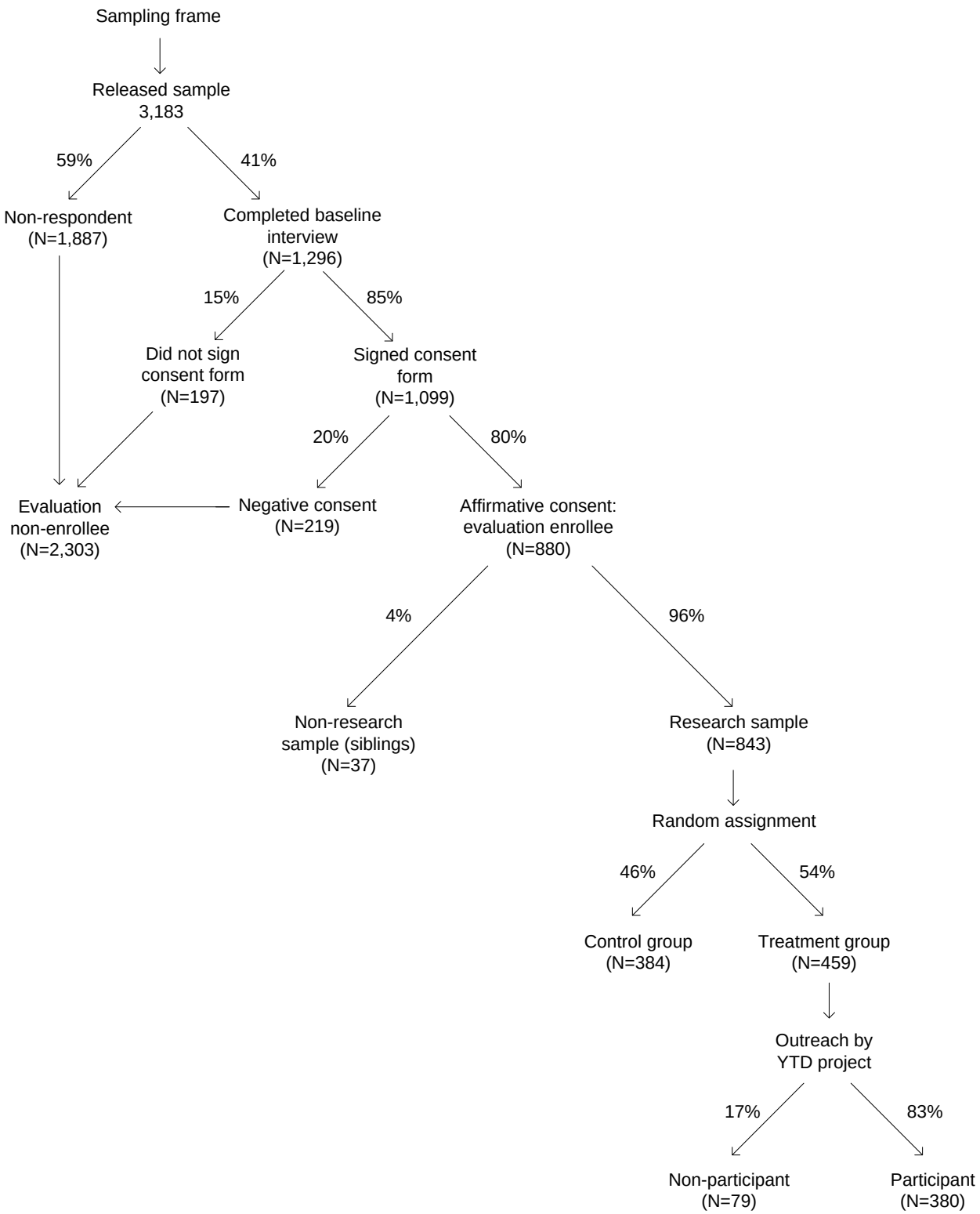
## 2. Sample Selection and Recruitment

Transition WORKS targeted youth ages 16 through 25 who received SSI, DI, or CDB. The sampling frame for the YTD evaluation was Social Security disability beneficiaries who were in the target age range and lived in Erie County. All youth in the sampling frame (and in the research sample that we drew from the sampling frame) were on the SSA benefit rolls at the time of data extraction, however a small percentage of them were not in "current pay" status. Subsequent analysis of benefit records showed that two percent of youth in the research sample did not receive benefits in the year prior to random assignment. These youth were considered to be at high risk of returning to "current pay" status in the future. With this caveat, we refer to the members of the research sample as "beneficiaries."

Mathematica conducted outreach and recruited eligible youth into the study. During a 15-month recruitment period from January 2007 through March 2008, Mathematica randomly selected 3,183 eligible youth from beneficiary rolls provided by SSA.[12] Mathematica attempted to contact these youth for baseline interviewing and gathering of written informed consent until 880 youth completed these steps and were enrolled in the evaluation (Figure II.1). After receiving informed

[12] SSA provided Mathematica with lists of youth who were disability beneficiaries in the program catchment areas. The lists, which constituted the sampling frame for the evaluation, were updated periodically to capture new entrants. Mathematica randomly sorted the lists into survey replicates containing 10 eligible beneficiaries each. Each replicate was a random sample of the frame. We gradually released the replicates for purposes of baseline interviewing and gathering written informed consent to participate in the evaluation.

**Figure II.1. Intake Flow Diagram for Transition WORKS**



consent orally, we conducted baseline interviews with 41 percent of the youth (1,296). Of the 1,887 youth with whom we could not conduct interviews, about 21 percent refused to participate in the survey. The rest were "unlocatable" (37 percent; we were unable to reach them by using the information in SSA files or additional contact information drawn from publicly available sources); found to be ineligible (16 percent; they had moved out of the target county, were no longer age-eligible, or were deceased); or still in a stage of contact attempts when the survey concluded (26 percent). Of the youth who completed the baseline interview, 85 percent returned completed consent forms (guardian consent was required for minor youth). Among youth with signed consent forms, 80 percent agreed to participate in the evaluation, for a total enrollment of 880 youth in the evaluation.

Overall, we were able to enroll a broad group of disability beneficiaries who were similar to those who did not enroll on several baseline characteristics (based on data from administrative records; Appendix A, Table A.1).[13] In particular, although we anticipated that Transition WORKS would be most attractive to youth expecting to work, we observed no substantial differences in employment and earnings in the year before random assignment for the evaluation enrollees compared with non-enrollees. However, not unexpectedly, we did observe some differences between the two groups.[14] In particular, compared with youth who did not enroll in the evaluation, those who did enroll had a somewhat shorter duration of benefit receipt, and a greater share of enrollees received their SSA benefits through their parent(s) as representative payees, rather than directly or through other representative payees. They also were a few months younger on average and were more likely to speak English at home. While these differences are small and do not suggest a strong pattern of self-selection into the study, we hypothesize that youth who chose to enroll in the evaluation may have self-selected based on unobserved characteristics such as motivation to work in the future.

Of the 880 youth recruited into the evaluation, 459 were randomly assigned to a treatment group whose members were eligible to enroll in the Transition WORKS; 384 were randomly assigned to a control group. The remaining 37 youth who provided written consent and had siblings already in the evaluation were automatically assigned to the groups (21 treatment and 16 control) that matched the status of their siblings and were not part of the research sample for the Transition WORKS evaluation.

Following random assignment, Transition WORKS staff were responsible for enrolling treatment group members in the project and providing them with services. The enrollment target was 83 percent, or 381 of the 459 youth randomly assigned to the treatment group. As described more fully in Chapter III, Transition WORKS ultimately enrolled 380 of these youth.[15]

### 3. Data Sources and Analytic Sample

**Data Sources.** The impact analysis relied on both survey data and administrative data from SSA records. We collected survey data at baseline (just before random assignment and the receipt of

[13] Youth were considered "enrolled" in the evaluation once they completed the baseline survey and signed a consent form agreeing to participate in the evaluation.

[14] Baseline differences between youth who enrolled in the evaluation and non-enrollees do not lead to bias in the impact estimates, as both treatment and control group youth enrolled in the evaluation.

[15] Transition WORKS also enrolled 20 of the 21 non-research treatment group youth, for a total enrollment of 400.

written consent for enrollment in the evaluation) and at 12 months following random assignment. We collected the data primarily through interviews with the youth, although we obtained some information from both the youth and the parent or guardian (satisfaction with YTD services and future expectations).[16] In addition, for youth under age 18, we obtained some information only from the parent or guardian (school enrollment, service utilization, knowledge of SSA waivers). If the youth was unable to respond to questions, we asked the parent or guardian for the relevant information. Below, we briefly discuss the various data sources used in this interim impact report; we provide a more detailed discussion of these sources in the evaluation's data collection and survey plan (Rangarajan et al. 2007).

The baseline survey was conducted as part of the evaluation's sample intake process over the period January 2007 through March 2008. The survey consistently collected data on demographic characteristics and personal and family background for all youth enrolled in the evaluation (treatment and control groups). The baseline survey was the principal source of the control variables in the regression models used to improve the precision of impact estimates and control for any observable pre-existing differences between the two groups. It also was a source for variables that identified subgroups of youth for examination.

The first of two follow-up surveys of evaluation enrollees began in January 2008, 12 months after the first evaluation enrollee was randomly assigned. We collected follow-up data through July 2009 for 416 of the 459 youth in the treatment group and 330 of the 384 youth in the control group (response rates of 91 percent and 86 percent, respectively).[17] The follow-up survey gathered information on outcomes for the year following random assignment that may have been affected by participation in Transition WORKS, such as receipt of work-related services, understanding of SSA work incentives, employment, education, and measures reflecting youth attitudes and expectations. For some outcomes, such as employment and receipt of services, the survey information covers the entire period following random assignment. For other outcomes, such as living arrangements and educational attainment, the survey information is specific to the time of the follow-up interview.

In addition to survey data, we relied on data from SSA administrative files for the impact analysis. SSA benefits and use of work incentives are of particular interest to the agency for understanding program implementation and assessing program savings. We obtained benefit information from the Ticket Research File (TRF) (Hildebrand et al. 2010),[18] which includes information on receipt of any disability benefits, type of benefits received, and monthly dollar amount of benefits received. We also used information on work participation and use of SSA work incentives from SSA records. In addition, we used data from the SSA Master Earnings File (MEF)

[16] In the impact analysis chapters, we provide details on the sources of information for outcome variables.

[17] As discussed in Section 6 of this chapter, we found that follow-up survey non-respondents differed from respondents to some extent. However, given high overall response rates, we found no differences in conclusions based on impact estimates for the respondent sample relative to the full sample when we examined impacts on benefits and work incentive outcomes for these groups based on administrative sources, which are available for all youth (Appendix A, Table A.9).

[18] For disability benefit information from SSA records, we used an enhanced version of the TRF 2008, which includes benefit data through November 2009 (one year following the last random assignment for Transition WORKS). From October 2004 onward, the TRF was expanded to include SSI beneficiaries as young as 10 years old. Previously, the minimum age for inclusion in the file was 18.

to assess earnings of various sample groups in the year before random assignment.[19] Finally, for all evaluation enrollees, we used administrative information on gender, age, language, primary disabling conditions, and representative payee type.

**Analytic Sample.** We treated as our main analytic sample for the interim impact analysis the 746 evaluation enrollees who completed the 12-month follow-up survey, which provided information on many of our primary outcomes. However, we have a larger sample of randomly assigned evaluation enrollees for whom we have data on benefits and use of SSA work incentives from administrative records. To make use of the best available sample, we report impact analysis results for the full sample of *all* randomly assigned youth for the benefits and work incentive use outcomes measured in administrative records.[20] For these outcomes, we found no meaningful differences in the impact analysis results when we limited the analysis to the sample of 12-month survey completers (Appendix A, Table A.9).

We compared the baseline characteristics of treatment and control group members in the analytic sample to assess their equivalence at the time of random assignment. In all, we examined 50 characteristics. (We report 29 characteristics in Table II.2 and the rest in Appendix A, Table A.2.[21]) Overall, we found that the two groups were highly similar, but we did observe some differences. These were small and not statistically significant for most characteristics, including school attendance, living arrangements, family socioeconomic status, expectations about future living arrangements, age, and duration of benefit entitlement. The most notable difference between the two groups was that, among the treatment group youth, there was a slightly smaller share that expected to work for pay: 91 percent for the treatment group compared with 95 percent for the control group. This difference of almost four percentage points is statistically significant at the 10 percent level. We found no differences between the treatment and control groups in the share who reported in the baseline survey that their primary language spoken at home was English. However, administrative records showed a slightly higher share of English speakers among the treatment group youth. The difference of just over four percentage points is statistically significant at the 10 percent level.[22]

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[19] Post–random assignment data from the MEF were not available for the research sample in time to be analyzed for this interim report. We will present estimates of impacts on earnings as measured in the MEF in the comprehensive final report on all of the random assignment YTD projects.

[20] The full research sample for the impact analysis of outcomes measured in administrative records consisted of the 843 youth who enrolled in the evaluation and were randomly assigned to treatment or control status, less six youth who had died as of the one-year anniversary of their random assignment, for a total of 837 youth (457 treatment and 380 control cases).

[21] Table II.2 reports all key baseline characteristics, plus any characteristics we examined that showed a statistically significant difference between the treatment and control groups at baseline. Table A.2 in Appendix A reports no statistically significant difference between treatment and control group members in the total amount of disability benefits received in the year before random assignment. In Section F of Appendix A, we provide additional details on benefit amounts before random assignment.

[22] We also compared the baseline characteristics of the treatment and control groups in the full research sample, regardless of whether they responded to the 12-month survey (see Appendix Table A.3). This analysis was based on all 843 youth randomly assigned to the treatment or control groups, including the six youth who died during the year following random assignment. In general, the patterns were largely similar to those shown in Table II.2. In the full research sample, there were a few more differences that are statistically significant at the 10 percent level: school attendance, attainment of a high school diploma, worked for pay in the last month, and rides public transportation alone. Notably, whereas the treatment-control difference in language, as measured in SSA administrative records, is statistically significant in the analytic sample, it is not so in the full research sample.

**Table II.2. Baseline Characteristics of Analytic Sample (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | All | Treatment | Control | Difference | | P-Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Baseline Survey Data** | | | | | | |
| Demographic Characteristics | | | | | | |
| Race | | | | | | 0.74 |
| White[a] | 56.1 | 56.2 | 55.9 | 0.3 | | |
| Black | 34.7 | 33.3 | 36.3 | -2.9 | | |
| American Indian/AK/HI/Pacific Islander | 1.2 | 1.5 | 0.9 | 0.6 | | |
| Asian | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 0.2 | | |
| Other or unknown | 7.6 | 8.5 | 6.6 | 1.8 | | |
| Hispanic | 9.2 | 8.5 | 9.9 | -1.4 | | 0.52 |
| Primarily speaks English at home | 96.6 | 96.9 | 96.3 | 0.6 | | 0.64 |
| Education | | | | | | |
| School Attendance | | | | | | 0.27 |
| Does not attend school[a] | 48.4 | 45.5 | 52.0 | -6.5 | | |
| Attends regular high school | 25.5 | 27.8 | 22.8 | 5.0 | | |
| Attends special high school | 8.6 | 8.2 | 9.0 | -0.8 | | |
| Attends other school | 17.4 | 18.5 | 16.2 | 2.3 | | |
| High school diploma, GED, or certificate of completion[a] | 41.6 | 38.9 | 44.8 | -5.9 | | 0.11 |
| Employment | | | | | | |
| Received job training in last year | 38.6 | 38.0 | 39.3 | -1.3 | | 0.72 |
| Worked as volunteer in last year | 10.0 | 9.8 | 10.3 | -0.5 | | 0.81 |
| Worked for pay in last year[a] | 34.7 | 33.5 | 36.1 | -2.6 | | 0.46 |
| Worked for pay in last month | 18.4 | 16.5 | 20.7 | -4.2 | | 0.15 |
| Never worked for pay at baseline | 42.5 | 43.2 | 41.6 | 1.5 | | 0.67 |
| Living Arrangements and Household Composition | | | | | | |
| Living Arrangements[a] | | | | | | 0.79 |
| Two-parent family | 32.4 | 33.2 | 31.4 | 1.7 | | |
| Single-parent family | 49.9 | 49.8 | 50.1 | -0.2 | | |
| Group home | 2.1 | 1.5 | 2.8 | -1.3 | | |
| Other institution | 3.2 | 3.4 | 3.1 | 0.3 | | |
| Lives alone or with friends | 12.4 | 12.1 | 12.7 | -0.5 | | |
| Average number of people in household | 3.6 | 3.7 | 3.6 | 0.1 | | 0.46 |
| Lives with others with disabilities | 43.5 | 44.8 | 41.9 | 2.9 | | 0.47 |
| Family Socioeconomic Status | | | | | | |
| Annual Income | | | | | | 0.43 |
| Less than $10,000 | 32.5 | 34.1 | 30.6 | 3.5 | | |
| $10,000–$24,999 | 33.9 | 31.7 | 36.5 | -4.8 | | |
| $25,000 or more | 33.6 | 34.2 | 32.9 | 1.3 | | |
| Parents' Education | | | | | | |
| Mother high school graduate[a] | 73.6 | 75.1 | 71.9 | 3.2 | | 0.34 |
| Father high school graduate | 73.2 | 74.9 | 71.0 | 3.8 | | 0.30 |
| Self-Reported Health Status[a] | | | | | | 0.51 |
| Excellent | 18.4 | 18.0 | 19.0 | -1.0 | | |
| Very good/good | 61.4 | 63.2 | 59.3 | 4.0 | | |
| Fair/poor | 20.1 | 18.8 | 21.8 | -3.0 | | |
| Expectations About the Future | | | | | | |
| Expects to live independently (w/ or w/o help)[a] | 75.7 | 76.7 | 74.4 | 2.3 | | 0.53 |
| Expects to continue education | 76.6 | 79.0 | 73.8 | 5.2 | | 0.14 |
| Expects to work at least part-time for pay | 92.7 | 90.9 | 94.8 | -3.9 | * | 0.08 |

| | All | Treatment | Control | Difference | | P-Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Administrative Data** | | | | | | |
| Demographic Characteristics | | | | | | |
| Male[a] | 61.2 | 63.0 | 59.0 | 4.0 | | 0.27 |
| Age in Years[a] | | | | | | 0.41 |
| 14–17 | 24.1 | 24.5 | 23.6 | 1.0 | | |
| 18–21 | 44.7 | 46.3 | 42.8 | 3.6 | | |
| 22–25 | 31.2 | 29.1 | 33.7 | -4.5 | | |
| Average age (years) | 19.9 | 19.8 | 20.0 | -0.2 | | 0.30 |
| Language | | | | | * | 0.09 |
| English | 94.2 | 96.1 | 92.0 | 4.1 | | |
| Spanish | 2.2 | 1.9 | 2.6 | -0.7 | | |
| Other | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.3 | -0.3 | | |
| Unknown/missing | 3.4 | 2.0 | 5.1 | -3.1 | | |
| Benefits | | | | | | |
| SSA Beneficiary Status | | | | | | 0.82 |
| CDB or DI | 5.6 | 5.4 | 5.8 | -0.4 | | |
| SSI (only or concurrent with CDB or DI)[a] | 94.4 | 94.6 | 94.2 | 0.4 | | |
| Duration of benefit entitlement (years)[a] | 8.3 | 8.3 | 8.3 | 0.0 | | 0.93 |
| Health Status | | | | | | |
| Primary Disabling Condition (SSA data)[a] | | | | | | 0.38 |
| Mental illness | 16.6 | 16.6 | 16.6 | 0.0 | | |
| Cognitive/developmental disability | 45.1 | 45.4 | 44.7 | 0.6 | | |
| Learning disability/ADD | 13.7 | 15.6 | 11.4 | 4.2 | | |
| Physical disability | 18.8 | 16.7 | 21.3 | -4.7 | | |
| Speech, hearing, visual impairment | 5.8 | 5.8 | 5.9 | -0.1 | | |
| Duration of disability ( years) | 9.9 | 9.7 | 10.2 | -0.5 | | 0.34 |
| Earnings in prior year ($) | 853 | 887 | 812 | 75 | | 0.66 |
| **Sample Size** | **746** | **416** | **330** | | | |

Sources: YTD baseline survey and SSA administrative records.

Notes: We weighted statistics to adjust for non-response to the 12-month survey. Baseline survey non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for some characteristics than indicated at the bottom of the table. Missing information on primary disabling condition resulted in a smaller sample size for this characteristic than shown at the bottom of the table.

[a]We included these characteristics in the regression models for the impact analysis. In addition, the regression models include indicators for whether the youth required assistance with primary care needs and year of random assignment.

*/**/***Treatment-control difference is statistically different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

The degree of difference between the treatment and control groups was less than we would expect based on chance alone. For example, of the 50 baseline characteristics we investigated, we would expect two or three to be statistically different at the five percent significance level or lower and about five characteristics to be statistically different at the 10 percent significance level or lower. We found statistically significant differences for no characteristics at the five percent significance level and only two characteristics at the 10 percent significance level.

## 4. Estimating Overall Impacts

Although random assignment ensures that a simple comparison of mean values of outcomes will yield unbiased estimates of program impacts, we estimated regression-adjusted impacts to increase the precision of the estimates. In addition, the regression-adjustment approach controls for the few chance differences in characteristics between treatment and control group members observed at baseline, which may be correlated with outcome measures. We estimated ordinary least squares regression models for continuous outcome measures, logistic regressions for binary outcomes, and multinomial logit models for categorical outcomes. We estimated impacts for all

youth in the analytic sample. In particular, we included all treatment group members in the analytic sample, regardless of whether they enrolled in Transition WORKS. The evaluation literature refers to the resulting estimates as the intent to treat (ITT) impact estimates.

Estimates of ITT impacts address the policy question: "What are the effects of a YTD project on eligible youth who were interested and consented to participate in YTD, and subsequently were offered the opportunity to do so?" The ITT impacts reflect both the decisions of those who declined to participate in project services and the effects of the YTD intervention on those who accepted the offer of services. Youth in the treatment group who declined to participate are a self-selected subset of treatment group youth likely to have different baseline characteristics, on average, than YTD participants. If these youth were excluded from the analysis, the control group would no longer provide a valid basis for comparison with the participant subsample.[23]

Our regression models used 14 distinct variables or sets of related variables to control for baseline characteristics believed to be correlated with the outcomes of interest.[24] An important consideration in selecting the control variables was the need to adjust for any pre-existing differences at baseline between the treatment and control groups. We also used as controls (1) variables believed or known to have strong behavioral relationships with the outcome measures (for example, work experience or education); (2) variables that could be used to target intervention services to youth for whom they would have the greatest impacts (for example, age and school enrollment); and (3) variables related to the enrollment cohort or timing of random assignment (for example, year of random assignment).[25]

To provide context for interpreting the impact estimates, we report the estimates and observed means for the treatment group. We decided to report the treatment group means (rather than the observed control group means) because we judged them to be of greater interest to readers; furthermore, our discussions of findings begin with them.[26] To illustrate the expected treatment group experience in the absence of Transition WORKS, we show the observed treatment group means less the regression-adjusted impact estimates and refer to these as the "estimated treatment

[23] Bloom (1984) shows that, under some additional assumptions, ITT estimates can be adjusted to estimate the impact of an intervention on those who actually participated. These estimates are known as the impact of the treatment on the treated (TOT).

[24] We list the control variables in the impact regression models in Table A.4 of Appendix A. Most of the variables also appear in Table II.2, where they are designated by an "a" superscript. In addition to the control variables in Table II.2, the regression models include indicators for whether the youth required assistance with primary care needs and year of random assignment. To keep Table II.2 brief, we present these and additional baseline characteristics in Table A.2 of Appendix A.

[25] We excluded from the regression model two variables with statistically significant treatment-control differences in Table II.2. We excluded "expects to work part-time for pay" because we believed that (1) attitudes toward work were better captured by the included variable "worked for pay in last year," and (2) the included variable "expects to live independently" was more likely to be correlated with a broad range of outcome measures. We excluded the administrative measure of language because (1) this variable is not statistically significant for the full research sample (see Appendix Table A.3), and (2) the treatment-control difference in the survey-based measure of language is not statistically significant for either the analytic or the full research samples. As a robustness check, we verified that inclusion of future work expectations and language in the regression model did not alter any findings related to the statistical significance of impact estimates for primary outcomes. We also verified that the magnitudes of the estimates were essentially unchanged for primary outcomes with statistically significant impact estimates.

[26] We show the observed control group means for all outcomes in each domain in Table A.5 of Appendix A, along with the observed treatment group means.

group means in the absence of Transition WORKS." Where we observe significant program impacts and want to describe their magnitudes in proportional terms, we use the estimated treatment group means in the absence of Transition WORKS as our base; however, if these means differ by a meaningful amount from the observed control group means, we also report the proportional impacts using the observed control group means as our base (Appendix A, Section C).

We tested the sensitivity of the estimated impact on the primary outcome in each domain to the use of either the regression adjustment or a comparison of simple means (Appendix A, Table A.6) and found that the impact estimates were robust with respect to the particular estimation approach. The absolute sizes and proportional magnitudes of statistically significant impact estimates were very similar when we estimated using regression adjustment or simple means. In some instances, the signs and sizes or magnitudes of the estimated impacts varied with the estimation method, but in all of those instances, the estimated impacts are not statistically significant. Hence, the choice of estimation methodology did not affect our conclusions about the impacts of Transition WORKS.

### 5. Estimating Subgroup Impacts

In addition to the impacts of Transition WORKS on outcomes for all eligible youth, we were interested in estimating whether the project had different impacts on different types of youth. The subgroup analysis examined whether the intervention worked better for some youth versus others. Subgroup analysis can inform decisions about targeting scarce resources to specific groups. However, the limited size of the analytic sample (746 youth) meant that, for some subgroups, the sample sizes were insufficient to test for meaningful differences between them. Further, to be responsive to the multiple comparisons problem, we had to minimize the number of subgroups for which we would estimate impacts on primary outcomes and identify them upfront.

In our design report, which we prepared before conducting the impact analysis, we identified several baseline characteristics defining the subgroups that might be expected to experience different impacts of YTD: youth under age 18, youth enrolled in school, and youth experienced in working for pay (Rangarajan et al. 2009a). For example, we might expect to see larger employment impacts on older or out-of-school youth—as opposed to younger or in-school youth—and youth with at least some paid work experience. In addition, the expectations of youth who did not work for pay in the year before random assignment might have been more malleable than those of older youth and those with work experience. In Section G of Appendix A, we discuss impact estimates for additional exploratory subgroups.

In Table II.3, we describe the sample sizes of the subgroups selected for analysis. To estimate subgroup impacts, we modified the regression models to include the interaction of the treatment status indicator with specific subgroup indicator variables. For each subgroup, we conducted tests to determine the statistical significance of the subgroup impact estimates and whether the impact estimates across the subgroups differed significantly from each other.[27]

[27] In our design report (Rangarajan et al. 2009a), we noted that the estimates would have sufficient power to detect impact differences between subgroup pairs for pairs balanced in sample size (that is, with at least 40 percent of youth in the smaller group of the pair). We decided to report impact estimates for subgroup pairs that were not balanced because these estimates are of interest and may be statistically significant, particularly for the larger group of the subgroup pair.

**Table II.3. Sample Size by Subgroup**

| | Number | Percentage of Sample |
|---|---|---|
| Age | | |
| Under age 18 at baseline | 180 | 24.1 |
| Age 18 or over at baseline | 566 | 75.9 |
| School Attendance | | |
| In school at baseline | 390 | 52.3 |
| Not in school at baseline | 356 | 47.7 |
| Paid Work Experience | | |
| Worked for pay in year prior to random assignment | 267 | 35.8 |
| Did not work for pay in year prior to random assignment | 478 | 64.2 |
| **Total** | **746** | **100** |

Sources: YTD baseline survey and SSA administrative records.

Notes: We did not weight percentages to account for non-response to the 12-month survey. For paid work experience, numbers do not total to 746 due to missing information on prior paid work experience for one youth in the control group.

## 6. Other Analytic Considerations

As noted, the response rate to the 12-month follow-up survey was quite high and fairly similar for the treatment and control groups (91 and 86 percent, respectively). Even with relatively high response rates, if respondents differed systematically from non-respondents and we did not account for the differences, the estimated impacts could be biased in the sense that they would not represent all youth enrolled in the evaluation.

We found that respondents did differ from non-respondents on several baseline characteristics. For example, respondents were more likely to have completed high school, to have received job training in the year prior to random assignment, to have private health insurance, and to have a cognitive or developmental disability, and less likely to have a mental illness. Respondents also had a longer average duration of disability by more than one year (Appendix A, Table A.7). To account for the differences between the respondent and non-respondent samples, we used survey weights that adjusted the estimated impacts for survey non-response in all of our impact analyses for outcomes measured in survey data. The weights made the respondent cases more representative of the original sample of youth enrolled in the evaluation and reduced the potential for non-response bias. To calculate the weights, we used logistic models to estimate the propensity for a sample member to respond. In Section D of Appendix A, we describe the calculation of survey weights.

In addition, the availability of administrative data on some important outcomes for all evaluation enrollees during the year following random assignment allowed us to assess whether non-respondents experienced any changes since random assignment that may have led them to become non-respondents (Appendix A, Table A.8). Using administrative data on SSA disability benefit receipt and benefit amount, we estimated impacts for both the 12-month survey respondents and the full evaluation sample (Appendix A, Table A.9).[28] We found little difference in the estimated

[28] We were not able to estimate impacts on earnings using the MEF administrative data because the data are not yet available for the follow-up period. We will examine this issue in future reports.

impacts for the two samples; all statistically significant impact estimates were roughly the same in magnitude for both samples. Overall, the results suggest that use of non-response weights eliminated any potential bias in the estimated impacts attributable to non-response to the 12-month follow-up survey.[29]

For most of the control variables in our regression models, few observations had missing information, and we replaced any missing information with the mean value from the non-missing observations. For two control variables with large shares of missing observations (dummy variables for "mother completed high school" and "youth expects to live independently"), we included dummy variables in our regression models to indicate that the information was missing. For outcome measures, we typically excluded observations with missing information for an outcome from any analysis of that outcome. However, for some outcome measures for which missing information was not random, we used a multiple imputation procedure.[30] In Section E of Appendix A, we provide a full description of our treatment of missing information for control variables and outcome measures.

## B. Process Analysis

In the process analysis, we addressed the question: Did the demonstration test the service intervention that SSA wanted to test? We also provided descriptive information essential to any program replication efforts. In particular, we described the major aspects of service delivery, along with background on Transition WORKS and the local context and service environment in which Transition WORKS operated. In addition, we examined the enrollment process, project implementation, service utilization, and youth satisfaction with services. Below, we describe our broad analytic approach to conducting the process analysis, followed by the data sources for the analysis.

### 1. Analytic Approach

Our approach to the process analysis was driven by the theory of change presented in the conceptual framework for YTD (Figure I.1). The analysis examined whether the Transition WORKS intervention included all of the core components shown in the conceptual framework and emphasized particular components of the design. We examined the extent to which Transition WORKS staff members were able to deliver services related to the core components and the successes and challenges they faced in doing so. We considered whether the barriers to successful transition in Erie County differed from those in the conceptual framework and how the intervention interacted with the environment and community service providers to shape youth transitions.

To ensure that we captured several perspectives on key issues, we used a systematic approach to gather information from a variety of sources. We started by identifying the key domains or areas in which we wanted to obtain information and the types of information we needed for each domain.

[29] We did find a higher average benefit amount in the year following random assignment among respondents relative to non-respondents (Appendix A, Table A.8). The difference did not affect the impact estimates when we weighted the analysis to adjust for survey non-response (Appendix A, Table A.9).

[30] We used a multiple imputation procedure for measures of the amount of services used, paid and unpaid employment, employment intensity, earnings, income, and expectations of future employment. For nearly all of these variables, no more than 13 percent of observations had missing data. The only exception was future employment expectations (15 percent were missing the youth response and 26 percent were missing the parent response). In Section E of Appendix A, we provide details on the multiple imputation procedure.

We then developed a source grid that identified the sources that could provide reliable information for each domain of interest. The sources included interviews with program operators, direct service staff, program managers, and staff at other related community organizations. They also encompassed published statistics about the local environment (such as the unemployment rate) and administrative data from the Transition WORKS management information system (Efforts-to-Outcomes or ETO), program observations, and case file reviews. In addition, we gathered information from youth via focus group discussions. We developed a set of standard protocols to ensure that we covered all key items, collected data in a uniform fashion, and collected consistent information. The protocols included open-ended sections to capture information about unexpected challenges or successes. (For a detailed description of our analytic approach to conducting the process analysis, see Rangarajan et al. 2009a.)

The use of more than one perspective on key domains was a central element of our process analysis. To verify and analyze key questions, we assessed the extent to which multiple respondents suggested the same types of input and insights and how often they reported different experiences. The different perspectives might reflect information obtained from (1) different sources by the same informants (information provided by staff during site visit interviews versus information staff entered into ETO while delivering services); (2) staff in different agencies (for example, project versus school district staff); or (3) staff at different levels within an organization. The different perspectives provided a fuller understanding of implementation issues.

## 2. Data Sources and Sample

We tapped a wide range of qualitative and quantitative data sources to inform the process analysis, gathering qualitative data from interviews and focus groups during site visits to the project and obtaining quantitative data primarily from ETO. Project document reviews and ongoing communications with project management also informed the analysis.

The analysis of the Transition WORKS implementation relied primarily on qualitative data collected during site visits. The evaluation team assigned to Transition WORKS made three research-related site visits to Erie County to study the project and interview staff and partners. The first visit, in August 2007, supported an early assessment of Transition WORKS enrollment activities and the implementation of services (Mamun et al. 2008). The team made subsequent visits in May 2008 and May 2009. During all visits, we conducted interviews with Transition WORKS staff, either individually or in groups, and reviewed participant case files. In 2009, the evaluation team also interviewed key community partners and conducted four focus group discussions: three with youth and one with parents. In addition, the team conducted in-depth telephone interviews with 20 Transition WORKS participants to learn more about their service use. Finally, the evaluation team engaged in bi-weekly telephone conversations with the assistant project director and reviewed project documents, such as quarterly reports to SSA.

As mentioned in Chapter I, given that SSA wanted to ensure that all YTD projects delivered strong services, it provided funding through the evaluation contract for a technical assistance provider, TransCen, Inc., to help the projects design and implement services and make certain that all recommended components were included in the projects' service approaches. As an integral part of the evaluation, TransCen helped Transition WORKS implement the core employment-focused components and integrate them into the project's intervention; it delivered other technical assistance as needed. The evaluation team met regularly with the TransCen team to learn about project-specific issues and challenges. Information obtained from TransCen through regular team meetings also fed

into the process analysis and helped the evaluation team understand the project's successes and challenges.

The process analysis relied heavily on quantitative data from the Transition WORKS management information system. As part of the YTD evaluation, each project was provided with ETO, which served as a case management tool for project line staff and a management tool for project managers, and provided information for the evaluation on services delivered. Data on enrollment activities and service utilization for the process analysis came from ETO. Staff members used ETO to record outreach efforts related to enrolling youth in Transition WORKS and information related to the provision of services to or on behalf of enrolled youth. Services included individualized direct services, such as developing a transition plan, and group direct services, such as a self-determination workshop. Staff also entered information on services provided on behalf of youth, such as contacting a community partner to arrange services for a specific youth.

Our analysis of ETO data suggests that, in some cases, some direct and indirect services were improperly omitted from ETO by YTD project staff (for Transition WORKS and other sites).[31] In addition, staff time on the project not directed to helping specific youth was omitted from ETO by design (for example, meeting with community partners to discuss service needs for YTD youth generally). Finally, staff time on behalf of youth not related to service provision was intentionally omitted from ETO (for example, time spent travelling to meet with a youth).

We used the ETO data to address critical questions related to enrollment efforts, participant take-up of project services, type and level of services, and other service delivery issues. The sample for analysis of enrollment included all youth randomly assigned to receive an offer of Transition WORKS services (that is, all treatment group members), while the sample for the analysis of service utilization included just those treatment group youth who enrolled in Transition WORKS (about 83 percent of all treatment group youth). We had 15 months of ETO data available (through June 2009). As part of the process analysis, we also assessed the use of ETO by project staff and addressed its strengths and limitations for tracking services.

The process analysis relied on ETO to describe service utilization among youth in the treatment group who had participated in Transition WORKS. In contrast, the impact analysis of service utilization used data from the 12-month follow-up survey to compare service utilization among treatment and control group youth. For several reasons, data from the survey are not directly comparable to ETO data. For example, the latter are entered by program staff at the time of service delivery, whereas the follow-up data rely on youths' recall of services used. Furthermore, ETO data reflect staff time spent on services with or on behalf of a specific youth. In contrast, youth reports in the survey data do not include efforts on behalf of youth when the efforts did not directly involve them (such as calls to a potential employer). Perhaps most important, youth reports of service

[31] The entry of data on YTD services into ETO was a problem to some degree at all six of the random assignment sites. Problems occurred despite the evaluation team's delivery of substantial technical assistance to site staff on the use of ETO. That technical assistance took the form of (1) an initial in-person training on ETO for the staff of each site; (2) occasional refresher trainings conducted either in-person or through the Internet, combined with telephone conferencing; (3) a bi-monthly meeting of selected evaluation staff with the ETO administrators from the project sites (each site was required to designate an ETO administrator); and (4) formal feedback to project managers approximately one year after the start of random assignment on the quality of ETO data entry through site-specific early assessment reports. Our early assessment report on Transition Works (Mamun et al. 2008) did identify deficiencies in ETO data entry by project staff, particularly the benefits counselors at Neighborhood Legal Services. The project subsequently took steps to remedy these deficiencies.

receipt include services provided by organizations or programs other than Transition WORKS, whereas ETO data capture Transition WORKS services only.

We used data from the baseline survey to provide information on the characteristics of the youth the project intended to serve, allowing us to develop useful descriptions of the target population and those who enrolled in project services. We compared the baseline characteristics of treatment group youth who participated in Transition WORKS with the baseline characteristics of treatment group youth who did not, using the baseline survey and SSA administrative data on earnings and benefits. Finally, data from the 12-month follow-up survey provided information on participants' satisfaction with project services.

# III. IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSITION WORKS

The Transition WORKS YTD project in Erie County, New York, sought to maximize economic self-sufficiency and independence for youth with disabilities who were Social Security beneficiaries by improving their educational and employment outcomes. The project served 380 Erie County youth who were ages 16 to 25 at entry and receiving Social Security disability benefits—Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (DI), or Childhood Disability Benefits (CDB).

Youth in this county faced several of the challenges outlined in the YTD conceptual framework (see Chapter I). Most notably, low family expectations about the potential for employment and self-sufficiency, lack of access to community-based work experiences, and an uncoordinated handoff between school and adult services hampered the ability of these youth to find and retain employment.[32] Transition WORKS provided services and financial incentives to address all of the YTD model components, including individualized work-based experiences, youth empowerment and family support, referrals supporting system linkages that address gaps in the handoff from school to adult services, case management, waivers of certain SSA rules, and benefits counseling to inform youth about SSA and other work incentives.

Transition WORKS was a well-organized, cohesive project that maintained a high degree of fidelity to its program model and focused on self-determination, understanding of YTD waivers and other SSA work incentives, education, and employment. Most youth who enrolled in the project received some services in each of these components. Self-determination training, career exploration and job search, and benefits counseling were the most intensive services. Employment services were less intensive.

In the initial sections of this chapter, we provide an overview of the local environment in which the project operated, outline key partnerships, and describe Transition WORKS services. In later sections, we present findings from field visits and statistics from the project's management information system on the enrollment of youth in Transition WORKS, the implementation of the intervention, and the use of services by enrolled youth. We end the chapter with conclusions and lessons learned that may be applicable to similar projects.

## A. Overview of the Sponsoring Organization and Its Partners

The Erie 1 Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), one of 37 regional public education service organizations that serve school districts throughout New York, administered the Transition WORKS YTD project. Erie 1 BOCES provides educational services to 20 of the 29 public school districts in the county, which enroll about 73,000 students. The organization, which also offers academic and functional programs, provides related special education services, such as counseling, occupational therapy, physical and speech therapy, hearing and vision services, and a six-week summer program for youth with disabilities.

SSA selected Erie 1 BOCES in September 2003 to design and implement a YTD project. Pilot operations began in June 2004 and continued for about two-and-a-half years. The centerpiece of the

[32] Memorandum, "Youth Transition Demonstration Focus Group Findings, Erie County New York" to Jamie Kendall from Alissa Gardenhire-Crooks, March 26, 2007.

pilot project was a classroom-based self-determination curriculum for in-school youth, which included a scrapbooking activity for youth and their families highlighting goals in four distinct areas: living, learning, working, and playing. The youth also participated in career development activities such as field trips to employers. In addition, the intervention taught youth to self-direct their IEPs.

Because the piloted classroom-based intervention largely targeted implementation of the self-determination curriculum without much individualized focus on employment, it was unclear whether Transition WORKS had sufficient potential to increase employment and earnings to warrant its inclusion in the YTD national impact evaluation. To remedy this deficiency, Erie 1 BOCES redesigned the project to focus on individualized job development, career exploration, and employment for both in-school and out-of-school youth, while retaining its emphasis on self-determination. With input from the Mathematica-led evaluation and technical assistance team, in mid-2006 SSA selected the redesigned project to be part of the national impact evaluation. Random assignment of eligible Erie County youth to treatment and control groups began in January 2007 and the first treatment group member was enrolled in Transition WORKS in the following month.[33]

Erie 1 BOCES used its own staff to directly deliver many Transition WORKS services and established formal partnerships with three community organizations to provide other key project services. Descriptions of the partner organizations and their roles on the project follow below.

- **Neighborhood Legal Services (NLS)** is a legal services corporation that serves low-income families and people with disabilities. With three offices in the state of New York, including one in downtown Buffalo that serves Erie County, NLS operates about 14 disability-specific projects, including a Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) project.[34] NLS staff provided benefits planning services, including assistance with the SSA waivers for YTD, to Transition WORKS participants and their families.
- **The Community Employment Office (CEO),** in cooperation with the Western New York Placement Partnership, is an alliance of public and voluntary agencies that promotes integrated employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in western New York. The CEO provided employment preparation services (such as conducting mock interviews) to Transition WORKS participants and assisted them in identifying jobs that matched their interests and skills.
- **The Parent Network of Western New York** is a parent-led community organization whose mission is to support youth with disabilities and their families. It conducted a binder-training workshop that provided instruction to the parents and guardians of Transition WORKS participants on organizing important documents pertinent to the transition of their youth. The Parent Network also prepared a monthly newsletter with information on topics of importance to youth with disabilities and their families. This newsletter is an ongoing activity of the Parent Network and was not specific to Transition WORKS.

Transition WORKS was directed by the assistant director for School Support Services at Erie 1 BOCES. The project director spent about 40 percent of her time overseeing Transition WORKS

[33] Erie 1 BOCES does not provide its core education services in the city of Buffalo, but Transition WORKS served Buffalo and the remainder of Erie County.

[34] WIPA grantees provide beneficiaries with information about and assistance with using SSA work incentives. SSA funds 103 WIPA projects throughout the country.

during the pilot operations. Her involvement diminished over time, but she continued to provide vision and long-range planning for the project. A full-time assistant project director was responsible for the day-to-day management of Transition WORKS, including coordination of services provided by project partners and oversight and administration of the project's ETO data collection and management information system. Two full-time transition coordinators and five full-time job developers from Erie 1 BOCES provided the bulk of project services to youth, forming a cohesive, close-knit team. Three full-time and three part-time staff at NLS, a full-time staff member and a part-time assistant at the CEO, and several part-time staff of the Parent Network all complemented the core team at Erie 1 BOCES.

TransCen, Inc., under subcontract to Mathematica, provided training and technical assistance to all of the YTD projects. This support was critical to the successful implementation and ongoing operation of Transition WORKS. TransCen trained project staff on benefits planning, individualized and customized employment services, case management, and re-engagement of uninvolved participants. That training was particularly helpful in teaching the project's job developers effective strategies for networking with employers to identify employment opportunities for youth. TransCen delivered training and technical assistance through annual YTD conferences (one of which was held in Buffalo), site visits focused on training and technical assistance, monthly conference calls with all of the YTD projects, and telephone calls directly with Transition WORKS staff.

## B. Local Context and Infrastructure

### 1. County Socioeconomic Characteristics

With a median household income $3,500 lower than that for the entire United States, Erie County often is described as being economically depressed (Table III.1). The county also has a higher percentage of residents with disabilities living below the federal poverty level (23 percent) than the country overall (21 percent). Furthermore, the percentages of residents who receive SSI and SSI/DI concurrent benefits are higher for Erie County than for the United States as a whole.

Yet the economic recession that recently has hurt the rest of the country has not had the same magnitude of effect in Erie County, in part because the county has been depressed economically for decades. In interviews we conducted during two field visits to the county, Transition WORKS participants and staff told us that they had seen only small negative repercussions from the nation's economic crisis. For instance, they reported that entry-level and minimum wage jobs, which long have been common in Erie County's major business sectors—services, trade, government, and manufacturing (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002 American Community Survey)—were still available. In fact, in 2008 about 11 percent of the employed population worked in the manufacturing sector and 18 percent worked in the service sector, as compared to 11 and 17 percent of the U.S. population, respectively (Table III.1). However, these jobs had become more difficult to obtain for individuals who typically fill them because job applicants with more education and work experience had begun competing for them. This increased competition created challenges for Transition WORKS participants, who generally were less educated and had less work experience than other job applicants. Additionally, the economic recession resulted in more unemployment among the family members of Transition WORKS participants. Transition WORKS staff noted that this situation made some of the families reluctant to allow their children with disabilities to pursue employment because the perception was that doing so could potentially jeopardize their benefit checks—the only stable source of income for some of these families.

**Table III.1. Characteristics of the Service Environment for Transition WORKS (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Erie County | New York | United States |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Demographic and Economic Characteristics** | | | |
| Population (number) | 909,845 | 19,490,297 | 304,059,724 |
| Population density (number per square mile)[a] | 872.6 | 413.6 | 86.1 |
| Median annual household income ($) | 48,522 | 56,033 | 52,029 |
| Residents below the federal poverty level | 13.6 | 13.6 | 13.2 |
| Residents with disabilities below the federal poverty level | 22.7 | 23.1 | 20.6 |
| Language other than English spoken at home | 8.5 | 29.0 | 19.7 |
| High school graduate, over age 25[b] | 88.9 | 84.1 | 85.0 |
| Bachelor's degree or higher, over age 25 | 28.4 | 31.9 | 27.7 |
| Unemployment rate, 2008 | 6.3 | 6.3 | 6.4 |
| Percentage of employed population in manufacturing[c] | 10.9 | 7.4 | 11.2 |
| Percentage of employed population in services[c] | 18.4 | 19.4 | 17.1 |
| Public transportation use[d] | 3.9 | 26.7 | 5.0 |
| **SSI Beneficiaries** | | | |
| Number under 18 years old | 3,842 | 77,369 | 1,153,844 |
| Percentage of population under age 18 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 1.6 |
| Number age 18 and older | 23,702 | 579,599 | 6,366,657 |
| Percentage of population age 18 and older | 3.3 | 3.8 | 2.1 |
| **Other Disability Beneficiaries (all ages)** | | | |
| Number of recipients of Childhood Disability Benefits[e] | NA | 63,613 | 871,466 |
| Percentage of total population | NA | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| Number of SSI/DI concurrent beneficiaries | 10,361 | 218,682 | 2,612,560 |
| Percentage of total population | 1.1 | 1.1 | 0.9 |

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008 American Community Survey; U.S. Census Bureau 2009; Social Security Administration 2008a, 2008b.

[a]Population density calculations as of July 1, 2008.

[b]Includes high school equivalency.

[c]These measures refer to civilian workers age 16 and over.

[d]The percentage of all workers, age 16 and over, who use public transportation (excluding taxicabs) to travel to work.

[e]Published data on the number of recipients of Childhood Disability Benefits are not available at the county level.

SSI = Supplemental Security Income; DI = Social Security Disability Insurance.

NA = not available.

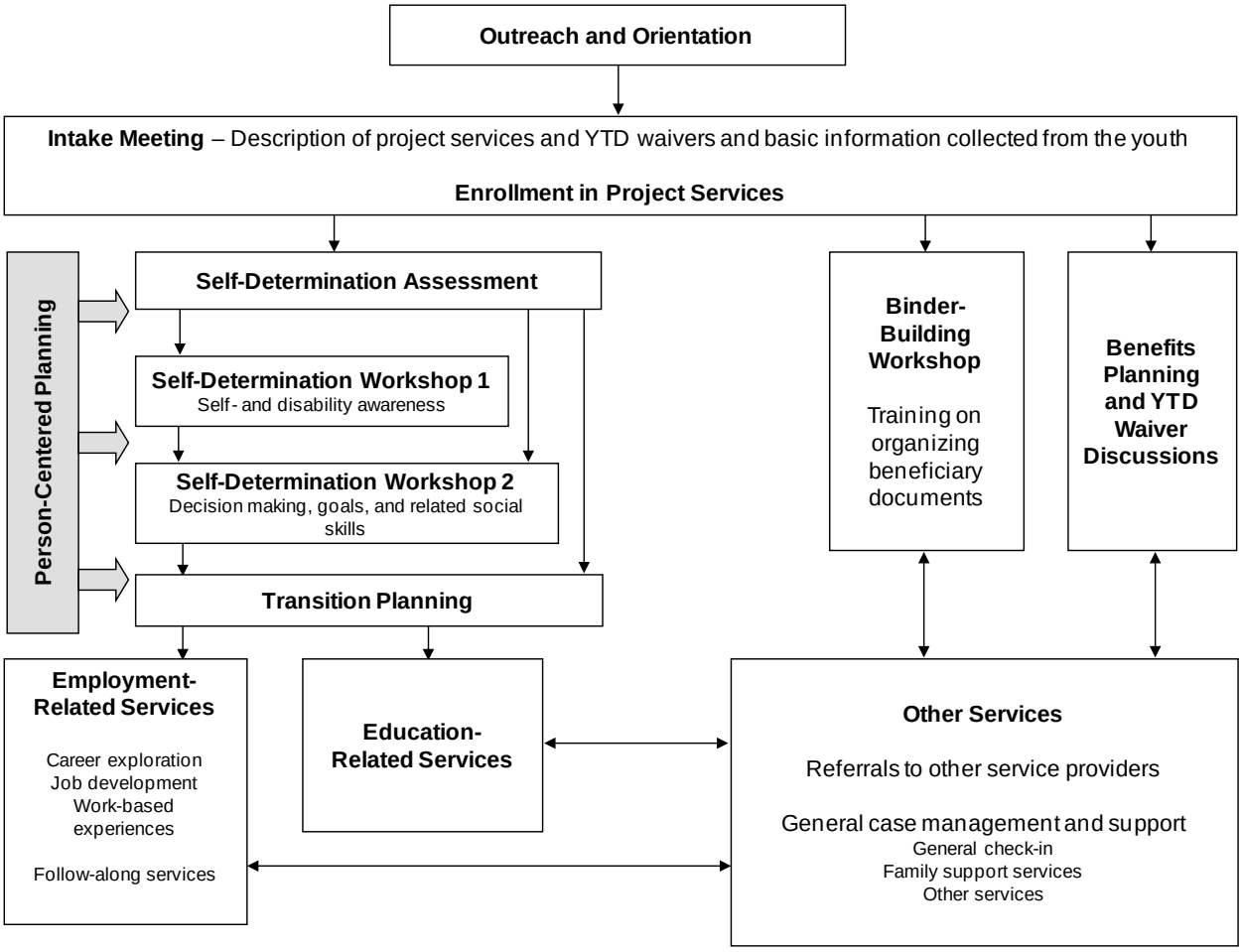
## 2. Existing Services for People with Disabilities

Erie County has a service-rich environment in many respects, with particularly strong services for individuals with developmental disabilities. However, even in this environment, gaps and deficiencies exist. Three key entities provide services to transition-age youth with disabilities: the Erie County school districts, the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, and the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities.

**Erie County public school districts** offer students with disabilities a variety of transition services, including life skills classes, job training, work experiences, and community-based training. Because each of the 29 districts in the county is responsible for coordinating its transition services, the quality, emphasis, and timing of these services vary greatly. Multiple sources told us that school transition services were generally inadequate, with their quality hinging on the commitment of individual teachers and school administrators.

**The New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD)** provides comprehensive long-term services, including care, treatment, and habilitation and rehabilitation of citizens with mental retardation or developmental disabilities. The Western New York Developmental Disabilities Office serves Erie County, providing person-centered assistance, including evaluation, information and referral, case management, job coaching and other employment services, residential services, in-home independent living and respite services, family support, and recreation. It provides these services by teaming with a variety of community organizations, such as The Arc, United Cerebral Palsy, Aspire, and People Inc. Transition WORKS staff and other agency representatives we interviewed said that youth often must spend years on a waiting list before receiving OMRDD services.

**Figure III.1. Participant Flow Through Transition WORKS Services**




Erie 1 BOCES, who were required to develop strong relationships with employers throughout Erie County. The locations of the various partners also offered advantages to particular youth; the location of Erie 1 BOCES on the outskirts of Buffalo was convenient for youth who arrived at appointments by car, whereas the downtown locations of NLS and the Parent Network were more convenient for participants who used mass transportation.

However, the multiple office locations and numerous staff working with each participant likely posed barriers for youth and their families. Further, this arrangement required ongoing communication among the staff of the partner agencies to ensure the seamless and coordinated provision of Transition WORKS services. The project director instituted a number of mechanisms to ensure that this communication occurred, including bi-weekly meetings of the Transition WORKS partners and monthly meetings with line staff from other area providers that served project youth. These meetings occurred consistently during the first year of the project and less consistently during later phases; as relationships solidified, one-on-one communication between staff members replaced some of these bi-weekly meetings.

The implementation of Transition WORKS services is described below, based upon data from several sources. A small team associated with the national YTD evaluation conducted three visits to Erie County to observe project activities and interview staff and partners about project

implementation. The first of these visits, in August 2007, was to conduct an early assessment of enrollment activities and the implementation of services. The second and third visits, in May 2008 and May 2009, were to assess ongoing project operations. During each visit, the evaluation team conducted individual and group interviews with Transition WORKS staff and reviewed a number of participant case files. During the 2009 visit, the evaluation team also interviewed key community partners and conducted four focus group discussions: three with youth and one with parents. In addition, the team conducted in-depth telephone interviews with 20 Transition WORKS participants to gain insight into their service use and analyzed ETO data for all participants.[36] Finally, the evaluation team had bi-weekly telephone calls with the assistant project director and reviewed project documents, such as quarterly reports to SSA.

### 1. Self-Determination Training and Transition Planning

Transition WORKS was guided by a strong philosophy of youth empowerment, based on a person-centered, self-determination model. Hillary's story (on page 35) exemplifies the types of services the project provided and the importance of self-determination.[37]

During intake meetings with youth, Transition WORKS staff members (usually the transition coordinators) conducted self-determination assessments. Youth were asked to (1) describe their disabilities and their effects on participation in education programs or employment; (2) articulate their goals; and (3) express their strengths, likes, and dislikes. The transition coordinators directed youth who had difficulty discussing these topics to self-determination training. Most youth were found to be in need of such training, regardless of whether they previously received it in school. The transition coordinators also evaluated whether youth had the cognitive ability to benefit from the training. Those who were deemed unable to benefit from group training due to cognitive limitations or were unable to attend one of the scheduled self-determination workshops were provided with individualized instruction.[38]

Transition WORKS staff used a modified version of the self-determination curriculum that had been developed during the project's pilot phase for in-school applications. The transition coordinators usually conducted the training for small groups of project participants in self-determination workshops 1 and 2 (SD 1 and SD 2). This training addressed the same four life domains as the school curriculum (living, learning, working, and playing), with an added emphasis on career exploration and the world of work. SD 1, which focused on the youths' awareness of themselves and their disabilities, assisted the workshop participants in articulating their likes, dislikes, strengths, and needs in each of the life domains. SD 2 focused on goal setting, decision making, and communication. Participants in this workshop used role playing to explore ways of communicating about their disabilities with educators and employers, how to communicate needs assertively, and how to request reasonable accommodations. SD 2 culminated with the youth setting short- and long-term goals related to the four life domains.

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[36] The in-depth interviews supplemented the telephone survey of all treatment and control group members conducted one year after random assignment.

[37] Note that Hillary's story (and Henry's story on page 40) is presented to illustrate the various services provided by Transition WORKS. To ensure adequate information to present a comprehensive picture of youth experiences, it was necessary to select youth who were active participants in Transition WORKS. These vignettes thus are not representative of the typical Transition WORKS youth's experiences or outcomes.

[38] Staff reported this to be a very small proportion of all participants, but we do not have an exact percentage.

**Hillary's Story**

Hillary enrolled in Transition WORKS in January 2008. Project staff helped her to build on her determination and motivation to overcome many of the barriers stemming from her deafness and physical and intellectual disabilities. She attended two self-determination workshops, in which she developed and discussed her employment goals. She also learned about SSA work incentives, including the waivers for YTD. In addition, Transition WORKS helped her to learn to use the public transit system.

In the summer of 2009, Transition WORKS helped her find a part-time job at the Buffalo Zoo through the Summer Youth Employment Program, where she assisted with education and recreation activities for children. She also attended an employment preparation class in which she learned interviewing techniques, how to complete an application, and explored potential internships. During the 2009-2010 school year, Hillary took classes adapted to her disabilities, attended a culinary education program at Erie 1 BOCES, and worked as an intern at a Manhattan Bagel store. She also worked part-time at a restaurant near her home—a job she obtained on her own using the skills she learned in the employment preparation class and the positive recommendation she received from staff at the zoo.

Hillary wanted to enroll in the culinary arts program at Erie Community College but was unable to do so until she earned her GED certificate. Her transition coordinator helped her to enroll in a GED preparation class and, as of the writing of this report, was helping her prepare for the Test for Adult Basic Education, which presented a challenge for her because it requires reading and math skills at the eighth-grade level.

Hillary received ongoing assistance from NLS, through which she learned about the SSA waivers for YTD and other SSA work incentives, particularly the SEIE. NLS sent Hillary's paystubs to the local SSA field office so that her earnings could be documented properly and helped her to develop the skill and self-confidence that she will need to send them in on her own. NLS also helped Hillary reach her goal to live away from her parents by enrolling her in a Nursing Home Diversion Waiver Program, which provides community-based services for persons 18 years of age and older who would otherwise need nursing home care and who can be served at less cost in a community setting. Hillary will need to continue her GED preparation, but with the help of Transition WORKS and other service providers, she was making progress toward her goals.

Early in the project, two transition coordinators jointly ran each of the self-determination workshops. As the number of project participants grew, however, the staffing plan was modified so that just one transition coordinator ran each workshop, assisted when possible by one or more of the five Transition WORKS job developers. The workshops provided an opportunity for the transition coordinators and job developers to get to know the new project participants and begin obtaining the information needed for transition planning.

According to the transition coordinators, the requirement that youth attend self-determination workshops and complete a transition plan before beginning other services was an unintended barrier to participation. Some youth simply were not interested in the workshops, or agreed to enroll in the workshops but then failed to attend them. To address this problem, the requirement to attend the self-determination workshops was relaxed in the later stages of the project. This change coincided with enrollment completion in May 2008, when most participants had already been offered self-

determination training. Staff delivered the training one-on-one, which may have been more acceptable to participants than the usual workshop format. This change removed the barrier to participation, but made self-determination training a less distinct component of the intervention. Nevertheless, as discussed in Section E, some of the youth who enrolled in Transition WORKS during the first several quarters of its participation in the random assignment evaluation may have been reluctant to participate in the program because of this requirement.

Once youth completed the self-determination training, or had been assessed to be "self-determined" and therefore without need for the training, the next component in the program model was transition planning. In this component, each participant developed a transition plan that outlined the youth's strengths, aspirations, and work experience. It provided a format for the youth to specify goals for employment, education, and other areas and identified the steps that he or she would take to achieve these goals. Each plan was reviewed and updated periodically to ensure its continued usefulness as a roadmap for project services and activities. All youth were expected to complete a transition plan within about three months of enrolling in project services.

### 2. Binder Training

During the project intake meetings, parents and guardians of Transition WORKS participants were scheduled to attend a two-hour workshop on binder training, conducted by the Parent Network of Western New York. The youth frequently attended this workshop as well. Parents were instructed to bring to the workshop documents pertaining to their children, such as a copy of an IEP and letters from SSA. The Parent Network provided binders for workshop attendees to organize the documents into categories, such as work, medical, and school. The binders had pockets for Social Security and Medicaid cards. During the workshop, staff of the Parent Network provided an orientation to the service system for young adults with disabilities and responded to questions from attendees about the services available through that system.

The binder training began with a discussion of the importance of the transition process, with particular attention focused on how to relate the principles for successful transition to the four life domains that were the basis for the self-determination training for youth. For example, the workshop participants learned how to infuse transition services in an IEP and how to request a vocational assessment before a youth exits school. The training ended with the development of an action plan for parents that may have included attendance at training sessions on specific services, conducted by the Parent Network with funding from sources other than Transition WORKS. Upon completing the binder training, every parent and youth began receiving the Parent Network's monthly newsletter, which, among other things, provided information about additional training opportunities.

Participation in binder training was voluntary for parents and guardians of Transition WORKS participants, but was strongly encouraged. During periods of heavy enrollment activity, the workshop was scheduled to occur several times per week at the Parent Network office; sessions were cancelled if the advance sign-up was low. The workshop was scheduled less frequently during lighter periods of enrollment. Generally, between two and eight parents or guardians attended each session, allowing the trainers to tailor the information presented to the specific circumstances and needs of the attendees and their children.

Staff of the Parent Network conducted binder training during the initial 18 months of participation by Transition WORKS in the YTD national evaluation. The project's transition coordinators conducted occasional binder-training workshops during the final 18 months, after

enrollment had been completed. During the latter period, the Parent Network's involvement in Transition WORKS generally was limited to preparing and distributing its newsletter and sending invitations for its various training opportunities.

### 3. Benefits Planning and YTD Waiver Discussions

Benefits planning services were a major component of the Transition WORKS program model. During the project intake meeting, all youth received a limited overview of SSA benefits, the standard SSA work incentives, and the SSA waivers for YTD. The transition counselors or other project staff who conducted the meetings referred the youth and their parents to NLS for intensive, individualized benefits counseling. The benefits counselors at NLS contacted the youth and/or their parents to schedule the initial benefits planning meeting.

The full benefits planning process at NLS consisted of the following activities:

- **Benefits assessment** began in an initial meeting at NLS that lasted about an hour and consisted of a thorough review of the financial situation of the youth and his or her family, as well as the benefits they received. The benefits counselor also reviewed SSI/DI work incentives, the SSA waivers for YTD, medical benefits, and vocational services to help beneficiaries understand how they could use these work incentives and services to support employment. After the meeting, the counselor verified the benefits the youth received and completed a benefits/waiver assessment document. This information was summarized in a letter that the counselor sent to the youth. The letter reiterated information gathered during the meeting, answered questions that arose, and recommended work incentives and waivers that might be beneficial to the youth.
- **Benefits analysis** primarily entailed the development of a plan that described how the youth would use the work incentives and waivers and report earnings to SSA. If the youth became employed, the benefits counselor would send the youth a packet of information on the work incentives and waivers and how to report wages to SSA.
- **Bi-monthly telephone contact** with all youth was to occur to allow the benefits counselors to follow up on the recommendations they had made, answer questions, and provide support for taking next steps. NLS also planned to offer more complete in-person or telephone contacts, at least once every six months, to discuss any benefit status changes. NLS actually implemented these plans in the project's first year in the national evaluation, but contacts initiated by the counselor subsequently waned. During the second year, youth who did not initiate contact with NLS received only general information about work incentives, waivers, and NLS activities through a monthly newsletter. During the third year, NLS hosted two "Transition WORKS Jeopardy Nights" in the office of the Parent Network to engage youth who had never had initial meetings with the benefits counselors. These events used the answer/question Jeopardy game show format to help youth and families better understand benefit rules, work incentives, and waivers.
- **Family assessment of eligibility for other public assistance**, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), housing assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp Program), legal assistance, and assistance with domestic violence, was provided as needed. NLS referred families to its public benefits unit for more in-depth guidance on such programs.

Transition WORKS participants and their parents or guardians generally attended in-person meetings with the NLS benefits counselors together. The meetings usually took place at the NLS office in downtown Buffalo, but the counselors would travel to the youths' homes when necessary. Some of the counselors also worked in the evenings or on weekends to be more accessible to participants. NLS had a "four times and you're out" policy, whereby staff made four attempts to contact each participant to schedule a meeting or provide telephone counseling. Youth who did not respond to these attempts received no additional personal contacts but continued to receive newsletters and other mailed information.

**4. Employment-Related Services**

The services provided by Transition WORKS were premised on the belief that all youth who want to work can do so. The initial focus of employment services for participating youth was on career exploration. The Transition WORKS job developers initiated career exploration through meetings with participants and their transition coordinators to review their employment goals and transition plans. Youth who had little or no job experience received vocational assessments. Early in the project, the job developers used traditional vocational assessments, such as written tests and referrals to a local vocational assessment center. As the project matured, based on advice from TransCen staff, the job developers used job tryouts at local firms to obtain more realistic assessments of the youths' capabilities and interests.

Building on the participants' skills and interests outlined in their transition plans and the results of the assessment, the job developers arranged work experiences, such as job shadowing, internships, informational interviews, and job tours. Some youth participated in interview training provided by the CEO, during which they were videotaped in mock interviews. The CEO staff reviewed the tapes with the youth and worked with them to develop strategies for improvement. The CEO staff also coordinated with job developers to identify jobs that matched the skills and interests of the participants or coached them on applying for jobs that the participants had identified on their own.

The job developers reported spending considerable time getting to know local employers and working with them to develop employment opportunities for Transition WORKS participants. TransCen provided them with training and on-site technical assistance in building strong relationships with employers. The job developers scheduled initial appointments with employers to introduce themselves and Transition WORKS. Some of them presented the project as an employment program specifically for youth with disabilities; others presented it more broadly as a youth employment program. In either case, the job developer's goal was to establish rapport with the employers and learn about their operations and staffing needs. This groundwork created a heightened potential for placing Transition WORKS participants in paid jobs or work-based experience at these organizations.

The five Transition WORKS job developers used the information they had accumulated collectively about Erie County employers to place Transition WORKS participants in paid jobs. When a participant was ready for paid employment, a job developer identified one or more positions that matched the youth's interests and skills. The job developer provided the youth with information about these jobs, as well as assistance with applying for the positions.

The job developers provided follow-up services to support some youth in maintaining their jobs or assisted the participants in identifying new employment opportunities when placements proved unsatisfactory. They provided job coaching to head off job-related problems before they

developed. They also assisted with resolving job-related issues, including relationships with supervisors and co-workers, personal appearance and social comportment, and youth dissatisfaction with some aspect of a job. For participants who wanted or needed to leave a position, the job developers assisted them in doing so appropriately and respectfully so employers would provide the youth with a positive reference. They also worked with these participants to help them understand why their jobs had turned out to be unsatisfactory and learn how they might improve future employment experiences.

The job developers reported checking in with participants who needed it once a week right after they became employed and then bi-weekly for about 90 days. Some participants needed more job coaching than Transition WORKS could provide, either directly or through its vendors. For these youth, the job developers worked with VESID or OMRDD to secure funding and identify another provider of job coaching services.

During the last few months of the Transition WORKS operation, the job developers relied more heavily on group job tours to expose greater numbers of youth to selected employers. They also instructed youth how to make their own appointments with employers. The job developers also used a generic job application form to give the participants practice in completing the standard education and work history sections.

Henry's story (on page 40) highlights the employment services that Transition WORKS provided to youth.

### 5. Education-Related Services

Educational advancement was a primary goal of Transition WORKS at the beginning of the project. As the transition coordinators juggled provision of education services with enrollment, empowerment training, and case management, however, attention to education services became less of a project focus. A few youth were provided assistance in obtaining a GED, help with locating funding for and enrolling in postsecondary or vocational programs, and education counseling and other school retention support. A few of the participants enrolled in community college programs that provided a college-like experience for individuals with developmental disabilities through on-campus classes in independent living and sometimes matriculation into college credit courses.

### 6. Case Management

Transition WORKS developed strong formal and informal relationships with area agencies and organizations through participation in activities such as conferences on transition, job fairs, regional events such as Disability Resource Day, and informal referral networks. These relationships made it easier for the transition coordinators to refer participants to VESID, OMRDD, the local transit authority, and other providers for vocational assessments, job coaching, supported housing, respite services, transportation, and other services. The transition coordinators also assisted in locating appropriate medical experts for participants with complex medical needs. They also provided general case management, which encompassed family support services, telephone check-ins, and follow-up services. Staff of service agencies interviewed by the YTD evaluation team in May 2009 reported that service linkages and coordination were among the strongest of the contributions provided by Transition WORKS staff, particularly for youth with the most severe disabilities.

**Henry's Story**

Henry enrolled in Transition WORKS in the spring of 2007. Although he hesitates before speaking due to a hearing impairment and is uncomfortable in new social situations due to paranoia, he eagerly enrolled in Transition WORKS and completed both the SD 1 and SD 2 self-determination workshops.

At the time of his enrollment, Henry lived independently and wanted to pursue employment. He previously had worked at Toys "R" Us, but did not like his job and left after two weeks. He expressed interest in obtaining training and working as a baker. After giving advice on appropriate interview attire and comportment, a Transition WORKS job developer accompanied Henry to an informational interview with the director of operations at Costanzo's, a large industrial bakery near Henry's house. Although this seemed to be a particularly promising opportunity, the job was not a good fit with Henry's interests; he wanted to be a baker, rather than pushing loaves of bread into a machine, as the job required.

The Transition WORKS job developer then referred Henry to VESID to explore funding to attend the baking academy at Erie Community College. The job developer helped Henry submit the required documents, gave him mobility training so he could take a bus to class, and took him to visit the college Disability Student Services Coordinator to discuss financial aid for costs not covered by VESID. Henry completed the six-month program and progressed to an internship with a local bakery. The manager at the bakery was pleased with Henry's performance and wanted to hire him as a cashier, but Henry was determined to work as a baker.

Henry identified a bakery at a local grocery store and called repeatedly to speak with managers about available positions. His persistence paid off: in December 2008, Henry was hired and, as of the writing of this report, was working successfully part-time, making $7.90 per hour. The bakery allowed Henry plenty of time to learn his job responsibilities and scheduled him to work at times when bus service was available. Henry reported to his job developer that he was extremely happy with his job.

## 7. Implementation Issues

The above strengths of the implementation of Transition WORKS notwithstanding, Transition WORKS staff found it difficult to engage youth in project services. Many participants either were unengaged or minimally engaged in project services, meaning that they received less than two hours of service during the 15 months after random assignment. Project staff at Erie 1 BOCES reported that, despite their efforts to contact the youth by telephone and mail, between one-quarter and one-third participated minimally in project services.[39] They cited several reasons for the lack of engagement in services by a substantial proportion of the project participants. Some of the youth reportedly had never been very interested in the intervention; they had agreed to participate in the evaluation just to receive the $10 dollar gift card offered by Mathematica as an incentive to sign and return the evaluation consent form. These same youth subsequently may have agreed to enroll in Transition WORKS, but had little commitment to participate in services. Other youth had unstable living situations that made it difficult for staff to remain in touch with them. Also, some youth were

[39] Our analysis of ETO data showed that 23 percent of Transition WORKS participants received less than two hours of project services. See Section E for additional findings from ETO on the intensity of services.

not encouraged to participate by their parents because they had limited expectations for their children or feared the loss of benefits if the youth were successful in the program. Finally, lack of transportation was another major barrier to participation in the program, according to Transition WORKS staff, the staff of other service providers with whom we spoke during our site visits, and focus group participants. Public transportation is scarce or nonexistent in large sections of Erie County, and the percentage of public transportation commuters is lower in Erie County than in the United States overall (Table III.1).

The transition coordinators were charged with keeping in touch with unengaged youth, but the staff's significant number of other job responsibilities made it difficult to perform this task successfully. Each of the two coordinators had caseloads of approximately 200 youth, making it impossible to stay in touch with all of them. The transition coordinators had primary responsibility for meeting the project's enrollment targets and they found it particularly challenging to reach out to reluctant youth during periods of intense enrollment activity. In addition to leading the enrollment effort, they were the front-line staff for responding to enrollees' crises. Project management and the Mathematica-led evaluation and technical assistance team made repeated efforts to focus the attention of the transition coordinators on outreach to non-participating youth, particularly during the last six months of the project. Nevertheless, these staff reported that they continued to spend most of their time managing crises and conducting service coordination activities with youth already engaged in project services.

Engagement of enrolled youth in services was also a problem for the benefits planning staff at NLS. During 2009, the organization stepped up its outreach efforts through the previously mentioned Jeopardy Nights, which attracted a few new participants. NLS staff stated that they stressed the importance of employment and use of the SSA waivers for YTD during their initial meetings with youth. According to those staff, the youth saw little relevance of benefits planning until they received their age-18 redetermination letter[40] or found employment and wished to use the SSA work incentives and waivers; however, the initial meetings may have made the youth more open to seeking employment. The agency's "four times and you're out" policy for attempting to contact participants contributed to the staff spending most of their time in a reactive mode, responding to requests from youth for services, rather than proactively reaching out to youth who appeared uninterested in benefits planning.

The job developers' large caseloads—generally 40 to 50 youth who actually were engaged in services—made it very difficult for them to provide intensive employment services. Turnover among the job developers was also an issue. Of the five job developers working on the project at the commencement of random assignment and enrollment in services, only two remained at the conclusion of the project and the other three positions turned over at least once during this time. Recruiting and hiring new staff to fill these vacant positions became a protracted process due to the bureaucratic requirements of the New York State Department of Education, which is the organizational home of Erie 1 BOCES. The large caseload size cited above was due, in part, to the chronic vacancies in these positions. According to the information we received during field interviews, staff hired after the project services commenced received less training than the original employees and new staff took longer than anticipated to acquire the job development skills. Finally,

[40] Typically, when an SSI recipient turns 18, there is a medical redetermination in which the recipient must meet the adult criteria for disability. Recipients are informed of this process through a letter from SSA. YTD participants are eligible for continued benefit eligibility throughout the project, regardless of the outcome of the age-18 medical redetermination.

the job developers were called on to assist with enrollment during intensive enrollment periods, which resulted in delays in providing employment services to youth already enrolled.

Staff turnover at NLS was also an issue. Among the three full-time and three part-time staff at NLS who were associated with the project at its outset, two of the full-time staff members had departed by the end of the project—one in July 2008 and the other in April 2009. In lieu of replacing the departed staff, NLS increased the hours of the part-time staff. However, the project was still understaffed with respect to benefits planners for almost the entire evaluation period.

The impact that the geographic dispersion of services had on youth engagement in Transition WORKS is hard to assess, but it likely posed barriers for project participants. Youth had to find their way to four agencies to receive the full array of project services. To add to the problem, the CEO changed location several times over the course of the project, which meant that the job developers often had to accompany participants to that office so they would not get lost.

A final issue was that participants tended to gravitate to staff members who had demonstrated strong ability to meet their needs or had established the best rapport with the youth. This sometimes resulted in a blurring of staff roles, relative to the sharp delineations in the program model, and made coordination among the various staff members time-consuming.

## D. Enrollment in Transition WORKS

The effort to recruit youth into the evaluation of Transition WORKS and enroll them in project services began in January 2007 and ended in May 2008. Because of that effort, 880 youth consented to participate in the evaluation. A total of 459 of the consenting youth were randomly assigned to the evaluation's treatment group.[41] Transition WORKS staff enrolled 380, or 83 percent, of these youth in project services.

### 1. Enrolling Youth in Project Services

After the YTD evaluation team had randomly assigned a youth to the treatment group, it sent the youth's contact information and selected information from the baseline survey to Transition WORKS via the ETO management information system. The assistant director of Transition WORKS assigned each treatment group member to a transition coordinator and a job developer, taking into account their caseloads, the location of the youth, and characteristics of the youth and staff (for example, male youth were primarily assigned to a male job developer and Spanish-speaking youth were assigned to a Spanish-speaking job developer).

The staff of Transition WORKS reached out to treatment group youth very soon after random assignment. In Table III.2, we show that the median elapsed time between random assignment and the first contact was eight days for youth who eventually enrolled ("participants") and ten days for those who did not ("non-participants"). Staff contacted about 40 percent of youth during the first week following random assignment and another 35 percent within the second week. Following the initial contact, it typically required somewhat more than two weeks to enroll a youth in services; for youth who eventually enrolled, the median duration between first contact and enrollment was 15

[41] In addition, 21 of the evaluation enrollees were intentionally assigned to treatment status because they were siblings of treatment group members. Such youth were not part of the research sample and were not included in the analysis. Transition WORKS enrolled 20 of these youth in services.

**Table III.2. Staff Efforts to Enroll Treatment Group Members in Transition WORKS**

| | All | Participants | Non-Participants | Difference | | P-Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Staff Enrollment Efforts** | | | | | | |
| Number of outreach contacts | | | | | | |
| Total | 1,524 | 1,252 | 272 | | | |
| Average per youth | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.4 | -0.1 | | 0.51 |
| Median per youth | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | | | |
| Staff time per contact | | | | | | |
| Average (minutes) | 25.4 | 29.7 | 5.5 | 24.3 | *** | 0.00 |
| Median (minutes) | 5.0 | 5.0 | 3.0 | | | |
| Staff time per youth | | | | | | |
| Distribution of hours (%) | | | | | *** | 0.00 |
| Less than 1 | 26.8 | 13.4 | 93.4 | -80.0 | | |
| 1 to less than 2 | 48.9 | 57.6 | 5.3 | 52.4 | | |
| 2 to less than 3 | 18.2 | 21.6 | 1.3 | 20.3 | | |
| More than 3 | 6.1 | 7.4 | 0.0 | 7.4 | | |
| Average (hours) | 1.4 | 1.6 | 0.3 | 1.3 | *** | 0.00 |
| Median (hours) | 1.4 | 1.6 | 0.2 | | | |
| **Duration of Enrollment Efforts** | | | | | | |
| Number of days from random assignment to first attempted contact | | | | | | |
| Distribution of days (%) | | | | | | 0.14 |
| 3 or less | 9.4 | 9.2 | 10.1 | -0.9 | | |
| 4 to 7 | 30.5 | 32.4 | 21.5 | 10.8 | | |
| 8 to 14 | 35.1 | 35.5 | 32.9 | 2.6 | | |
| 15 to 30 | 20.9 | 19.2 | 29.1 | -9.9 | | |
| More than 30 | 4.1 | 3.7 | 6.3 | -2.6 | | |
| Average (days) | 11.5 | 11.1 | 13.3 | -2.2 | * | 0.05 |
| Median (days) | 9.0 | 8.0 | 10.0 | | | |
| Number of days from first attempted contact to project enrollment | | | | | | |
| Distribution of days (%) | | | | | | |
| 1 to 7 | n.a. | 2.9 | n.a. | | | |
| 8 to 14 | n.a. | 20.0 | n.a. | | | |
| 15 to 30 | n.a. | 38.9 | n.a. | | | |
| 31 to 60 | n.a. | 24.2 | n.a. | | | |
| More than 60 | n.a. | 13.9 | n.a. | | | |
| Average (days) | n.a. | 26.3 | n.a. | | | |
| Median (days) | n.a. | 15.0 | n.a. | | | |
| Number of days from random assignment to project enrollment | | | | | | |
| Average (days) | n.a. | 36.4 | n.a. | | | |
| Median (days) | n.a. | 25.0 | n.a. | | | |
| **Sample Size** | **459** | **380** | **79** | | | |

Source: The Transition WORKS ETO management information system.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who were randomly assigned to the treatment group for the evaluation of Transition WORKS. Random assignment began on January 24, 2007 and ended on March 27, 2008. The first treatment group member enrolled in Transition WORKS on January 31, 2007; the last enrolled on May 28, 2008.

*/**/***The difference between participants and non-participants is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

n.a. = not applicable

days. The entire process, from random assignment to enrollment in services, usually required less than a month; the median number of days from random assignment to enrollment was 25.

Transition WORKS staff members conducted enrollment efficiently, as they needed only about three contacts to successfully enroll a youth. They rather quickly convinced most youth to enroll and did not waste time attempting to contact hard-to-reach youth or trying to convince those not interested in the program. The median time spent per participant was about an hour and 40 minutes, with almost 93 percent of the participants successfully enrolling in less than three hours. For more than 90 percent of the non-participants, staff spent less than an hour on enrollment efforts, and for none did they spend more than three hours. They thus avoided investing large amounts of time in enrollment efforts that would likely prove unsuccessful. Although three times as many enrollment contacts were conducted by telephone as were made in person, the in-person contacts accounted for about 80 percent of the total staff enrollment time (Appendix Table B.8). The vast majority (about 90 percent) of the in-person contacts were home visits.

The transition coordinators made most of the enrollment contacts and conducted most of the ensuing enrollment meetings. During the first few months of the random assignment and enrollment process, job developers joined the transition coordinators at these meetings, but this practice was abandoned as the caseloads of the job developers increased. During the enrollment meetings, the transition coordinators provided oral and written information about Transition WORKS services and the SSA waivers for YTD to the youth and their families. They also gathered information on the youth that would aid the project staff in serving them: education and employment histories, family situation, nature of disability, and employment goals. The transition coordinators used the enrollment meetings to begin engaging the participants in the transition planning process. Most were enrolled in Transition WORKS in a single meeting, but some required a follow-up visit to complete the process.

### 2. Characteristics of Participants and Non-Participants

The 380 treatment group members who chose to participate in Transition WORKS were similar to the 79 non-participants in most of their baseline characteristics. In Table III.3 we show no statistically significant difference between these two groups in gender, age, race, ethnicity, employment and earnings histories, family socioeconomic status, expectations for the future, primary disabling condition, and type and amount of disability benefits. However, participants and non-participants differed significantly with respect to four baseline characteristics:

- School attendance. Participants were more likely to have been attending school at baseline than non-participants. In particular, they were more likely to have been enrolled in schools other than high schools—postsecondary and vocational schools. On the other hand, non-participants were more likely than participants to have been enrolled in high schools that exclusively served students with severe disabilities.
- Living arrangements. Participants were twice as likely as non-participants to have been living in two-parent families. Non-participants were more likely to have been living in single-parent families, on their own, or with friends.
- Mother's education. The mothers of youth who chose to participate in Transition WORKS were more likely to have graduated from high school than the mothers of the youth who did not participate.

**Table III.3. Baseline Characteristics of Treatment Group Members who Did/Did Not Participate in Transition WORKS (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | All | Participants | Non-Participants | Difference | | P- Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Baseline Survey Data** | | | | | | |
| **Demographic Characteristics** | | | | | | |
| Race | | | | | | 0.18 |
| White | 55.8 | 58.2 | 44.3 | 13.9 | | |
| Black | 33.8 | 31.3 | 45.6 | -14.3 | | |
| HI/Pacific/American Indian/American Native | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 0.0 | | |
| Asian | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.5 | | |
| Other or unknown | 8.7 | 8.7 | 8.9 | -0.2 | | |
| Hispanic | 8.8 | 9.5 | 5.1 | 0.0 | | 0.20 |
| Primarily speaks English at home | 96.5 | 96.8 | 94.9 | 0.0 | | 0.40 |
| **School Attendance** | | | | | *** | 0.00 |
| Does not attend school | 44.9 | 43.5 | 51.3 | -7.7 | | |
| Attends regular high school | 28.0 | 28.5 | 25.6 | 2.9 | | |
| Attends special high school | 7.7 | 6.1 | 15.4 | -9.3 | | |
| Attends other school | 19.5 | 21.9 | 7.7 | 14.2 | | |
| **Employment** | | | | | | |
| Received job training in last year | 37.8 | 38.5 | 34.2 | 0.0 | | 0.47 |
| Worked as a volunteer in last year | 9.8 | 9.5 | 11.4 | 0.0 | | 0.61 |
| Worked for pay in last year | 33.6 | 32.9 | 36.7 | 0.0 | | 0.51 |
| Worked for pay in last month | 16.6 | 17.1 | 13.9 | 0.0 | | 0.49 |
| Never worked for pay | 43.4 | 42.4 | 48.1 | -0.1 | | 0.35 |
| **Living Arrangements** | | | | | ** | 0.02 |
| Two-parent family | 33.1 | 36.3 | 17.7 | 18.6 | | |
| Single-parent family | 49.2 | 47.4 | 58.2 | -10.9 | | |
| Group home | 1.7 | 1.8 | 1.3 | 0.6 | | |
| Other institution | 3.3 | 3.2 | 3.8 | -0.6 | | |
| Lives alone or with friends | 12.6 | 11.3 | 19.0 | -7.7 | | |
| **Family Socioeconomic Status** | | | | | | |
| Annual Income | | | | | | 0.20 |
| Less than $10,000 | 34.4 | 32.8 | 42.2 | -9.4 | | |
| $10,000 – $24,999 | 31.6 | 31.3 | 32.8 | -1.5 | | |
| $25,000 or more | 34.1 | 35.9 | 25.0 | 10.9 | | |
| Mother is a high school graduate | 75.4 | 77.2 | 66.7 | 0.1 | * | 0.06 |
| **Self- Reported Health Status** | | | | | | |
| Excellent | 17.9 | 18.5 | 15.2 | 3.3 | | |
| Very good/good | 63.5 | 63.3 | 64.6 | -1.2 | | |
| Fair/poor | 18.6 | 18.2 | 20.3 | -2.0 | | |
| **Expectations About the Future** | | | | | | |
| Expects to live independently (with or without help) | 76.1 | 76.3 | 75.0 | 1.3 | | 0.83 |
| Expects to continue education | 78.4 | 78.0 | 80.7 | -2.7 | | 0.65 |
| Expects to work at least part-time for pay | 90.3 | 90.8 | 87.5 | 3.3 | | 0.44 |
| **Administrative Data** | | | | | | |
| **Demographic Characteristics** | | | | | | |
| Male | 62.5 | 61.3 | 68.4 | -7.0 | | 0.24 |
| Average age (years) | 19.8 | 19.8 | 19.9 | -0.1 | | 0.76 |
| **Benefits** | | | | | | |
| SSA Beneficiary Status | | | | | | 0.59 |
| CDB or DI | 5.0 | 5.3 | 3.8 | 1.5 | | |
| SSI (only or concurrent with CDB or DI) | 95.0 | 94.7 | 96.2 | -1.5 | | |
| Duration of benefit entitlement (years) | 8.2 | 7.9 | 9.3 | -1.4 | * | 0.06 |
| Benefit amount in 12 months before month of RA | $6,977 | $7,046 | $6,641 | $405 | | 0.21 |
| **Health Status** | | | | | | |
| Primary Disabling Condition | | | | | | 0.90 |
| Mental illness | 16.9 | 17.2 | 15.6 | 1.6 | | |
| Cognitive/developmental disability | 45.6 | 45.6 | 45.5 | 0.2 | | |
| Learning disability/ADD | 15.1 | 14.8 | 16.9 | -2.1 | | |
| Physical disability | 16.5 | 16.1 | 18.2 | -2.1 | | |
| Speech, hearing, visual impairment | 5.9 | 6.3 | 3.9 | 2.4 | | |
| Duration of disability (years) | 9.6 | 9.4 | 10.6 | -1.2 | | 0.14 |
| **Earnings in Prior Year** | $886 | $900 | $819 | $81 | | 0.79 |
| **Sample Size** | **459** | **380** | **79** | | | |

Sources: The baseline survey for the YTD evaluation, SSA program administrative files, SSA's Master Earnings File.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who were randomly assigned to the evaluation's treatment group.

*/**/***The difference between participants and non-participants is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test a chi-square test.

- Duration of benefit entitlement. At baseline, participants had been receiving benefits for about a year and a half less than non-participants. Since the youth in these two groups were, on average, about the same age, the shorter duration of benefits by the participants indicates that they began receiving benefits at an older age than the non-participants.

These differences may be indicative of some underlying systematic differences between youth who did and did not enroll in Transition WORKS. The differences in school attendance and mother's education suggest that youth from families that placed a high value on education were more likely to participate in the intervention. Since non-participants had received SSA benefits for a longer time and were more likely to have been attending schools that specialized in serving students with disabilities, they may have had more severe disabilities. The statistically significant difference in living arrangements suggests that parental support also may have been an important determinant of who participated in project services. Youth from two-parent families may have been able to depend on their parents for transportation and other support to participate in Transition WORKS.

## E. Service Use

Almost all participants in Transition WORKS received at least one project service, with the most common being employment services, benefits planning, and training on self-determination. This section uses quantitative data from ETO to explore the services that participating youth received. We first examine the rates at which participating youth received specific types of project services and then document both the nature of the contacts between project staff and participants during the service receipt period and the timing and intensity of the services. For the purpose of this analysis, we refer to the first 15 months after random assignment as the period of service receipt.[42] To limit the analysis to substantial contacts only, we exclude contacts with participants lasting two minutes or less.[43] We also exclude contacts that were made on the day of a youth's enrollment in Transition WORKS.[44] The tables presented in this section summarize findings from the analysis of the ETO data; please see the tables in Appendix B for more detailed results.

Project staff were expected to enter into ETO any service provided to or on behalf of a youth, as well as the time spent during the service contact. The staff were trained to record separately each type of service provided during one contact. For example, if a transition coordinator discussed education options with a youth for 20 minutes and provided general case management for another 30 minutes, the staff member would record each of these services and the associated time in its own category. ETO was not intended to be a staff timesheet system, meaning that the information recorded in ETO was not expected to reflect all of the work staff did in a day. For example, time spent doing general job development was not recorded in ETO because it was not attributable to a specific youth. Moreover, as is the case with any MIS, it is likely that staff did not enter all contacts

[42] When we conducted the analysis of service use, 15 months of post-random assignment service data were available for the last treatment group member to enroll in Transition WORKS. To ensure a uniform follow-up period for all participants, we limited our analysis of service use to the first 15 months following random assignment.

[43] In our analysis, service-related contacts were limited to those lasting longer than two minutes ("substantial" contacts), thereby excluding attempted contacts (i.e., unsuccessful attempts to reach youth). In addition, all letter, text, and e-mail contacts were excluded, with the exception of benefits planning-related contacts. Benefits-related mailings were included because staff used them to provide important information and advisement on benefits.

[44] The staff of Transition WORKS sometimes provided basic services on the day of enrollment and recorded them in ETO. However, the evaluation team determined that those services generally were not substantive and therefore excluded them from the analysis of service use.

with youth, resulting in underreporting of service contacts and time spent with youth. Although the staff of Transition WORKS received extensive training on ETO and project managers monitored the quality of data entered, the staff may not have input complete data on the services provided. Because staff members of human service agencies pursue their professions based upon their interest in serving people, they sometimes may assign a low priority to administrative and record-keeping duties. ETO data entry was particularly problematic for NLS staff, who viewed the recording of their efforts in ETO as having a lower priority than providing services and fulfilling NLS-specific record-keeping requirements. Some of the project staff members at NLS were up to six months behind in entering ETO data at the time of the May 2008 site visit, but the backlog was eliminated during the next six months.[45] The ETO data analyzed here thus may not fully reflect the intensity of services provided.

### 1. Types of Services Received

During the Transition WORKS enrollment meetings, the transition counselors scheduled youth to participate in the self-determination workshops and also scheduled their parents/guardians to participate in concurrent binder-training sessions. In Table III.4, we show that about 70 percent of youth or their parents received some type of **self-determination service**, including attending a workshop, developing a transition plan, and participating in binder training. Nearly two-thirds of youth or their parents attended at least one workshop. More than 4 in 10 attended the binder training and the SD 1 workshop, but only a third of the participants attended the SD 2 workshop. Slightly more than half of the participants attended a workshop to develop a transition plan.

According to the staff of Erie 1 BOCES and its partners in Transition WORKS, the self-determination training was one of the most important components of the intervention. It was intended to provide a vehicle for youth to develop their employment and education goals, while the transition plan was to serve as a roadmap for achieving them. During our site visits, the project staff told us that the youth who had attended the workshops and completed a transition plan showed considerable growth in taking responsibility for their futures. As noted above, however, significant minorities of Transition WORKS youth did not participate in these activities. During focus group discussions, most of the youth who had completed the workshops spoke favorably of the self-determination training and could articulate their current goals, but they could not recall preparing transition plans or developing goals during the enrollment and workshop phases. The staff reported, however, that the original transition plans quickly lost relevance for guiding the ongoing delivery of services. They told us that they continued to deliver services based on the evolving aspirations and preferences of the participants, but they rarely updated the transition plans.

**Benefits planning services** were intended to be a strong component of the Transition WORKS program model. The transition counselors introduced the SSA waivers for YTD during the enrollment meeting and referred participants to NLS for comprehensive benefits planning services.[46] Nearly three-quarters of the participants followed up on these referrals and actually met with benefits planners at NLS, who introduced them to the standard SSA work incentives and the waivers for YTD (Table III.4). Slightly more than half of Transition WORKS participants received

[45] ETO training for NLS staff was held less than a month after the site visit to provide NLS staff with clearer guidance on data entry and emphasize the importance of maintaining timely ETO records. Following a YTD evaluation team recommendation, NLS also began using an administrative assistant to help reduce the ETO backlog and did eliminated its backlog.

[46] The introduction to the waivers is not treated as a benefits planning service in this analysis.

**Table III.4. Receipt of Transition WORKS Services (percentages)**

| | Transition WORKS Participants |
|---|---|
| Any Transition WORKS Service | 98.4 |
| Any Self-Determination Service | 69.2 |
| Any workshop attendance | 63.2 |
| Binder workshop | 43.4 |
| Self-Determination 1 | 44.7 |
| Self-Determination 2 | 33.4 |
| Transition planning workshop | 51.6 |
| Any transition plan | 54.2 |
| Any Benefits Planning Service | 74.5 |
| Any waiver or work incentive discussion | 74.5 |
| Benefits analysis and advisement | 57.6 |
| Additional discussions of YTD waivers (beyond general overview)[a] | 50.8 |
| Additional discussions of non-YTD SSA work incentives (beyond general overview) | 41.3 |
| Benefits overview | 23.7 |
| Benefits assessment | 16.8 |
| Discussions of non-SSA work incentives (e.g., TANF and SNAP) | 3.4 |
| Other | 10.0 |
| Any Employment-Related Service | 85.0 |
| Career exploration and job search | 82.9 |
| Direct employment services[b] | 25.3 |
| Employment skills training/ | 8.7 |
| Other | 19.2 |
| Any Employment Goal in Transition Plan | 56.8[c] |
| Any Employment-Related Service for Those with Employment Goal | 89.4 |
| Any Education-Related Service | 16.8 |
| Education counseling and academic advisement | 5.0 |
| Registration or enrollment assistance | 5.0 |
| Accessing financial aid | 2.9 |
| Assistance with accommodations and student support services | 2.1 |
| Retention activities | 1.1 |
| Preparing for or attending IEP or transition meetings | 1.1 |
| Other | 8.9 |
| Any Education Goal in Transition Plan | 56.3[c] |
| Any Education-Related Service for Those with Education Goal | 22.0 |
| Any Case Management Service | 68.7 |
| General check-in | 47.9 |
| Case review | 11.6 |
| Benefits programs | 9.5 |
| Vocational rehabilitation | 8.9 |
| Life skills | 6.1 |
| Family support | 5.8 |
| Legal information | 5.0 |
| Transportation | 4.2 |
| Housing | 3.4 |
| Mental health | 3.2 |
| Other | 24.5 |
| **Sample Size** | **380** |

Source: The Transition WORKS ETO management information system.

Notes: We excluded service contacts of less than two minutes and those made on the day of enrollment from this analysis. Within each service group, more than one type of service may have been recorded in ETO. The service types displayed within a group may not be exhaustive. We based percentages on 380 participants except for those conditional on the existence of employment or education goals.

[a]"Additional discussions of YTD waivers" includes only focused discussions of specific individual waivers or all five waivers. It does not include discussions that may have taken place during an enrollment meeting or a benefits assessment.

[b]"Direct employment services" includes development of work experiences, job coaching, job placement, and followup.

[c]For some youth who stated employment/education goals during the development of their transition plans, project staff did not record the completion of the plans in ETO. This accounts for the higher percentages of participants with employment/education goals than with transition plans.

benefits analysis, which included benefits management, problem solving and advocacy, and other benefits advisement.

During the benefits analysis process, the NLS staff person worked with the youth to develop a plan for use of work incentives and how earnings should be reported to SSA. These plans were crucial to conveying to youth that they could work without losing all of their cash and medical benefits. About 17 percent of youth received a benefits assessment, which included an hour-long meeting during which the benefits planner conducted a detailed and in-depth examination of the financial situation of the youth and his or her family, as well as the benefits they received. After the meeting and after the benefits had been verified with SSA, the benefits planner completed an assessment document and summarized this information in a letter written in simplified language that was sent to the youth. Half of Transition WORKS youth participated in discussions of the waivers beyond the introduction that was provided during their initial meeting with the benefits planners.

NLS staff spoke of their challenges in engaging Transition WORKS participants in benefits planning during our site visits. Youth often missed counseling appointments for practical reasons—lack of transportation, incarceration, or the nature of their disabilities. The staff stated that project participants tended to contact them only if they had received an age-18 redetermination letter or a notice of overpayment from SSA.[47] The youth who were employed generally lacked interest in the SSA work incentives and the YTD waivers, other than the $1 for $4 earnings exclusion waiver.

Despite the challenges that NLS experienced in engaging youth, participants in our May 2009 focus group discussions praised the agency and its staff, saying that they appreciated the benefits planning services they had received.[48] Some participants stated that these services were the most beneficial of all the services offered by Transition WORKS. A few mentioned that they met with the NLS benefits planners frequently—even more often than with the transition counselors and job developers at Erie 1 BOCES. Several youth said they believed that they could not work without losing their SSI checks, but NLS counselors showed them how to use the YTD waivers and work incentives to support and enhance employment.

Another important aspect related to benefits planning was implementation of the SSA work incentives and YTD waivers for Transition WORKS participants. Table III.5 presents participant usage rates of SSA waivers and work incentives (see Appendix C for a description of these waivers). Overall, 40 percent of participants reported any earnings to SSA over the course of the intervention (many of the SSA work incentives and YTD waivers were triggered by earned income). A smaller proportion, 33.6 percent, used any SSA work incentive in the same period. The most frequently used work incentive was the EIE, used by 25 percent of participants. All participants who used the EIE automatically received the waiver version of that incentive. More than 11 percent of participants used any SEIE (standard or waiver), with most (10 percent) using the standard SEIE incentive. Slightly more than six percent of participants used the CDR/age-18 redetermination waiver (also known as the Section 301 waiver). There was little to no usage of the PASS and IDA work incentives and waivers.

[47] Youth who turn 18 are subjected to an SSA benefits eligibility review. The YTD initiative encompasses five waivers of SSA regulations, one of which delays the effectuation of a negative age-18 review as long as a youth is eligible for the waivers.

[48] We held four focus groups during the May 2009 site visit: employed youth, youth enrolled in school, youth who had an employment goal but appeared to have experienced difficulty finding and keeping employment, and parents/guardians. Within these criteria, we selected youth who had received a variety of service levels.

**Table III.5. Percentage of Transition WORKS Participants Who Used SSA Work Incentives and Waivers**

| | Transition WORKS Participants |
|---|---|
| Reported any earnings to SSA | 40.0 |
| Used any SSA work incentive | 33.6 |
| Used SEIE (waiver or standard) | 11.6 |
| SEIE waiver only | 1.3 |
| Standard SEIE only | 10.3 |
| Used EIE (waiver) | 25.1 |
| Used PASS (waiver or standard) | 0.5 |
| PASS waiver only | 0.3 |
| Standard PASS only | 0.3 |
| Used IDA (waiver or standard) | 0.0 |
| Used Section 301 waiver | 6.4 |
| **Sample Size** | **378** |

Source: Calculations based on SSA administrative extracts on waiver and work incentive usage.

Notes: We excluded two deceased participants from this analysis.

SEIE = student earned income exclusion
EIE = earned income exclusion
PASS = plan for achieving self-support
IDA = individual development account

Transition WORKS maintained a sharp focus on employment throughout the duration of the project. A larger proportion of project participants (85 percent) received **employment-related services** than any other category of services (Table III.4). Most of these youth received career exploration and job search services, which included participation in a career club and assistance in preparing resumes. About a quarter of the youth received direct employment services, such as work-based experiences, placement in paid jobs, and post-employment services, and about nine percent received employment skills training, such as soft-skills training and occupationally specific skills training.

Most of the youth who participated in the 2009 focus group discussions, even those in the education and difficulty-finding-employment groups, had clear employment goals and, with assistance from project staff, had taken steps to achieve them. They reported that Transition WORKS had helped them prepare resumes and job applications and hone their interviewing skills. The project had also arranged for them to take tours of potential employer sites and helped them find summer jobs and internships, as well as longer-term paid employment. Most of the jobs they had obtained offered low pay and had high turnover; nevertheless, these youth generally enjoyed their jobs. These focus group members may have been atypical of all Transition WORKS participants because, as noted above, they were selected based upon their experiences with paid employment; only one-fourth of all participants received the types of direct employment services that several of the focus group members described.

The staff of Transition WORKS encountered several obstacles to assisting youth in finding employment. They highlighted three of these in their interviews with us. First, despite receiving

benefits planning services, some of the participants and their families were still afraid of losing their monthly SSI benefit checks. One job developer reported having identified several paid positions for a youth, all of which he turned down due to this fear. Second, some families had few or no employed members, so the participants from these families were especially uncertain and anxious about what employers might expect of them. And finally, due to the economic recession, the competition for low-wage jobs was intense, which meant that many participants had to complete multiple applications before finding jobs. This discouraged some participants. These obstacles notwithstanding, Transition WORKS staff said that the experience of seeking and obtaining paid jobs and other work-based experiences was key to convincing participants that they could become independent and productive adults.

**Education-related services** were included in the Transition WORKS program model (Figure III.1), and the project staff strongly believed in the importance of education and training in furthering a youth's employability. As noted earlier, however, the project did not retain its original focus on education. One-sixth of participants received education services through Transition WORKS, even though more than half of them had education goals in their transition plans (Table III.4). The education services provided included educational counseling and academic advisement, assistance with enrolling in education programs, help with accessing financial aid, and arranging for accommodations and support services.

According to Transition WORKS staff, a number of participants originally expressed the desire to return to enroll in education or training programs but ultimately decided to pursue employment instead. Staff reported that several youth enrolled in GED courses but failed to complete them. In focus group discussions, youth attributed their difficulties in the GED courses to a lack of one-on-one assistance. Other youth reported that Transition WORKS helped them enroll in education programs and arrange for financial aid. Some of these youth wished that the project had provided more post-enrollment support, such as finding tutors and arranging accommodations.

Most Transition WORKS participants received **case management services** through the project and there was broad agreement that the quality of these services was high. Nearly 70 percent of participants received some type of case management service (Table III.4). About half received general check-ins. Others received referrals for services such as vocational rehabilitation, life skills training, family support services, and legal services. The transition coordinators reported that they considered connecting youth with other agencies to be one of their primary job responsibilities. They routinely provided information about these services to youth and sometimes walked them through the various application processes. The transition coordinators sometimes accompanied the youth to meetings with the referral agency, or contacted the agency after making the referral to ensure that the youth received the intended services. Job developers also provided referrals, typically to employment services outside of Transition WORKS, such as job coaching and internships sponsored by OMRDD. Because such services were provided by other agencies, some Transition WORKS participants likely received employment services that were not reported in ETO.

Staff of local service agencies told us during our May 2009 interviews with them that service coordination was one of the most valuable services that Transition WORKS provided. Youth who participated in focus group discussions echoed this view. They told us that project staff helped them identify and apply for valuable services of which they had no knowledge prior to enrollment in Transition WORKS. The transition coordinators particularly emphasized service coordination during the final months of the project. They wanted to ensure that participants would be linked to community services when the Transition WORKS project ended.

## 2. Timing and Intensity of Services

In Table III.6, we show that the median duration between a youth's enrollment in Transition WORKS and the initial contact for delivering any type of service was 21 days. Approximately 60 percent of initial service contacts and 40 percent of second contacts occurred within 30 days of enrollment. Transition WORKS staff said it sometimes was difficult to schedule youth for self-determination training, particularly while staff were preoccupied with meeting enrollment targets. Staff also reported that some youth lacked interest in the services provided by the project.

The initial contact for delivering employment services occurred within 30 days of enrollment for about 15 percent of youth and the median elapsed time was 117 days, or nearly four months (Appendix Table B.4).[49] This was done by design, since the Transition WORKS model required youth to participate in self-determination training, develop a transition plan, and receive benefits counseling prior to receiving employment services. For this reason, although most Transition WORKS participants received employment services, they typically did not receive them during the first several months of Transition WORKS participation.

During the 15-month reference period for this process analysis, the median number of service contacts for youth who received any services was 10 and the median cumulative duration of these contacts was eight hours (Table III.7). More than 80 percent of these youth received fewer than 16 hours of services in which the youth were involved; this figure drops to 70 percent when all contacts, including contacts with employers and with other service providers on behalf of the youth, are considered (Appendix Table B.7).

For the 85 percent of participants who received any employment-related services, the median number of contacts with Transition WORKS staff for that purpose was three and the median cumulative duration of these contacts was less than an hour (Table III.7). The corresponding mean values were much larger—8.6 contacts and 5.8 hours—indicating that Transition WORKS employment services provided a great deal more services to some youth than others.

Smaller proportions of participants received self-determination services and benefits planning services, but these tended to be more intensive than the employment services.[50] Among the 70 percent of participants who received any self-determination services, the median number of service contacts was two and the median duration of these contacts was 5.5 hours (Table III.7). These findings are consistent with the typical youth participating in two self-determination workshops, each lasting about two hours. Among the three-quarters of participants who received any benefits planning services, the median number of service contacts was seven and the median duration of these contacts was 2.3 hours. These findings are consistent with the NLS service-delivery model, which specified an initial hour-long in-person benefits assessment and planning session, followed by a number of brief telephone contacts.

[49] In Appendix Tables B.1-B.6, we provide statistics on timing and intensity for six categories of Transition WORKS Services.

[50] If several different categories of services were delivered during a single meeting, Transition WORKS staff were instructed to make multiple data entries into ETO, providing the estimated time spent on each type of service. In our analysis, each entry constitutes a service contact.

**Table III.6. Timing of Transition WORKS Services**

| | Transition WORKS Participants |
|---|---|
| **Ever Received Service (%)** | 98.4 |
| **Timing of Service Receipt** | |
| Time between enrollment and first service contact | |
| Average number of days | 49.0 |
| Median number of days | 21.0 |
| First service contact occurred within: | |
| 30 days of enrollment (%) | 61.8 |
| 180 days of enrollment (%) | 92.8 |
| Time between enrollment and second service contact | |
| Average number of days | 71.0 |
| Median number of days | 39.0 |
| Second service contact occurred within: | |
| 30 days of enrollment (%) | 39.8 |
| 180 days of enrollment (%) | 88.5 |
| **Sample Size** | **380** |

Source: The Transition WORKS ETO management information system.

Notes: We excluded contacts of less than two minutes and those made on the day of enrollment from this analysis. We calculated the percentage of youth who ever received any service out of all 380 Transition WORKS participants. We calculated the statistics on the timing of service contacts out of those participants who ever received a first or second contact.

More than two-thirds of participants received case management services and the median duration of these services was about half an hour. About 17 percent of participants received education-related services and the median duration of these services was just under one hour.

## F. Participation Patterns over Time

Transition WORKS provided services to enrolled youth for up to 18 months. In Table III.8, we show the percentages of youth participating in various services in the quarter in which they enrolled (referred to as Quarter 0) and the subsequent five quarters.[51] It also compares participation during this same time period for two cohorts of youth defined by whether they had enrolled in the early or late stages of the project. We present statistics for receipt of any benefits planning, employment, or education service (combined) during the follow-up period, and for receipt of each of these three types of services individually. We excluded self-determination and case management services from the analysis because the timing of these services was relatively invariant. Self-determination services (including transition planning) were concentrated in the quarters immediately following enrollment, while case management services typically were provided consistently throughout a youth's tenure in the project.[52]

[51] Quarter 0 includes the month the youth enrolled in services and the next two months. Each subsequent quarter refers to the corresponding quarter after enrollment.

[52] Because we excluded case management and self-determination services from the definition of "any service" in Table III.8, these findings are not comparable with those for "any service" in Table III.4.

**Table III.7. Intensity of Transition WORKS Services**

| | Any Transition WORKS Service[a] | Self-Determination | Benefits Planning | Employment-Related | Education-Related | Case Management |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Ever Received Service** (%) | 98.4 | 69.2 | 74.5 | 85.0 | 16.8 | 68.7 |
| **Intensity of Service Use** | | | | | | |
| Number of service contacts per participant | | | | | | |
| Average | 15.3 | 2.4 | 8.6 | 8.6 | 3.6 | 3.9 |
| Median | 10.0 | 2.0 | 7.0 | 3.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 |
| Service time per participant | | | | | | |
| Average (hours) | 12.7 | 5.4 | 3.5 | 5.8 | 2.2 | 1.6 |
| Median (hours) | 8.0 | 5.5 | 2.3 | 0.8 | 0.9 | 0.5 |
| Service time per contact | | | | | | |
| Average (minutes) | 37.0 | 119.3 | 29.1 | 34.4 | 32.0 | 21.9 |
| Median (minutes) | 15.0 | 120.0 | 15.0 | 15.0 | 10.0 | 10.0 |
| Percentage of contacts lasting longer than 30 minutes | 20.2 | 100.0 | 24.2 | 24.3 | 22.7 | 14.3 |
| **Sample Size** | **380** | **380** | **380** | **380** | **380** | **380** |

Source: The Transition WORKS ETO management information system.

Notes: We excluded contacts of less than two minutes and those made on the day of enrollment from this analysis. We calculated percentages of youth who ever received services based on all 380 Transition WORKS participants. We calculated the statistics on the intensity of services based on those participants who actually received the services in question.

[a]We capped the "number of service contacts per participant" at one per day per youth for the analysis of any Transition WORKS service.

**Table III.8. Use of Transition WORKS Services in Post-Enrollment Quarters, by Enrollment Cohort (percentages)**

| | | Enrollment Cohort | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Transition WORKS Service | All | Early[a] | Late[b] | Difference | | P-Value |
| Any Benefits Planning, Employment, or Education Service | | | | | | |
| Participated Q0 | 39.2 | 43.0 | 33.8 | -9.3 | * | 0.07 |
| Participated Q1 | 62.1 | 65.9 | 56.7 | -9.2 | * | 0.07 |
| Participated Q2 | 72.4 | 65.5 | 82.2 | 16.7 | *** | 0.00 |
| Participated Q3 | 68.7 | 64.1 | 75.2 | 11.0 | ** | 0.02 |
| Participated Q4 | 66.1 | 73.1 | 56.1 | -17.0 | *** | 0.00 |
| Participated Q5 | 67.9 | 76.2 | 56.1 | -20.2 | *** | 0.00 |
| **Sample Size[d]** | **380** | **223** | **157** | | | |
| Benefits Planning Services[c] | | | | | | |
| Participated Q0 | 27.4 | 28.7 | 25.5 | -3.2 | | 0.49 |
| Participated Q1 | 42.9 | 45.3 | 39.5 | -5.8 | | 0.26 |
| Participated Q2 | 54.5 | 52.5 | 57.3 | 4.9 | | 0.35 |
| Participated Q3 | 48.7 | 48.4 | 49.0 | 0.6 | | 0.91 |
| Participated Q4 | 51.8 | 58.3 | 42.7 | -15.6 | *** | 0.00 |
| Participated Q5 | 52.1 | 58.7 | 42.7 | -16.1 | *** | 0.00 |
| **Sample Size[d]** | **380** | **223** | **157** | | | |
| Employment Services | | | | | | |
| Participated Q0 | 17.4 | 19.7 | 14.0 | -5.7 | | 0.15 |
| Participated Q1 | 40.0 | 43.9 | 34.4 | -9.6 | * | 0.06 |
| Participated Q2 | 44.2 | 32.7 | 60.5 | 27.8 | *** | 0.00 |
| Participated Q3 | 48.9 | 40.8 | 60.5 | 19.7 | *** | 0.00 |
| Participated Q4 | 35.5 | 43.9 | 23.6 | -20.4 | *** | 0.00 |
| Participated Q5 | 35.8 | 45.3 | 22.3 | -23.0 | *** | 0.00 |
| **Sample Size[d]** | **380** | **223** | **157** | | | |
| Education Services | | | | | | |
| Participated Q0 | 4.2 | 6.3 | 1.3 | -5.0 | ** | 0.02 |
| Participated Q1 | 8.2 | 9.0 | 7.0 | -2.0 | | 0.49 |
| Participated Q2 | 4.7 | 5.4 | 3.8 | -1.6 | | 0.48 |
| Participated Q3 | 4.7 | 4.5 | 5.1 | 0.6 | | 0.78 |
| Participated Q4 | 2.6 | 4.0 | 0.6 | -3.4 | ** | 0.04 |
| Participated Q5 | 3.7 | 4.5 | 2.5 | -1.9 | | 0.33 |
| **Sample Size[d]** | **380** | **223** | **157** | | | |

Source: The Transition WORKS ETO management information system.

Notes: We report participation by quarter following enrollment in Transition Works. Quarter 0 (or "Q0") refers to the quarter that includes the month of enrollment plus the next two months. "Q1" refers to the first quarter following Q0. For example, if a youth enrolled in March, then Q1 would be June, July, and August.

[a]The "early" enrollment cohort consists of Transition WORKS participants who enrolled before November 1, 2007.

[b]The "late" enrollment cohort consists of Transition WORKS participants who enrolled on or after November 1, 2007.

[c]Benefits planning services include discussions of the SSA waivers for YTD.

[d]The sample size for the analysis of participation in a service during specific individual quarters is the number of cases that ever participated in the service during any quarter from 0 through 5.

*/**/***The difference in participation rates between the early and late cohorts is statistically significantly different at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

Among all Transition WORKS enrollees, the rate of participation in any of the services considered here was lowest in the quarter of enrollment, when only 39 percent of the youth received services. The proportion of enrollees receiving services subsequently increased, however, ranging from 62 to 72 percent over the next five quarters. This pattern of low service participation in the quarter of enrollment and higher participation in the subsequent quarters holds even when we look at each of the three types of services individually. The lower levels of engagement in these services in the quarter of enrollment reflect the focus of the project on self-determination training and transition planning directly after enrollment.

During our May 2008 site visit, the staff of Transition WORKS expressed concern that the intensive effort to achieve the project's enrollment goals in the winter and spring of that year had limited their ability to provide services to recently enrolled youth in a timely manner. To evaluate whether and how enrollment activities may have affected service delivery, we conducted a comparative analysis of participation patterns by youth in two cohorts: youth who enrolled in the project prior to November 2007 (the early cohort) and those who enrolled during or after that month (the late cohort). In the second and third columns of Table III.8, we present rates of participation in services for each of these cohorts. Based on what the staff had told us, we hypothesized that the intensive focus on enrollment in the first half of 2008 may have affected service delivery negatively in the initial quarters (Quarters 0 and 1) for the late cohort. The service participation patterns of the early and late cohorts strongly support this hypothesis.

Across the three types of services considered, both individually and combined, participation rates for the late cohort were lower in the quarters closest to enrollment compared with the rates for the early cohort. Conversely, participation rates were higher for the late cohort than for the early cohort in the quarters in the middle of the follow-up period. In the final two quarters of the follow-up period, participation rates for the late cohort were again lower than for the early cohort. This pattern of cohort differences in participation rates over time is especially striking for employment services. For benefits planning services, however, while the differences between the early and late cohorts during the first four quarters show the same pattern as for employment and education services, these differences are not statistically significant. While the focus on reaching enrollment targets in 2008 thus appears to have affected the late cohort for the delivery of all three types of services considered in this analysis, the impacts on employment services were most pronounced.

While enrollment efforts may have been responsible for the different rates of participation in services by the late cohort during the initial quarters following enrollment, additional factors must be considered to account for the cohort differences in participation rates during the remainder of the follow-up period. As the push to achieve the project's enrollment target subsided in the late spring of 2008, the staff members were able to concentrate more fully on delivering services to members of the late cohort. They may have intensified their service efforts to make up for lost time earlier in the year, thus resulting in relatively high participation rates in Quarters 2 and 3 for the late cohort. Yet for reasons that had little to do with enrollment and possibly related to the project's focus on closing cases as it neared completion in the second half of 2009, rates of participation in services by members of the late cohort fell in the last two quarters. This resulted in the late cohort having significantly lower participation rates towards the end of the follow-up period compared with their counterparts in the early cohort.

We conclude from this analysis that the effort by the management and staff of Transition WORKS to achieve the project's target for enrolling members of the treatment group likely resulted in some reduction in initial services for youth who enrolled late. Furthermore, some of the same youth may have received fewer services during the latter stages of their participation in Transition

WORKS due to project close-out activities. Generalizing from these findings, we have identified two lessons for managers of transition programs: they should seek to achieve enrollment goals through a steady, gradual effort, avoiding a big push at the end, and they should allow ample time for close-out activities to occur after all participants have received services for the standard period of time.

## G. Youth Satisfaction with Services

Although a large proportion of Transition WORKS participants could not recall having received services from the project, many of those who could were satisfied with the project as a whole and regarded their specific experiences in it as having been helpful.[53] In Table III.9, we present findings from the evaluation's 12-month follow-up survey on satisfaction with Transition WORKS. These corroborate findings from our 2009 focus group discussions with participants, during which the youth generally expressed very positive opinions about Transition WORKS and appreciation for the assistance that the project had provided them on employment and benefits matters. It should be noted, however, that some of the focus group participants mentioned that they would have appreciated more assistance from the project, particularly in finding jobs and navigating complex service systems.

Approximately 40 percent of Transition WORKS participants felt that each of six specific experiences or services that they may have had or received through the project had been somewhat or very helpful. The values range from 36 percent of the participants feeling that the project had helped them work effectively with others to 42.9 percent feeling that the project had helped them to develop confidence in their abilities.[54]

Slightly fewer than half of Transition WORKS participants reported that their overall experience with the project had been either good or very good. Only 2.4 percent rated their experience in the project as having been poor. A somewhat higher proportion of participants, slightly more than half, believed that the project services, in general, had been somewhat or very useful. Again, only a small proportion (3.7 percent) had an unambiguously negative opinion of the project, telling us that the services had been not at all useful. A large proportion (37.3 percent) of the participants could not recall having received services from Transition WORKS.[55]

## H. Implementation Lessons and Challenges

As described in the conceptual framework presented in Chapter I, YTD was conceived as a program to empower youth and their families, test the efficacy of various SSA waivers, provide system linkages to social and health services, and help youth participate in school or achieve employment. Transition WORKS addressed the barriers identified in the conceptual model and

[53] As shown in Tables III.7 and III.8, more than 98 percent of Transition WORKS participants received some type of service from the project; however, as shown in Table III.9, 37.3 percent of the participants who responded to the 12-month survey could not recall receiving services from the project.

[54] For this analysis, the youth who could not recall having received services from Transition WORKS were classified with those who did recall the services but did not consider them to have been somewhat or very helpful.

[55] Additional analysis, not shown, indicates that the vast majority (99.6 percent) of participants who recalled receiving services from Transition WORKS had services recorded in ETO. On the other hand, most participants who did not recall receiving services from Transition WORKS (98 percent) also had services recorded in ETO. Furthermore, about 66 percent of these participants received at least five contacts from Transition WORKS.

**Table III.9. Satisfaction with Transition WORKS Services Among Participants (percentages)**

| | Transition Works Participants |
|---|---|
| Transition WORKS Was "Somewhat Helpful" or "Very Helpful" in Assisting Participant with: | |
| Developing a sense of confidence in abilities | 42.9 |
| Understanding self | 42.2 |
| Gaining information about career opportunities | 41.9 |
| Developing clearer career goals | 39.9 |
| Acquiring job- or work-related knowledge and skills | 36.8 |
| Working effectively with others | 36.0 |
| **Sample Size** | **350** |
| Participant's Overall Experience with Transition Works | |
| Very good | 25.1 |
| Good | 22.9 |
| Fair | 11.6 |
| Poor | 2.4 |
| Don't know | 0.6 |
| Did not recall receiving services | 37.3 |
| Usefulness of Transition Works Services | |
| Very useful | 28.4 |
| Somewhat useful | 25.1 |
| Not very useful | 4.0 |
| Not at all useful | 3.7 |
| Don't know | 1.5 |
| Did not recall receiving services | 37.3 |
| **Sample Size** | **327** |

Source: The 12-month follow-up survey for the evaluation of Transition WORKS.

Notes: This analysis is based on 350 treatment group youth who enrolled in Transition WORKS and completed the 12-month interview. In this group, 122 youth did not mention having received Transition WORKS services. The analysis of the helpfulness of Transition WORKS (top panel) assumes that those who did not recall receiving services did not find those services to have been somewhat or very helpful. Data are missing for between four and six cases, depending on the measure of helpfulness. We excluded cases with missing data from the calculations. The sample size for the analyses of the participant's overall experience with Transition WORKS and the usefulness of Transition WORKS services (bottom panel) is smaller because questions on these topics were not asked of 23 proxy respondents.

provided services that emphasized empowerment and use of SSA waivers and other work incentives to meet the ultimate goal of employment.

Transition WORKS was a well-organized, cohesive project that maintained a high degree of fidelity to its program model and the YTD conceptual framework. Also, the project provided services to promote self-determination, increase understanding of SSA benefits and work incentives, and promote employment for all youth. Most youth who enrolled in the project received some services in each of these components. Youth tended to receive some of the services provided by Transition WORKS, such as self-determination training, career exploration, and benefits planning services, at more intensive levels than others, such as employment services.

We conclude this chapter by discussing key implementation lessons and challenges for Transition WORKS that were identified through the process analysis.

1. **Provide the full range of project services in a single location, using partners and staff that specialize in particular service components.** The Transition WORKS model enabled youth to receive services from multiple staff, each with a particular area of expertise. This arrangement made certain components strong, particularly self-determination training and benefits counseling. However, the model was implemented in a way that required youth to travel to multiple locations for services, which probably created barriers to participation for some youth. Also, the manner in which the model was implemented may have diluted the project's identity and contributed to the inability of youth to remember receiving services from Transition WORKS. Providing services in one location by staff from both the lead agency and its partners would take advantage of agency and staff areas of expertise while reducing the need for many participants to travel extensively.

2. **Ensure that youth become engaged in project services immediately after enrollment**. Projects should assign a high priority to engaging enrolled youth in services rapidly. This may require creativity, perhaps by designing interventions that combine learning and recreation or that permit youth to bring friends or family members to service sessions. Projects should designate specific staff members as responsible for contacting youth who do not take advantage of project services soon after enrollment, and managers should monitor the success of these staff in minimizing the number of unengaged youth. This is particularly true for employment services, since research on employment practices supports an earlier engagement in employment services (Blackorby and Wagner 1996; Luecking and Fabian 2000; Mooney and Scholl 2004). Perhaps employment services and self-determination training could be initiated simultaneously, or employment goals could be discussed prior to self-determination training. In any case, engagement in employment services should not be contingent on completion of self-determination training.

3. **Future projects should provide enough staff to ensure that caseload sizes are reasonable.** Each transition coordinator at Erie 1 BOCES was responsible for providing case management and other services to 200 youth, and the job developers typically had active caseloads of between 30 and 50 youth. These caseloads were too high to allow the project staff to provide the intensity and depth of services needed to assist youth in finding employment and provide other services. Additional staff resources might have allowed Transition WORKS to engage youth in services more rapidly and deliver services more intensively. Additionally, project management should develop a strategy for the timely hiring and training of replacement staff prior to project implementation.

4. **Ensure a steady effort for enrollment and close-out, avoiding a concentrated focus that may interfere with provision of program services.** We noted different rates of participation in services between the project's early and late enrollment cohorts. Relatively low participation rates among members of the late cohort during the initial quarters following their enrollment may have been due to a focus by project staff on meeting enrollment targets near the end of a limited recruiting period rather than providing services to youth who were enrolled already. Rates of participation in services by members of the late cohort were also relatively low during the final quarters that we examined, possibly because staff were focused on project close-out activities. Generalizing from these findings, managers of transition programs should seek to

achieve enrollment goals through a steady, gradual effort, avoiding a big push at the end of the recruitment period, and they should allow ample time for close-out activities to occur after all participants have received services for the standard period of time.

# IV. IMPACTS ON USE OF EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND OTHER SERVICES

The YTD initiative was designed to help youth with disabilities maximize their economic self-sufficiency as they transition from school to work. Given that paid employment is critical to the achievement of economic self-sufficiency, employment-promoting services are a core component of the initiative, as described in the conceptual framework (Figure I.1), and participation in those services constitutes one of the five outcome domains for the impact analysis. Employment-promoting services are intended to increase work-related experiences in the short term, and short-term participation in employment, an outcome examined in the next chapter, is pivotal to improving the potential for long-term employment.

As originally designed, services delivered under Transition WORKS included a classroom-based self-determination curriculum for in-school youth, teaching youth to self-direct their IEPs, and engaging them in field trips to employers and other career development activities. To be included in the random assignment evaluation, the project was required to increase its emphasis on employment-promoting services while retaining its focus on self-determination and also extend services to out-of-school youth. Under the redesigned Transition WORKS service model, the project provided self-determination training, individualized transition planning, direct and indirect employment services, strong benefits counseling, and referrals to other service providers. As described in Chapter III, while Transition WORKS fully embraced work-related experiences and short-term employment as the central focus of its services, it delivered less than an hour of employment services to most participants.

In this chapter, we begin with a discussion of the findings pertaining to the primary outcome measure in the domain of employment-promoting services—the use of any such service. Based on our analysis of this measure, we answer the following question: During the year following random assignment, did Transition WORKS lead to treatment group youths' use of more employment-promoting services than if the project had not been initiated? In Chapter III, we used data from the project's management information system to show that 85 percent of treatment group youth participating in the project indeed received employment-promoting services from project staff. However, in this chapter, to answer the above question, we use information from survey data collected from both treatment and control group youth about 12 months after random assignment.[56] It is important to note that this analysis captures the use of services delivered by Transition WORKS and other providers. Because the project provided referrals to local service providers, it could have increased the use of services beyond those provided directly by Transition WORKS. On the other hand, Transition WORKS services could have displaced some services that other organizations otherwise would have provided.

We found that Transition WORKS increased the proportion of youth who used any employment-promoting service and several specific types of such services, including career and benefits counseling, as well as direct work experiences, such as apprenticeships. The project also increased the proportion of youth who used non-employment services, particularly those related to person-centered planning. Transition WORKS had a modest impact on the number of months of

[56] For youth under age 18 at the time of the 12-month survey, we gathered information on service utilization from a parent or guardian. For ease of reference, we term the responses "youth reports."

overall service use but a substantial impact on the number of hours of service use. Despite the project's emphasis on benefits counseling, we found that it did not increase understanding of the relationship between benefits and employment. It did, however, increase knowledge of specific SSA work incentives. All of these service utilization measures cover the period between random assignment and the evaluation's 12-month follow-up survey; we may find additional impacts based on data for later periods.

## A. Transition WORKS Increased the Use of Employment Services

Consistent with the intent of the YTD program model, Transition WORKS increased the use of any employment-promoting service by youth with disabilities. Two-thirds (66 percent) of treatment group youth reported using any employment-promoting service in the year following random assignment (Table IV.1). We estimated that, in the absence of Transition WORKS, only 53 percent of these youth would have used any such service. The project thus had a positive impact of 14 percentage points on the primary outcome measure in the domain of employment-promoting services (reflecting a relative impact of 26 percent).[57]

The YTD 12-month follow-up survey asked about the use of specific employment-promoting services, including career counseling, support for resume writing and job search activities, job shadowing and apprenticeships/internships, and other employment-focused services (such as basic skills training, computer classes, problem solving, and social skills training). Given that SSA benefits-related work incentives are integral to the YTD initiative, counseling on SSA benefits is also considered an employment-promoting service. The Transition WORKS service model emphasized the provision of employment-promoting services, including job development and benefits counseling. Consistent with this model, we found that the project increased the use of career counseling services (by eight percentage points, an increase of 27 percent); support for resume writing and job search (by 15 percentage points, an increase of 65 percent); job shadowing and apprenticeships/internships (by five percentage points, an increase of 43 percent); and benefits counseling (by 14 percentage points, an increase of 66 percent).[58]

While important, the receipt of benefits counseling was not the primary factor underlying the increase in overall use of employment services. To assess whether the impact on the use of any employment-promoting service was mainly attributable to the increase in benefits counseling, we

[57] As noted in Chapter II, Section A.4, the estimated impacts presented in this and subsequent chapters are regression adjusted. To provide context, in Table IV.1 and subsequent tables we report observed mean values for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates. A regression-adjusted impact estimate is the difference between the treatment and control group means after adjusting for differences in baseline characteristics. The "estimated mean without Transition WORKS" is calculated as the observed treatment group mean less the regression-adjusted impact estimate. We report unadjusted mean impacts in Table A.5 for all outcomes.

[58] In Chapter III, Section E, we reported that our analysis of ETO data revealed that Transition WORKS delivered benefits planning services to 74.5 percent of the treatment group youth who had enrolled in the project. The enrollment rate was 83 percent, so it follows that the project delivered benefits planning services to 62 percent of all treatment group members (.745 x .83 = .618). The difference between this rate, computed from ETO data, and the 34 percent rate of use of benefits planning services computed for treatment group members from the 12-month survey data (Table IV.1) can be explained by two factors: (1) Per instructions given by the YTD evaluation team, project staff recorded in ETO even very brief discussions with youth about SSA benefits at the time they occurred. (2) The survey respondents were asked to recall benefits planning services that they may have used over the entire preceding 12 months. Especially if those services consisted of a single brief discussion, the youth may have forgotten about them.

**Table IV.1. Use of Employment- Promoting Services and Non- Employment Services (percentages)**

| | Treatment Group | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | | P-Value |
| **Primary Outcome** | | | | | |
| Any Employment-Promoting Service | 66.3 | 52.6 | 13.7 | *** | 0.00 |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | | |
| Employment-Promoting Services | | | | | |
| Career counseling | 37.7 | 29.6 | 8.1 | ** | 0.02 |
| Support for resume writing and job search activities | 38.6 | 23.3 | 15.3 | *** | 0.00 |
| Job shadowing, apprenticeship/internship | 15.6 | 11.0 | 4.7 | * | 0.07 |
| Other employment-focused services (basic skills training, computer classes, problem solving, and social skills training) | 5.0 | 4.8 | 0.3 | | 0.87 |
| Counseling on SSA benefits and work incentives | 33.8 | 20.3 | 13.5 | *** | 0.00 |
| Non-Employment Services | | | | | |
| Any non-employment service | 81.5 | 73.1 | 8.4 | *** | 0.01 |
| Discussions about youth's general interests, life, and future plans | 77.3 | 63.8 | 13.5 | *** | 0.00 |
| Life skills training | 34.5 | 34.5 | 0.0 | | 1.00 |
| Help getting into a school or training program | 24.4 | 19.7 | 4.6 | | 0.13 |
| Help with accommodations | 25.1 | 27.1 | -2.0 | | 0.52 |
| Referrals to other agencies | 4.5 | 1.5 | 3.0 | ** | 0.03 |
| Transportation services | 6.9 | 5.1 | 1.8 | | 0.29 |
| Health services | 10.3 | 9.6 | 0.7 | | 0.75 |
| Case management | 4.3 | 2.9 | 1.4 | | 0.36 |
| Other non-employment services | 15.2 | 9.5 | 5.7 | ** | 0.02 |
| Overall Service Use | | | | | |
| Any employment or non-employment service | 86.4 | 77.1 | 9.3 | *** | 0.00 |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. In the table, we report observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment by using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analysis sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Appendix Table A.5 for sample sizes for all outcomes.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

conducted an impact analysis that excluded benefits counseling from the definition of "any employment-promoting service." With this change, the estimated impact fell slightly, to 13 percentage points (from 14 percentage points), but still was relatively large and statistically significant at the one percent level.

We also examined whether Transition WORKS led to more youth using non-employment services. It is likely that general case management services were more readily available than employment-promoting services in Erie County, such that control group youth also would have had access to these services. In fact, we found higher levels of use of non-employment services relative

to employment-promoting services among members of both the treatment and control groups. Our estimates show that Transition WORKS increased the use of these services by eight percentage points (82 percent of treatment group youth reported using any non-employment service, compared with the 73 percent who would have used any such service in the absence of the intervention). Furthermore, consistent with the Transition WORKS service model and its focus on self-determination and transition planning, we found the largest impact on the percentage of youth who reported that someone had talked with them about their general interests, life, and future plans. About 77 percent of the treatment group youth reported having had such discussions, compared with only 64 percent who would have had them in the absence of the intervention, leading to an impact of 14 percentage points (reflecting a relative increase of 21 percent). We found significant impacts on the use of only two other types of non-employment services: referrals to other agencies for services increased by a statistically significant three percentage points (a relative increase of 203 percent), and use of other non-employment services (such as help with school work, legal services, and housing support) increased by a statistically significant six percentage points (a relative increase of 60 percent).

Finally, we found that Transition WORKS increased the share of youth using any service. Looking at overall service use (employment-promoting or non-employment), we found that 86 percent of treatment group members used any service at all. In the absence of Transition WORKS, 77 percent of them would have used services. The nine percentage point difference is statistically significant. Thus, the project led to an increase in the combined use of employment and non-employment services.

In sum, we found that Transition WORKS resulted in greater use of both employment-promoting services and non-employment services. In the next chapter, we examine whether the increased services under Transition WORKS, combined with other aspects of the intervention, were sufficient to produce a significant impact on employment. However, an impact on employment also depends on the amount of services used. In the next section, we address the impact of Transition WORKS on the amount of services.

## B. Transition WORKS Led to Increases in the Amount of All Services Used

In addition to examining the proportion of youth who used services, we examined the amount of all (employment and non-employment) services used. [59] If control group youth were able to access services from other providers, they may have used a similar amount of services as did members of the treatment group. On the other hand, if Transition WORKS succeeded in helping treatment group youth access services from other local providers, its overall impact on the amount services could have been greater than just the amount provided by the project itself.

Our measures of the amount of all services used are subject to considerable error because they are based on youth recall over a one-year period. However, there is no reason to believe that the measurement error differs between treatment group and control group members. This means that, while the measurement error may reduce the precision of our impact estimates, it does not cause them to be biased. The 12-month survey asked each youth about the starting and ending dates for services from each provider that the youth had reported using. Our principal measure of the amount

[59] Our data from the 12-month survey did not allow us to analyze the amount of employment services separately from the amount of all services.

of services is the number of months during which a youth reported using services from any provider. We estimated that treatment group members used services for 8.3 months, which is about two-thirds of a month more than the duration of services they would have used in the absence of the intervention (Table IV.2). This represents a relative impact of nine percent. Further analysis suggests that this impact was driven largely by the fact that more treatment group youth used any service, and not by additional months of services among those who used any service. Among youth who used any service, the average number of months of services was just under 10 months for both the treatment and control groups (not shown in table). In addition, based on information about the typical frequency of service contacts (for example, weekly or monthly), we estimated that the project had no impact on the number of contacts that youth had with providers.

The survey-based measure of hours of services is especially problematic. For each service provider reported by a youth, we used information on the starting and ending dates of service, the frequency of visits, and the typical length of each visit (in minutes). We multiplied these components together to calculate the total hours of services for each provider and then summed across the providers to calculate the grand total of service hours. We thus constructed our measure of service hours from three measures that are themselves difficult to measure accurately, based on recall over an entire year.

We estimated that Transition WORKS substantially increased the total hours of services used. Treatment group members used a total of 446 hours of services, on average, and we estimated that they would have used 321 hours in the absence of the project. Thus, Transition WORKS increased the total hours of services used by 125 hours (a relative increase of 39 percent). The impact is statistically significant at the one percent level.[60] Thus, not only were treatment group youth more likely to have used any service, they used more hours of services. The average value of total hours of services (446 hours) was quite high for treatment group members. This result may seem surprising in light of the finding from the process analysis, which showed that youth participating in Transition WORKS received an average of 13 hours of services from the project (Table III.7). One explanation is that the survey-based measure reflects services received from Transition WORKS and other providers, such as schools and personal care providers; the average includes some very high values for youth who received personal care or other services on a daily basis.[61] Another explanation is the fundamental differences between how Transition WORKS staff and survey respondents perceived and reported services.

In collaboration with other service providers in Erie County, Transition WORKS used referrals to meet the needs of its participants, perhaps leading to the expectation that the project would have increased the total number of service providers used. On the other hand, given that the project provided youth with a number of services directly, and that control group youth may have had to

[60] To flesh out this estimate, we examined the average hours of services among youth who received any services. The average hours of services was higher for treatment group youth (528 hours) than control group youth (403 hours), and the difference (125 hours) is statistically significant (not shown in Table IV.2). Because this analysis was conducted on a self-selected subsample (youth who used any services), rather than on the full research sample, this finding should not be interpreted as a formal impact estimate.

[61] To understand the hours of services measure better, we examined this measure for youth who used fewer than 1,000 hours of services over the one-year recall period. The 1,000-hour level is roughly equivalent to four hours of services every weekday over the year. Eighty percent of treatment group members and 88 percent of control group members used fewer than 1,000 hours of services. Among these youth, the average amount of services used was 142 hours for those in the treatment group and 129 hours for those in the control group.

**Table IV.2. Amount of Services Used and Unmet Service Needs**

| | Treatment Group | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | | P-Value |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | | |
| Amount of Services Used[a] | | | | | |
| Average number of months of service use[b] | 8.3 | 7.6 | 0.7 | * | 0.06 |
| Average number of contacts with providers[b] | 115.7 | 106.1 | 9.6 | | 0.32 |
| Average number of hours of service[b] | 445.7 | 321.1 | 124.5 | *** | 0.00 |
| Average number of providers | 2.2 | 1.7 | 0.5 | *** | 0.00 |
| Unmet Service Needs (%) | | | | | |
| Any unmet service need | 20.2 | 16.1 | 4.1 | | 0.15 |
| Type of unmet service need | | | | | |
| Help finding a job | 6.3 | 6.4 | -0.2 | | 0.92 |
| Other employment services | 9.7 | 8.7 | 1.0 | | 0.65 |
| Basic skills training | 3.1 | 2.7 | 0.4 | | 0.74 |
| Other unmet needs | 8.9 | 10.4 | -1.5 | | 0.49 |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. In the table, we report observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of the treatment group means or percentages in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment by using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analysis sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Appendix Table A.5 for sample sizes for all outcomes.

[a]The average values include youth who did not use any (employment or non-employment) services.

[b]For these outcomes, item non-response occurred conditionally, depending on the values of other measures in the follow-up survey. The rate of missing data ranges from 9.4 to 12.7 percent. We used a "multiple imputations" procedure to assign values when they were missing. See Appendix A, Section E for more information on the procedure.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

rely on several providers for the services they wanted, the project could have had the opposite effect on the number of service providers used. We estimated that Transition WORKS increased the number of service providers used by youth. On average, treatment group members received services from 2.2 providers (including Transition WORKS), and we estimated that they would have used just 1.7 providers had they not had the opportunity to participate in the project (a relative increase of 32 percent). The difference is statistically significant at the one percent level.

Transition WORKS did not reduce the share of youth with unmet service needs. Among youth in the treatment group, 20 percent reported any unmet need (Table IV.2).[62] We estimated that the share would have been similar in the absence of the project. We also found no project impacts on unmet service needs by type.

[62] Specifically, the evaluation's 12-month follow-up survey asked if the youth "needed any (other) help or services preparing for work or school" that they had not received. One possible explanation for the absence of an impact on unmet service needs is that Transition WORKS may have increased youth awareness of needs. The increased awareness of needs could have offset any potential reduction in unmet service needs due to the intervention.

## C. Transition WORKS Did Not Increase Understanding of the Relationship Between Benefits and Employment

Our process analysis found that Transition WORKS offered participants an opportunity to receive individualized benefits counseling. This focus of the project was borne out by our previously reported finding that it increased the proportion of youth who received benefits counseling by 14 percentage points (Table IV.1). These results notwithstanding, in this section we show that Transition WORKS did not lead to increased understanding of the relationship between benefits and employment. The project did increase knowledge of SSA requirements and work incentives, however.

We analyzed two measures that capture whether youth understood that, when they started working, they would not lose (1) all of their SSA benefits or (2) their related medical insurance.[63, 64] About 69 percent of treatment group youth understood that the entire cash benefit is not lost once work begins, and 81 percent understood that medical insurance is not lost as soon as work commences (Table IV.3). We estimated that these proportions would have been roughly the same in the absence of Transition WORKS. In other words, we found no significant evidence that Transition WORKS improved understanding of these relationships.[65] Furthermore, despite the availability of benefits counseling from Transition WORKS for treatment group members, there was room for improvement in the understanding of these basic benefits issues.

In addition to determining whether youth understood the basic principle that all benefits are not lost when they start working, we examined whether Transition WORKS increased their awareness of specific SSA requirements and work incentives. Awareness among treatment group youth was not as great as might have been expected, given the project's emphasis on benefits counseling; however, it was significantly greater than what it would have been in the absence of the project. The 12-month survey asked youth whether they had ever heard of each of the following six requirements or work incentives for disability beneficiaries:[66]

1. The earned income exclusion (EIE)
2. The student earned income exclusion (SEIE)
3. The continuing disability review (CDR) or age-18 medical redetermination requirement
4. The plan for achieving self-support (PASS)

[63] We collected information on knowledge of SSA benefits from a parent (or guardian) for youth under age 18 for most of the measures reported in this section. For ease of reference, we refer to the measures as "youth reports." For knowledge of the continuing disability review or age-18 medical redetermination, for which we collected information from both the youth and a parent, we used the parent report because the information was more complete: 89 percent of records were missing youth responses, whereas about 29 percent were missing parent responses. For knowledge of IDAs, for which we collected information from both the youth and a parent, we report both measures: about 17 percent of records were missing youth responses, and about 29 percent were missing parent responses.

[64] These measures report the share of youth who (correctly) disagreed with the statements, "As soon as people start working, they stop getting their Social Security benefits" and "As soon as people start working, they lose their medical coverage."

[65] Understanding of these relationships was not any different among treatment group youth who had worked for pay in the year following random assignment. Of these youth, 69 percent understood the relationship between work and SSA benefits and 82 percent understood the relationship between work and medical coverage.

[66] The survey questions provided both the name of each requirement or incentive and a brief description.

5. Individual development accounts (IDA)
6. Medicaid-while-working or continued Medicaid eligibility

Table IV.3 shows that more than half of treatment group youth were aware of the CDR/age-18 medical redetermination requirement and the EIE work incentive but far less than half were aware of each of the other work incentives.[67] Their awareness would have been lower had the youth not had the opportunity to participate in Transition WORKS. We estimated that the project significantly increased youth awareness of all five of the work incentives by 7 to 18 percentage points (relative increases ranged from 29 to 124 percent). However, it did not significantly improve youth awareness of the CDR/age-18 medical redetermination requirement or parental awareness of IDAs.[68]

The project led to a shift away from SSA and to Transition WORKS as a potential source of information on how working might affect benefits. Among treatment group members, 18 percent told us that they would seek such information from Transition WORKS (Table IV.3).[69] While this impact estimate is statistically significant, the issues surrounding access to and outreach by the benefits counselors at NLS, as discussed in Chapter III, may have suppressed its size. The ability of some treatment group members to rely on the project for information on work and benefits may have reduced the group's expected reliance on local SSA offices. We estimated that Transition WORKS reduced by 13 percentage points the share of youth who would obtain such information from SSA offices. In addition, the share of youth who would have used the Internet as a source of information on work and SSA benefits decreased by five percentage points.

## D. Transition WORKS Had Little Impact on the Types of Service Providers Used

The Transition WORKS service philosophy was to provide transition services directly to participants and to leverage those services, when possible, through referrals to other providers. This philosophy did not lead to strong expectations regarding project impacts on the types of providers of transition services—other than Transition WORKS—used by youth with disabilities in Erie County.

[67] Knowledge of SSA requirements and work incentives among treatment group youth who had worked for pay during the year following random assignment was similar to what we observed for all treatment group youth: 59 percent had heard of EIE, 39 percent had heard of CDR, 33 percent had heard of PASS, 26 percent had heard of SEIE, 14 percent had heard of IDA (8 percent of their parents had heard of IDA), and 42 percent had heard of continued Medicaid eligibility.

[68] Awareness of SSA work incentives was substantially higher among youth in this evaluation versus a nationally representative sample of beneficiaries from the National Beneficiary Survey (NBS). In the NBS from 2006, 16 percent of beneficiaries were aware of continued Medicaid coverage, and smaller shares were aware of EIE, PASS, and SEIE (percentages calculated as a share of the population eligible for the benefit; see Livermore et al. 2009b, Exhibit 16). Even among work-oriented beneficiaries in the NBS from 2004, only 20 percent were aware of continued Medicaid coverage and only 16 percent were aware of PASS (Livermore et al. 2009a, Exhibit 17). Data from the National Survey of Children and Families 2001, a nationally representative survey of current and former child SSI recipients, also suggest lower-level knowledge of SSA work incentives, as only 22 percent of the respondents reported to have ever heard of SSA work incentives (Loprest and Wittenburg 2005, Table 8).

[69] Specifically, the 12-month survey asked, "If you wanted information about how working would affect your Social Security benefits, where would you get that information?" We collected the information from each youth and a parent or guardian. For a sample member, we coded each source as a potential source of information if either the parent or youth mentioned it.

**Table IV.3. Knowledge and Sources of Information on SSA Requirements and Work Incentives (percentages)**

| | Treatment Group | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | | P-Value |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | | |
| Knowledge of SSA Requirements and Work Incentives | | | | | |
| Understands the relationship between work and SSA benefit receipt | 69.4 | 73.1 | -3.8 | | 0.26 |
| Understands relationship between work and medical coverage | 81.1 | 79.0 | 2.1 | | 0.48 |
| Ever heard of EIE | 51.7 | 37.4 | 14.3 | *** | 0.00 |
| Ever heard of SEIE | 24.3 | 15.0 | 9.2 | *** | 0.00 |
| Ever heard of CDR/age-18 medical redetermination requirement | 54.4 | 52.9 | 1.5 | | 0.74 |
| Ever heard of PASS | 32.9 | 14.7 | 18.2 | *** | 0.00 |
| Ever heard of IDA (parent report) | 13.2 | 10.1 | 3.1 | | 0.29 |
| Ever heard of IDA (youth report) | 16.3 | 9.0 | 7.4 | *** | 0.01 |
| Ever heard of Medicaid-while-working or continued Medicaid eligibility | 39.0 | 30.2 | 8.8 | ** | 0.02 |
| Potential Sources of Information on Work and SSA Benefits | | | | | |
| Transition WORKS | 18.2 | 0.0 | 18.2 | *** | 0.00 |
| SSA office | 60.8 | 73.9 | -13.1 | *** | 0.00 |
| SSA web site | 6.3 | 6.9 | -0.6 | | 0.74 |
| Friends and family | 11.0 | 14.2 | -3.2 | | 0.19 |
| Internet | 8.4 | 13.3 | -4.8 | ** | 0.03 |
| Vocational rehabilitation agency | 3.3 | 4.8 | -1.5 | | 0.29 |
| Benefits planner | 3.6 | 1.8 | 1.8 | | 0.15 |
| Other | 26.2 | 19.4 | 6.8 | ** | 0.03 |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. In the table, we report observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment by using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analysis sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Appendix Table A.5 for sample sizes for all outcomes.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

We found that Transition WORKS significantly increased the likelihood of youth using services from the project itself, including formal partners of Erie 1 BOCES. As described in Chapter III, NLS—a legal services corporation—provided benefits counseling services to Transition WORKS participants. As a result, treatment group respondents were more likely to have reported in the follow-up survey that they had used services from a legal service provider. Hence, we combined reports of the use of services from Transition WORKS with those of services from legal services providers. We found that 43 percent of the treatment group youth reported using services from Transition WORKS or a legal services provider (Table IV.4). We estimated that, in the absence of the project, less than one percent of them would have used services from these sources. The 42 percentage point impact is statistically significant at the one percent level.

**Table IV.4. Use of Transition Services by Type of Provider (percentages)**

| | Treatment Group | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | | P-Value |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | | |
| Type of Service Provider | | | | | |
| Transition WORKS/legal services | 42.7 | 0.7 | 42.0 | *** | 0.00 |
| Schools or school districts | 34.9 | 34.6 | 0.3 | | 0.93 |
| One-Stop Workforce Center | 5.5 | 3.0 | 2.5 | | 0.17 |
| Vocational rehabilitation agency | 7.4 | 8.8 | -1.4 | | 0.48 |
| Work-related, sheltered workshop, employment agency, job training | 4.5 | 4.2 | 0.3 | | 0.83 |
| SSA office | 2.6 | 5.6 | -3.0 | * | 0.05 |
| Health services providers | 4.1 | 5.5 | -1.4 | | 0.38 |
| Other providers serving primarily people with disabilities | 31.2 | 35.4 | -4.2 | | 0.23 |
| All other providers | 28.0 | 14.6 | 13.4 | *** | 0.00 |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. In the table, we report observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment by using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analysis sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Appendix Table A.5 for sample sizes for all outcomes.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

It is not surprising that the 43 percent of treatment group youth who reported that they had used services from Transition WORKS or legal services provider is smaller than the share receiving services as recorded by project staff in ETO: 83 percent of treatment youth enrolled in Transition WORKS, of whom 98 percent received project services (Chapter III, Sections D and E). These rates imply that 81 percent of treatment group youth received project services. That the share of treatment group members reporting project services is smaller than the share derived from ETO data probably is attributable to the youths' inability to recall either (1) the services they used or (2) that Transition WORKS was the provider.

Aside from Transition WORKS/legal services, we found a significant impact of the intervention on the use of services from only one other specific type of provider—SSA. Less than three percent of treatment group youth reported using services from an SSA office. We estimated that, in the absence of Transition WORKS, the use of services from this source would have been nearly six percent. The negative sign for this impact most likely reflects the fact that counseling on Social Security benefits was available through Transition WORKS for treatment group members. We found no project impacts on the use of services from schools or school districts, One-Stop Workforce Centers, the state vocational rehabilitation agency, other work-related service providers, health service providers, or other providers serving primarily people with disabilities. However, we did find that the project increased the use of services from providers not explicitly categorized in Table IV.4 (that is, "other providers"), such as churches, group homes, and community centers. The share of treatment group youth using services from other providers was 28 percent. We estimated

# V. IMPACTS ON EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS

Transition WORKS sought to improve economic self-sufficiency and independence among youth receiving SSA disability benefits by providing intensive services, including employment-promoting services, and the waiver of certain disability program rules. Work-based experiences, ranging from workplace tours to placement in paid jobs, were integral to the intervention, so its effective implementation could be expected to lead to increased employment and earnings within the first year of service receipt. In this chapter, we examine the short-term impacts of Transition WORKS on employment, earnings, and job characteristics.

We found that Transition WORKS did not have impacts on employment (either paid or unpaid) or earnings during the year after youth enrolled in the evaluation. These results may have been due to the low intensity of employment-related services delivered, as documented by the process analysis (Chapter III). Furthermore, as we reported in the previous chapter, the intervention had only a modest impact (14 percentage points) on the receipt of employment-promoting services, one-third of treatment group members did not receive any such services, and the intervention did not increase the understanding of the relationship between paid employment and the receipt of SSA benefits. Together, these findings indicate that, as implemented, the employment-promoting services in Transition WORKS were not robust enough to generate positive impacts on employment and earnings in the year following random assignment. Future analyses under this evaluation may find employment-related impacts of the project that emerge in later years.

## A. No Impact of Transition WORKS on Employment

Maximizing self-sufficiency through work was a central goal of the YTD interventions; consequently, we identified employment as a key domain for the analysis of the short-term impacts of Transition WORKS and the other YTD projects. The primary outcome in this domain is the share of youth who were ever employed in a paid job during the year after random assignment. This measure is preferred to a measure of the intensity of employment, such as the number of weeks worked during the year, because half of the youth in the evaluation were students who would not be expected to work intensely over the course of the year. We constructed the primary outcome measure based on youth reports of paid employment during the period between random assignment and the 12-month follow-up interview.

Transition WORKS had no significant impact on the share of youth with paid employment during the year following random assignment. About 44 percent of the treatment group youth were ever employed in a paid job during the follow-up period (Table V.1). In the absence of Transition WORKS, we estimated that 41 percent of the youth would have ever been employed in a paid job during that period. The estimated impact of three percentage points is not statistically significant.

To enhance our understanding of the finding of no impact on the primary employment outcome, we conducted supplementary analyses of other employment-related outcomes. Table V.1 presents the estimated impacts on these outcomes, including the prevalence of employment in any (paid or unpaid) job and in solely unpaid jobs. Similar to what we found for paid jobs, Transition WORKS had no impact on the share of youth employed in any job. Although 47 percent of treatment group youth were ever employed in any job during the year following random assignment, about five percentage points more than they would have been in the absence of the intervention, the difference is not statistically significant. The prevalence of employment in unpaid jobs was low;

**Table V.1. Employment and Number of Jobs (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Treatment Group | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value |
| **Primary Outcome** | | | | |
| Ever employed in paid job during the first year after random assignment (RA) | 43.6 | 40.7 | 2.9 | 0.39 |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | |
| Employment During the First Year After RA | | | | |
| Ever employed in any (paid or unpaid) job | 46.8 | 42.3 | 4.5 | 0.18 |
| Ever employed in unpaid job (but not in paid job) | 2.9 | 1.5 | 1.4 | 0.17 |
| Extent of Employment During First Year After RA[a] | | | | |
| Percentage of weeks employed in any (paid or unpaid) job since RA | 28.6 | 25.5 | 3.1 | 0.24 |
| Percentage of weeks employed in paid jobs since RA | 26.2 | 23.9 | 2.3 | 0.38 |
| Percentage of weeks employed in unpaid jobs since RA | 1.8 | 1.2 | 0.7 | 0.38 |
| Employment Status at the Time of the Follow-up Survey | | | | 0.83 |
| Employed in paid job | 25.1 | 23.2 | 1.9 | |
| Employed in unpaid job | 1.8 | 1.7 | 0.1 | |
| Not employed, looking for work | 13.2 | 11.8 | 1.3 | |
| Not employed, out of the labor force | 60.0 | 63.2 | -3.3 | |
| Number of Jobs Held During the First Year After RA[a] | | | | |
| Number of jobs (paid and unpaid) | | | | 0.42 |
| 0 | 54.0 | 58.4 | -4.4 | |
| 1 | 34.1 | 30.8 | 3.3 | |
| 2 or more | 11.9 | 10.7 | 1.1 | |
| (average, paid and unpaid)[b] | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.1 | 0.36 |
| Average number of jobs (paid)[b] | 0.6 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.40 |
| Average number of jobs (unpaid)[b] | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.38 |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. In the table, we report observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of the treatment group means or percentages in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment by using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analysis sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Appendix Table A.5 for sample sizes for all outcomes.

[a]For these outcomes, item non-response occurred conditionally, depending on the values of other measures in the follow-up survey. The rate of missing data ranges from 0.4 percent to 5.1 percent. We used a "multiple imputations" procedure to assign values when they were missing. See Appendix A, Section E for more information on this procedure.

[b]The average includes youth who were not employed during the year following random assignment.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

only three percent of treatment group youth were ever employed in jobs without pay. The estimated impact of Transition WORKS on the share of youth employed in unpaid jobs, about one percentage point, is not statistically significant.

Transition WORKS also had no effect on the extent of employment as measured by the percentage of weeks employed in any job during the year following random assignment. We constructed this measure by first identifying a respondent's employment status in each week

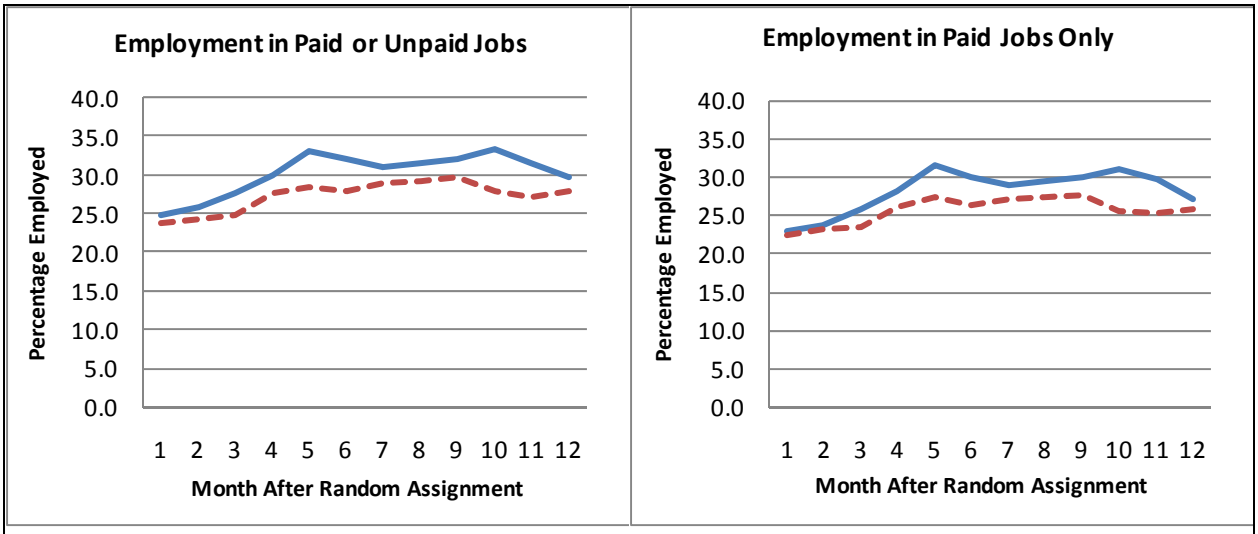
following random assignment and then aggregating that information over the 52-week follow-up period. Youth in the treatment group were employed in any (paid or unpaid) job for about 29 percent (roughly three-and-a-half months) of the 52 weeks following random assignment. In the absence of Transition WORKS, they would have been employed for 26 percent of the 52 weeks. The estimated impact of about three percentage points is not statistically significant. The project also had no significant impact on the extent of paid employment only or unpaid employment only.

In addition, Transition WORKS had no effects on employment status at the time of the follow-up survey or on the number of jobs held since random assignment. Youth could have been in any one of four employment statuses when they completed the survey: employed in a paid job; employed in an unpaid job only (no paid employment); not employed but in the labor force (that is, actively looking for work); and not employed and out of the labor force. To identify the impact of the project, we conducted a test of the difference between the observed distribution of treatment group youth across these employment statuses and our estimate of what that distribution would have been in the absence of the project. The results in Table V.1 show no significant evidence that the project had an effect on employment status at the time of the follow-up survey. The results in this table also show that Transition WORKS had no statistically significant impacts on the number of jobs held by youth during the follow-up period.

Transition WORKS had only limited impacts on the timing of employment following random assignment. We used youth reports from the 12-month follow-up survey on the starting and ending dates of each job to construct monthly measures of employment. Figure V.1 presents the rates of employment for youth in any job and in paid jobs only for each month during the year following random assignment.[70] The figure shows the observed employment rates for treatment group members and our estimates of what the rates would have been if they had not had the opportunity to participate in the project. In the figure, the vertical difference between the two plotted employment rates for any month is a graphical representation of the estimated impact. Although the monthly rates of employment in paid or unpaid jobs and in paid jobs only for treatment group youth increased over time, the estimated impacts are significant only for month 10. This means that the treatment group youth experienced a higher employment rate in month 10 than they would have in the absence of Transition WORKS. In all other months during the year following random assignment, the treatment group youth would have experienced similar employment rates even in the absence of Transition WORKS.

[70] We interviewed a small proportion (15 percent) of the analysis sample before the end of the 12th month following random assignment; consequently, employment outcomes measured for month 12 may reflect some underlying censoring in the data. Because there were no significant treatment-control differences in the timing of responses to the 12-month follow-up survey, we do not anticipate any bias in the estimated impacts for month 12.

**Figure V.1. Employment Rate by Month Following Random Assignment**




Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. In these figures, we present observed percentages for the treatment group and estimates of what the treatment group percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS. We measured explanatory in the regression model prior to random assignment by using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response.

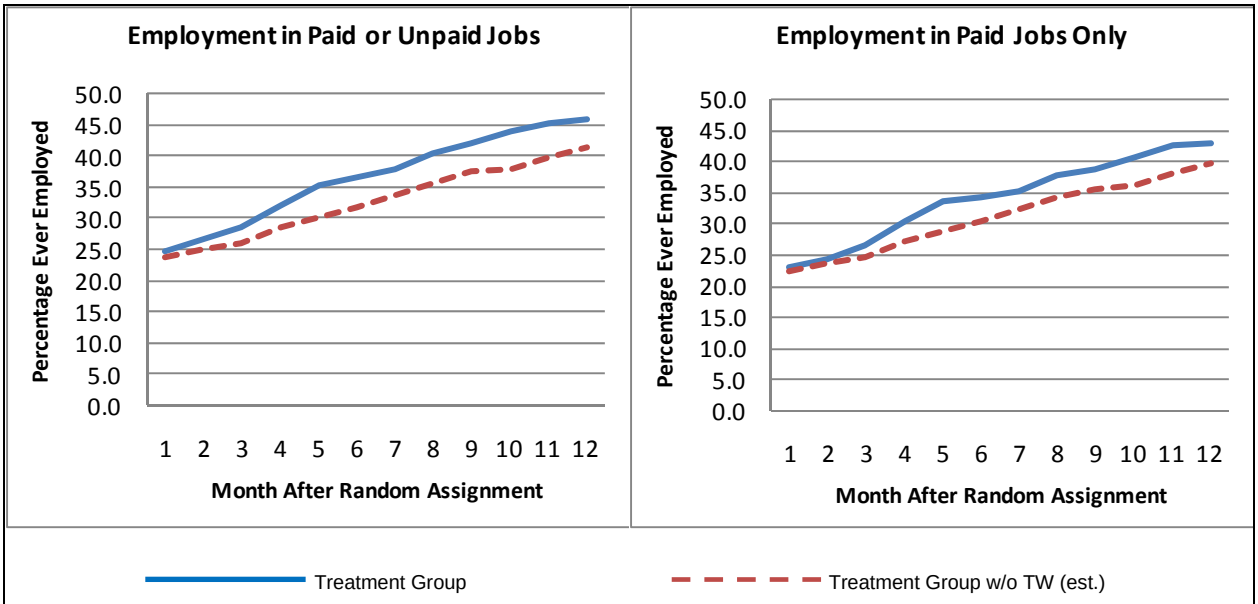
For all outcomes in this figure, item non-response occurred conditionally, depending on the values of other measures in the follow-up survey. The rate of missing data ranges from 2.5 percent to 3.5 percent. We used a "multiple imputations" procedure to assign values when they were missing. See Appendix A, Section E for more information on this procedure.

The impact estimates for both employment in paid or unpaid jobs and employment in paid jobs only in month 10 are significantly different from zero at the .10 level.

Figure V.2 displays the proportion of youth who had ever been employed since random assignment for each month during the year following random assignment.[71] Similar to employment status by month, the cumulative employment rate increased over time for treatment group youth, but the impacts of Transition WORKS were significant only for cumulative employment in any paid or unpaid job in month 5 and month 10. For cumulative employment in paid jobs alone, none of the monthly impacts are statistically significant. Overall the evidence suggests that that the intervention did not succeed in changing the trajectory of employment for treatment group youth during the follow-up period.

[71] The cumulative employment rate in paid or unpaid jobs in the 12th month following random assignment for treatment group members in Figure V.2 (45.8 percent) does not equal the percentage of those youth employed in any paid or unpaid job during the year following random assignment in Table V.1 (46.8 percent). This deviation is a result of our use of the "multiple imputations" procedure in Stata to assign employment status by month to youth who reported in the follow-up survey that they had worked but did not report the start and/or end dates for their jobs. This procedure imputed a status of *not employed* to a handful of these youth.

**Figure V.2. Cumulative Employment Rate by Month Following Random Assignment**




Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. In these figures, we present observed percentages for the treatment group and estimates of what the treatment group percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS. We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment by using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response.

For all outcomes in this figure, item non-response occurred conditionally, depending on the values of other measures in the follow-up survey. The rate of missing data ranges from 2.5 percent to 3.5 percent. We used a "multiple imputations" procedure to assign values when they were missing. See Appendix A, Section E for more information on this procedure.

The impact estimates for employment in paid or unpaid jobs in months 5 and 10 are significantly different from zero at the .10 level. None of the impact estimates for employment in paid jobs only are significantly different from zero at the .10 level.

## B. No Impacts of Transition WORKS on Hours of Work or Earnings

Given the absence of impacts of Transition WORKS on employment during the year following random assignment, it is not surprising that the intervention also had no impacts on hours worked or earnings. To support supplementary analyses in the employment domain, we constructed a number of different measures of hours of work and earned income. As discussed in this section, we found no impacts on any of these measures.

We estimated the impact of the project on total hours worked in any (paid or unpaid) job and paid jobs only during the year following random assignment. On average, youth in the treatment group were employed for a total of 250 hours in paid or unpaid jobs and 240 hours in paid jobs only (Table V.2). We found no significant impact of Transition WORKS on these measures of average hours, indicating that those youth would have worked about the same number of hours even if they had not had the opportunity to participate in the project. To better understand this finding, we investigated the impact on the distribution of total hours. We found that Transition WORKS had no

**Table V.2. Total Hours Worked (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Treatment Group | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | |
| **Total Hours Worked in All Jobs During First Year After Random Assignment** | | | | |
| Total Hours Worked in Paid and Unpaid Jobs | | | | 0.29 |
| Not employed | 53.2 | 57.8 | -4.5 | |
| >0 to 260 hours | 18.3 | 13.2 | 5.2 | |
| >260 to 1,040 hours | 19.8 | 19.9 | 0.0 | |
| >1,040 hours | 8.6 | 9.2 | -0.6 | |
| (Average total hours in all jobs)[a] | 249.7 | 240.3 | 9.4 | 0.76 |
| Total Hours Worked in Paid Jobs Only | | | | 0.62 |
| No paid employment | 56.1 | 59.2 | -3.1 | |
| >0 to 260 hours | 16.6 | 13.3 | 3.4 | |
| >260 to 1,040 hours | 18.7 | 18.3 | 0.4 | |
| >1,040 hours | 8.6 | 9.2 | -0.7 | |
| (Average total hours in paid jobs)[a] | 241.2 | 234.3 | 6.9 | 0.82 |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. In the table, we report observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of the treatment group means or percentages in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment by using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analysis sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Appendix Table A.5 for sample sizes for all outcomes.

260 and 1,040 hours per year correspond, respectively, to 5 and 20 hours per week for 52 weeks.

For all outcomes in this table, item non-response occurred conditionally, depending on the values of other measures in the follow-up survey. The rate of missing data was 5.4 percent. We used a "multiple imputations" procedure to assign values when they were missing. See Appendix A, Section E for more information on this procedure.

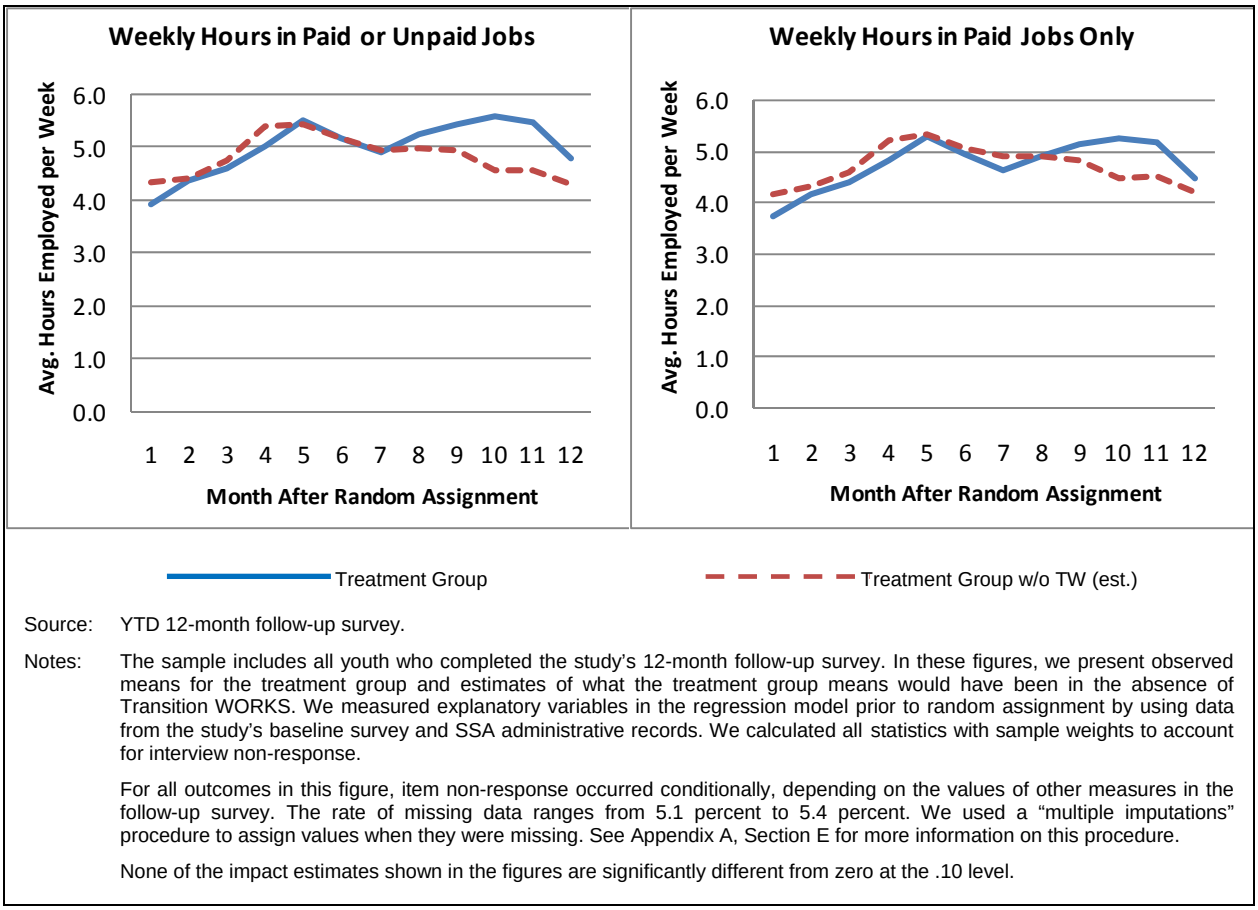
[a]The average includes youth who were not employed during the year following random assignment.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

statistically significant impact on the distribution of total hours of work in paid and unpaid jobs (combined). Our estimates show similar results for the distribution of total hours of work in paid jobs only.

We also estimated the impacts of the intervention on average hours worked per week for each month during the year following random assignment. Among treatment group youth, the average hours worked per week in paid and unpaid jobs combined ranged between four and six during the year (Figure V.3). The average is low because we include non-workers (with zero hours) and most youth were not working during these months (Figure V.1). We estimated that in the absence of Transition WORKS, the average hours worked per week in each of the months would not have been significantly different. In light of the small amount of unpaid employment (discussed in the

**Figure V.3. Average Hours Worked per Week by Month Following Random Assignment**




Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. In these figures, we present observed means for the treatment group and estimates of what the treatment group means would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS. We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment by using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response.

For all outcomes in this figure, item non-response occurred conditionally, depending on the values of other measures in the follow-up survey. The rate of missing data ranges from 5.1 percent to 5.4 percent. We used a "multiple imputations" procedure to assign values when they were missing. See Appendix A, Section E for more information on this procedure.

None of the impact estimates shown in the figures are significantly different from zero at the .10 level.

previous section), it is not surprising that the monthly pattern of average hours worked per week is essentially the same for paid jobs only as for paid and unpaid jobs combined, and Transition WORKS also had no statistically significant impact on the average hours worked in paid jobs only for any of the months during the year following random assignment.

We estimated that Transition WORKS had no impact on annual earnings from employment during the year following random assignment (Table V.3). Combining youth reports of their hours and wage rates on each paid job during the follow-up period, we calculated their earnings for the entire year.[72] On average, youth in the treatment group had earnings of $1,842 during the year following random assignment, which was $35 more than our estimate of their earnings absent the intervention; however, the impact is not statistically significant. Furthermore, there is no statistically significant impact on the distribution of yearly earnings.

[72] We adjusted the earnings measures for inflation using the consumer price index for urban wage earners and clerical workers (CPI-W) created by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). We chose this index because SSA uses it to adjust benefits. The earnings measures thus represent real earnings in 2008 dollars. For the yearly measure of earnings, we used the annual average of the CPI-W (as is the convention for SSA and BLS). For the monthly measures of earnings, we used the monthly CPI-W (not seasonally adjusted).

**Table V.3. Earnings from Employment (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Treatment Group | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | |
| **Earnings During First Year After Random Assignment** | | | | |
| Annual Earnings | | | | 0.74 |
| No paid employment | 56.1 | 58.9 | -2.8 | |
| $1 to $1,000 | 13.2 | 10.6 | 2.6 | |
| $1,001 to $5,000 | 17.2 | 16.4 | 0.8 | |
| More than $5,000 | 13.5 | 14.1 | -0.6 | |
| (Average earnings) ($)[a] | 1,842 | 1,806 | 35 | 0.89 |
| **Earnings per Month Worked During First Year After Random Assignment** | | | | |
| Earnings per Month Worked | | | | 0.56 |
| No paid employment | 56.1 | 59.7 | -3.5 | |
| $1 to $500 | 23.1 | 20.7 | 2.4 | |
| More than $500 | 20.8 | 19.6 | 1.2 | |
| (Average earnings per month worked) ($)[a] | 241 | 235 | 6 | 0.83 |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. In the table, we report observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of the treatment group means or percentages in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment by using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analysis sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Appendix Table A.5 for sample sizes for all outcomes.

For all outcomes in this table, item non-response occurred conditionally, depending on the values of other measures in the follow-up survey. The rate of missing data ranges from 8.6 percent to 9.8 percent. We used a "multiple imputations" procedure to assign values when they were missing. See Appendix A, Section E for more information on this procedure.

[a]The average includes youth who were not employed during the year following random assignment.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level, using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

Transition WORKS also had no impact on earnings per month worked. We estimated that the average earnings per month worked by treatment group members ($241) was only $6 larger than what it would have been without Transition WORKS (Table V.3). This difference is not statistically significant, indicating that the intervention had no impact on this outcome measure.[73] Moreover, the intervention had no impact on the distribution of earnings per month worked.

Figure V.4 presents the estimated average monthly earnings and average cumulative earnings for each month during the year following random assignment. We found that Transition WORKS had no impacts on these measures in any month. The timelines in Figure V.4 show that the average

[73] Youth not employed in a paid job during the one-year period following random assignment had zero earnings per month worked. On average, treatment group youth employed in a paid job during the follow-up period worked about seven months and earned $556 per month worked.

generate reliable estimates of whether the intervention resulted in better jobs for treatment group youth.

We found no impacts of Transition WORKS on any of the job characteristics that we examined. As shown in Table V.4, the average tenure in the primary job for youth in the treatment group was three months (all averages include values of zero for youth who did not work). We estimated that the average tenure would have been about the same even if the youth had not had the opportunity to participate in the project; likewise for the distribution of tenure. Our estimates also show that Transition WORKS had no significant impacts on usual hours worked per week, the hourly wage rate, or the availability of health insurance and paid vacation or sick leave benefits on the primary job.

## D. No Impact of Transition WORKS on Employment for Key Subgroups

Although our analysis of the full research sample for the Transition WORKS evaluation found no significant impacts on employment-related outcomes, the intervention nevertheless may have affected these outcomes for certain subgroups of youth. Because age and prior work experience may strongly influence employment outcomes for transition-age youth, we are particularly interested in subgroups defined by the baseline values of these two characteristics. Accordingly, we estimated employment impacts for youth who were younger than 18 years old when they were randomly assigned versus those 18 or older, and for youth who had worked for pay in the year before random assignment versus those who had not. For completeness with subgroup analyses reported in other chapters, we also estimated impacts on the primary employment outcome for youth who were in school at baseline versus those who were not.

We found no significant impact of Transition WORKS on the primary outcome measure in the employment domain—the share of youth who were ever employed in a paid job during the year after random assignment—for any of the six subgroups defined by age, school attendance, and paid work experience at baseline (Table V.5). Furthermore, the impact estimates are not significantly different between younger and older youth, between in-school and out-of-school youth, or between those with and without paid work experience.

## E. Descriptive Analysis of Job Characteristics and Job Search Activities

To provide context for the findings from the analysis of impacts on employment-related outcomes, we present descriptive information for the primary paid jobs held by treatment group youth during the follow-up period. Among youth in the treatment group who were employed in paid jobs at some time during the year following random assignment, the three most common types of jobs, as shown in Table V.6, were janitorial work (18 percent), assembly work (15 percent), and bus person or waitperson at food service outlets (13 percent). Other frequently reported jobs were store cashier (6 percent), office assistant and secretarial tasks (5 percent), and child care (4 percent). These

*(continued)*
Transition WORKS on job characteristics. Hence, to estimate impacts on job characteristics reliably, the analysis must maintain the experimental nature of the evaluation sample by using measures of job characteristics defined to include youth who were never employed as well as those who were ever employed.

**Table V.4. Job Tenure, Hours of Work, Hourly Wage, and Benefits for the Primary Job (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Treatment Group | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | |
| Tenure | | | | 0.93 |
| Not employed | 56.1 | 58.7 | -2.6 | |
| 1 month or less | 4.5 | 4.4 | 0.0 | |
| More than 1 month to 6 months or less | 14.8 | 14.4 | 0.5 | |
| More than 6 months to 11 months or less | 11.6 | 10.1 | 1.5 | |
| More than 11 months | 13.0 | 12.4 | 0.6 | |
| (Average months of tenure)[a] | 3.0 | 2.7 | 0.3 | 0.37 |
| Usual Hours Worked per Week | | | | 0.33 |
| Not employed | 56.1 | 58.9 | -2.7 | |
| 10 hours or less | 14.7 | 9.9 | 4.8 | |
| More than 10 hours to 20 hours or less | 14.2 | 16.0 | -1.8 | |
| More than 20 hours | 15.0 | 15.2 | -0.2 | |
| (Average hours per week)[a] | 8.1 | 8.0 | 0.1 | 0.90 |
| Hourly Wage Rate (in 2008 dollars) | | | | 0.51 |
| Not employed | 56.1 | 59.0 | -2.9 | |
| Less than $7 | 17.0 | 14.6 | 2.4 | |
| $7 to $9 | 18.3 | 20.1 | -1.9 | |
| More than $9 | 8.6 | 6.3 | 2.4 | |
| Health Insurance Benefit | | | | 0.60 |
| Not employed | 56.1 | 59.3 | -3.2 | |
| Employed without health insurance | 32.1 | 30.4 | 1.7 | |
| Employed with health insurance | 11.8 | 10.3 | 1.5 | |
| Paid Vacation/Sick Leave Benefit | | | | 0.42 |
| Not employed | 56.1 | 59.1 | -3.0 | |
| Employed w/o paid vacation/sick leave | 33.5 | 29.1 | 4.4 | |
| Employed with paid vacation/sick leave | 10.4 | 11.8 | -1.4 | |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. In the table, we report observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of the treatment group means or percentages in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment by using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analysis sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Appendix Table A.5 for sample sizes for all outcomes.

For all outcomes in this table, item non-response occurred conditionally, depending on the values of other measures in the follow-up survey. The rate of missing data ranges from 5.6 percent to 9.8 percent. We used a "multiple imputations" procedure to assign values when they were missing. See Appendix A, Section E for more information on this procedure.

[a]The average includes youth who were not employed during the year following random assignment.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

**Table V.5. Ever Employed in Paid Job During the First Year After Random Assignment, by Subgroup (percentages)**

| | Treatment Group | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value | Treatment Group Size | Control Group Size |
| Age | | | | | | |
| Younger than 18 at baseline | 35.5 | 32.4 | 3.1 | 0.66 | 101 | 79 |
| Age 18 or older at baseline | 46.3 | 43.4 | 2.8 | 0.46 | 315 | 251 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.97) | | |
| School Attendance | | | | | | |
| In school at baseline | 41.5 | 37.6 | 3.9 | 0.38 | 228 | 162 |
| Not in school at baseline | 46.1 | 44.3 | 1.8 | 0.72 | 188 | 168 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.74) | | |
| Paid Work Experience | | | | | | |
| Worked for pay in prior year | 69.7 | 68.9 | 0.8 | 0.89 | 146 | 121 |
| No work for pay in prior year | 30.5 | 26.3 | 4.2 | 0.31 | 270 | 208 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.61) | | |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. In the table, we report observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of the treatment group means or percentages in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment by using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes, as indicated in the table.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

types of jobs are similar to those of youth in the general population (Wagner 2003; Herz and Kosanovich 2000). About two-thirds of the ever-employed treatment group youth learned about their primary jobs from the following four sources (results not shown in the table): a school job placement office (21 percent), friends or relatives (21 percent), directly from the employer (13 percent), and vocational rehabilitation and other employment-service agencies (11 percent). Only 6.6 percent of these youth reported that they had learned about their primary jobs through Transition WORKS.[76]

The average tenure on the primary job by the ever-employed treatment group members was about seven months. The 27 percent of youth who had left their primary jobs by the time of the follow-up survey cited many reasons for having done so, but the most common was reaching the end of a temporary job. Other reasons included being fired due to performance problems, not liking the job, returning to school, the difficulty of the job, low pay, health-related issues, and prospects for a better job elsewhere. Notwithstanding this job turnover, an overwhelming majority of the ever-employed youth in the treatment group reported that they had been happy with their primary jobs; only about nine percent reported that they had been unhappy.

[76] Among the subset of ever-employed treatment group youth who actually participated in Transition WORKS (159 youth), 7.7 percent reported that they had learned about their primary jobs through the project. Our focus group discussions with participants revealed that awareness of the Transition WORKS "brand" was low among some participants. Because multiple geographically dispersed organizations provided Transition WORKS services, some participants may not have understood that the services they had received had been provided by Transition WORKS.

**Table V.6. Types of Paid Jobs Most Frequently Reported by Treatment Group Members with Paid Employment**

| Treatment Group Youth | Percent |
|---|---|
| Janitorial work | 17.7 |
| Assembly work | 14.8 |
| Bus person/waitperson at food outlets | 12.8 |
| Store cashier | 5.5 |
| Office assistant and secretarial tasks | 4.8 |
| Child care | 4.4 |
| **Sample Size** | **185** |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: All statistics were calculated using sample weights to account for interview non-response.

Among the treatment group members who did not work for pay during the year following random assignment, the three most common reasons given were health problems, inability to find the jobs they wanted, and lack of reliable transportation to and from work. Other reasons included having had discouraging experiences when previously attempting to work, lack of confidence by others in their ability to work, apprehension about losing disability benefits, and waiting to finish school or training programs. These reasons for not working are very similar to those mentioned by a national cross-section of all SSA disability program beneficiaries in the 2006 National Beneficiary Survey (Livermore et al. 2009c). Among youth in treatment group, 20 percent had not been involved in either paid employment or education/training in the year following random assignment and, of those, about 60 percent reported that they had looked for work during the four weeks preceding the interview. Those who had looked for work indicated that their search typically involved checking job advertisements in a newspaper or on the Internet, asking friends or relatives about jobs, contacting employers directly, and checking the job listings at the local One-Stop Workforce Center.

# VI. IMPACTS ON EDUCATION

Education is an investment that can improve employment opportunities and increase the potential for self-sufficiency. It is a key short-term outcome in the YTD evaluation conceptual framework (Figure I.1) and some YTD projects, including Transition WORKS, provided education services. For Transition WORKS, these services may have been particularly valuable because a substantial share of the population it aimed to serve was enrolled in school; about half of treatment and control group youth were enrolled in school at baseline (see Table II.2).

Transition WORKS sought to provide education services to youth who identified education goals or expressed a need for such services. The transition coordinators provided education counseling and other school retention support, help with obtaining a GED, and assistance with locating funding for and enrolling in postsecondary or vocational programs. However, our process analysis revealed that Transition WORKS provided some type of education service to only 17 percent of youth who participation in project services (Table III.4).

In light of the age of youth in Transition WORKS and the importance of completing high school, the primary outcome in this domain is either that the youth (1) was enrolled in an educational institution at any time during the year following random assignment, or (2) had completed high school by the time of the 12-month follow-up survey (including youth who had completed high school at baseline). High school completion includes attainment of a high school diploma, GED, or certificate. We found that treatment group members were no more likely to have enrolled in school or completed high school than they would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS. Examining these two outcomes separately, we found that Transition WORKS did not increase enrollment but had a negative impact on completion of high school, as defined above. Analysis of the detailed results suggests that Transition WORKS may have encouraged youth who were enrolled in school to invest in attaining a high school diploma or a GED rather than pursuing the quicker route of obtaining a high school certificate. The high school certificate is easier to obtain than the diploma but provides fewer options for postsecondary enrollment.

## A. Transition WORKS Had No Impact on the Primary Outcome for Education

Among treatment group youth, 82 percent either were enrolled in school during the year after random assignment or had completed high school by the time of the 12-month follow-up survey (Table VI.1).[77] We estimated that the share either enrolled in school or with high school complete would have been about the same in the absence of Transition WORKS.

[77] For youth under the age of 18, education information was collected from the parent or guardian. Respondents were asked to report any education or training activity and, for youth with such an activity, the type of school or training program. We coded youth as enrolled in an education program if the type of program was school, college, GED, adult education, or home schooling. Among treatment group youth in the analytic sample, about 55 percent were reported to be enrolled in school at the time of the baseline survey (conducted prior to random assignment). In this same sample, about 51 percent of treatment group youth were reported to be enrolled in the year following random assignment. Enrollment statistics from the baseline and follow-up surveys are not directly comparable. The baseline survey asked about enrollment at the time of the survey or, if the interview was conducted during a summer month, asked if the youth would be returning to school in the fall (if affirmative, the youth was considered to be enrolled). The follow-up survey asked about enrollment during the year since random assignment; if the interview was conducted during a summer month, it did not probe about fall enrollment.

**Table VI.1. Educational Progress (percentages)**

| | Treatment Group | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | | P-Value |
| **Primary Outcome** | | | | | |
| Ever enrolled in school in the year following random assignment or completed high school by the time of the 12-month follow-up survey | 82.0 | 85.0 | -3.0 | | 0.22 |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | | |
| Ever enrolled in school in the year following random assignment | 51.3 | 49.0 | 2.3 | | 0.43 |
| Attained high school diploma/GED/certificate or higher | 49.0 | 54.5 | -5.5 | ** | 0.05 |
| **Type of School Attended** | | | | | 0.56 |
| Did not attend school | 49.0 | 51.0 | -2.0 | | |
| Elementary/middle/regular high school | 22.6 | 19.3 | 3.4 | | |
| Special school for the disabled or home school | 9.3 | 8.9 | 0.4 | | |
| Postsecondary institution | 16.7 | 17.3 | -0.6 | | |
| GED/Adult continuing education | 2.4 | 3.5 | -1.1 | | |
| **Intensity of Educational Activity** | | | | | |
| Number of Months in School | | | | | 0.56 |
| None | 49.3 | 51.2 | -1.9 | | |
| Less than nine months | 13.4 | 10.9 | 2.6 | | |
| Nine to twelve months | 37.3 | 38.0 | -0.7 | | |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics using sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analytic sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Appendix Table A.5 for the sample sizes for all outcomes.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

Examining these two outcomes separately, we found no impact of Transition WORKS on school enrollment but a statistically significant negative impact on high school completion. We estimated that 51 percent of treatment group youth were enrolled in school in the year following random assignment and that the share would have been about the same in the absence of Transition WORKS. On the other hand, we estimated that 49 percent of treatment group youth had completed high school by the time of the follow-up survey and that Transition WORKS reduced high school completion by almost six percentage points (significant at the five percent level). The negative impact of Transitions WORKS on the share of youth who had attained a high school diploma, GED, or a certificate of high school completion at the time of the follow-up survey is surprising

given that we found no impact on enrollment.[78] One possible explanation is that Transition WORKS may have provided information, advice, or services that encouraged youth to invest in attaining a high school diploma or GED rather than the high school certificate. The individualized education program (IEP) diploma (also known as a "certificate") merely affirms attendance in four years of high school and does not provide the same options for postsecondary education as does a high school diploma or GED.[79]

About half of the treatment group members were not enrolled in school; 23 percent attended a regular elementary, middle, or high school; nine percent were either home schooled or attended a special school for the disabled; about 17 percent attended a postsecondary institution; and about two percent attended a GED or adult continuing education program.[80] We estimated that Transition WORKS had no impact on the distribution of school type. We also found that Transition WORKS had no impact on the distribution of the number of months enrolled.[81]

## B. Transition WORKS Had No Impact on the Primary Outcome for Education for Any Subgroup

The impact of Transition WORKS on enrollment or completion of high school might be expected to vary across subgroups of youth. For example, the intervention might be expected to have had a greater impact on enrollment for youth who were younger because they may not have formed educational attainment goals previously. Similarly, any impact on high school completion within a year of random assignment may have been less likely for youth who were not enrolled in school at baseline. In addition, decisions and goals related to high school completion may be different for youth who worked in the year prior to baseline. We investigated whether the intervention had significant impacts on enrollment or completion for groups of youth defined by baseline characteristics: under age 18, attended school at baseline, and worked for pay in prior year.

We found no statistically significant impacts on the primary outcome for any of the subgroups we considered (Table VI.2). Furthermore, we found no statistically significant differences in the estimated impacts within the pairs of subgroups. We also separately examined the two outcomes that make up the primary outcomes: enrollment in the year following random assignment and completion of high school by one year after random assignment. We found no statistically significant impacts on school enrollment for any subgroup we considered. For most subgroups, we found no statistically significant impacts on high school completion. However, for youth who were

[78] The baseline and follow-up surveys used the same question when asking about high school completion. The impact estimate is based on a regression that adjusts for baseline differences in high school completion (at baseline, 40 percent of the treatment group and 45 percent of the control group had completed high school). The unadjusted enrollment was 49 percent for the treatment group and 58 percent for the control group (for an unadjusted impact of negative nine percentage points with a p-value of 0.01).

[79] To explore this further, we considered estimating a logistic model on attainment with four outcomes: high school diploma, GED, certificate, or none of these. However, the results would be difficult to interpret if treatment youth were more likely to distinguish between certificates and diplomas (perhaps based on information provided to youth by Transition WORKS).

[80] For this measure, we created mutually exclusive categories by using only the most recently attended institution.

[81] We calculated months of enrollment in school based on information in the follow-up survey on the start and end dates for attendance in each school attended during the year following random assignment. For the start and end dates, the survey gave no special instructions regarding how to report extended breaks in attendance, such as any summer break. For this reason, we do not separately measure the months of enrollment beyond nine months or calculate the average months of enrollment.

**Table VI.2. School Enrollment or Completion of High School, by Subgroup (percentages)**

| | Treatment Group | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value | Treatment Group Size | Control Group Size |
| Age | | | | | | |
| Under age 18 at baseline | 89.9 | 91.2 | -1.2 | 0.75 | 97 | 76 |
| Age 18 or over at baseline | 79.5 | 83.0 | -3.5 | 0.23 | 309 | 250 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.77) | | |
| School Attendance | | | | | | |
| In school at baseline | 90.5 | 90.4 | 0.1 | 0.96 | 221 | 159 |
| Not in school at baseline | 71.9 | 78.1 | -6.2 | 0.11 | 185 | 167 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.33) | | |
| Paid Work Experience | | | | | | |
| Worked for pay in prior year | 86.0 | 91.7 | -5.7 | 0.14 | 142 | 120 |
| No work for pay in prior year | 80.0 | 81.4 | -1.4 | 0.64 | 264 | 205 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.28) | | |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics using sample weights to account for interview non-response. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes, as indicated in the table.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test.

not enrolled in school at baseline, we estimated a negative impact on high school completion of 6.9 percentage points (significant at the 10 percent level; result not shown in table). Similarly, for youth who worked for pay in the prior year, we estimated a negative impact on high school completion of 8.8 percentage points (significant at the 10 percent level; result not shown in table).[82]

[82] The difference in the estimated impacts of Transition WORKS on high school completion across subgroup pairs is not statistically significant for any subgroup.

# VII. IMPACTS ON YOUTH INCOME, SSA BENEFITS, AND RELATED OUTCOMES

Greater income for youth with disabilities is a critical indicator of success for the YTD initiative, as described in the conceptual framework (Figure I.1). This initiative is expected to increase income through greater earnings and, in the short run, greater benefits as a result of the special SSA waivers for YTD participants. Although Transition WORKS had no impact on earnings in the short term (as discussed in Chapter V), in principle, the waivers would have allowed the project participants to retain more of their benefits at most levels of earnings. Through greater benefits, Transition WORKS thus could have increased participants' income during the year following random assignment.

The estimates presented in this chapter show that, for youth in the treatment group, the project did not have any impact on SSA benefits or total income during the year following random assignment. However, we found that the project did have positive impacts on the use of SSA work incentives. In addition, we estimated that the project had a positive impact on the annual benefit amount received by the subgroup of youth who were not in school at baseline, and thereby had a positive impact on total income for youth in this subgroup.

## A. Transition WORKS Had No Impact on Youth Income

Transition WORKS had no impact on the primary outcome measure in the domain of youth income—total income from earnings and SSA disability benefits during the year following random assignment. We constructed this measure by combining earnings information from the 12-month follow-up survey with information on benefit amounts from SSA administrative records.[83] The first row of Table VII.1 shows that, on average, youth in the treatment group had total income of $9,013 in the year following random assignment. On average, about 86 percent of this income came from SSA disability benefits. We estimated that Transition WORKS had no impact on youth's total annual income. In other words, we estimated that the average total annual income of treatment group youth would have been similar even in the absence of the project.

To enhance our understanding of the estimated impact on total annual income, we conducted supplementary analyses of the distribution of total annual income and the share of income from earnings. The results shown in Table VII.1 provide no evidence that Transition WORKS had an impact on the distribution of total income, which is consistent with our finding of no impact on average total income. We found that the share of total income from earnings among treatment group members was 14 percent and estimated that this share would have been nearly the same in the absence of the project.

In addition, Transition WORKS had no impact on the total income of youth by month. In Figure VII.1, we present average values of earnings plus SSA benefits for each month in the year following random assignment. The timelines in this figure show the observed average income amounts for youth in the treatment group, as well as estimates of what the average income amounts of treatment group members would have been if they had not had the opportunity to participate in Transition WORKS. The vertical difference between the plotted timelines in any month represents

[83] We used monthly data on SSA benefits obtained from an enhanced version of the TRF 2008. For a detailed description of the TRF data, see Hildebrand et al. (2010).

**Table VII.1. Youth Total Income**

| | Treatment Group | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value |
| **Primary Outcome** | | | | |
| Total annual income (earnings and SSA benefits) ($) | 9,013 | 8,830 | 183 | 0.55 |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | |
| Distribution of Total Annual Income (%) | | | | 0.97 |
| Less than $5,000 | 8.7 | 9.3 | -0.7 | |
| $5,000 to less than $7,000 | 19.0 | 19.2 | -0.1 | |
| $7,000 to less than $10,000 | 44.7 | 45.1 | -0.4 | |
| $10,000 or more | 27.6 | 26.4 | 1.2 | |
| Percentage of total annual income from earnings | 14.4 | 14.6 | -0.3 | 0.88 |

Sources: YTD 12-month follow-up survey and SSA administrative records.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics using sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analysis sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Appendix Table A.5 for the sample sizes for all outcomes.

For all outcomes in this table, item non-response occurred conditionally in measuring earnings, depending on the values of other measures in the follow-up survey. The rate of missing data in the annual earnings measure was 9.8 percent. We used a "multiple imputations" procedure to assign earnings when they were missing. See Appendix A, Section E, for more information on this procedure.

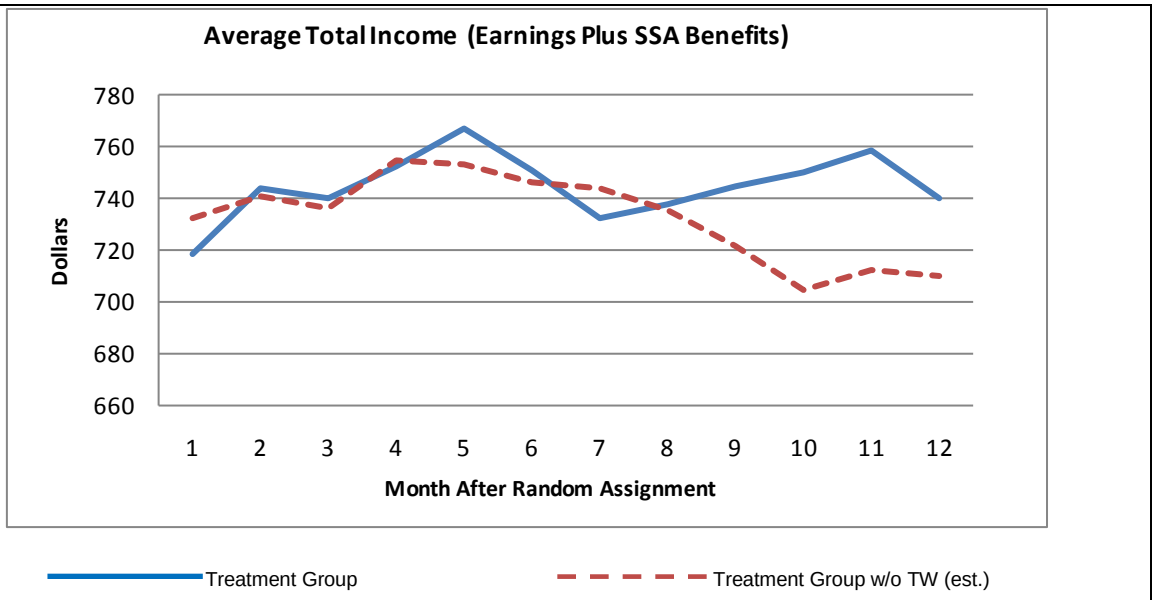
*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

the estimated impact of the intervention in that month. The monthly impact estimates are significantly different from zero only in month 10 and month 11.

Given the SSA waivers for YTD, we had no expectation that Transition WORKS would reduce either the rate of receipt or the average amount of disability benefits in the near term, even if it had increased earnings, which was not the case (as reported in Chapter V). In fact, we thought the waivers would increase benefits in the short run. In Table VII.2, we show that the project had no impact on the share of youth who received any SSA benefit during the year following random assignment.[84] We also show that treatment group youth received SSA disability program benefits for an average of 11 months of the year following random assignment. Our estimates show that the

[84] A small proportion of youth in the research sample were not in "current pay" status (i.e., they were not active disability beneficiaries) when their data were extracted from SSA files prior to the baseline interview and random assignment. The most common reasons why sample members were in not in current pay status were cessation of disability and family income in excess of the allowable amount. These cases account for the approximately three percent of treatment group members who received no SSA benefits during the year following random assignment (Table VII.2).

**Figure VII.1. Youth Income by Month Following Random Assignment**




Sources: YTD 12-month follow-up survey and SSA administrative records.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. The figure presents observed means for the treatment group and estimates of what the treatment group means would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS. We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics using sample weights to account for interview non-response.

For all outcomes in this figure, item non-response occurred conditionally in measuring earnings, depending on the values of other measures in the follow-up survey. The rate of missing data in the monthly earnings measure ranges from 7.4 percent to 8.6 percent. We used a "multiple imputations" procedure to assign earnings when they were missing. See Appendix A, Section E, for more information on this procedure.

The impact estimates for months 10 and 11 are significantly different from zero at the .10 level.

duration of benefit receipt would not have been different in the absence of the project.[85] Transition WORKS thus had no impact on the receipt of SSA benefits during the year following random assignment. Furthermore, we estimated that, on average, treatment group members received $7,142 in benefits during the follow-up year and that the intervention had no impact on the annual benefit amount. To flesh out this finding, we analyzed the distribution of the annual benefit amount.[86] We found no statistically significant impact of Transition WORKS on that distribution, indicating no strong impacts of the project on certain segments of the benefit distribution that potentially would offset impacts on other segments (see Table VII.2).

We found no impact of Transition WORKS on the monthly pattern of SSA disability benefit amounts. Figure VII.2 depicts the average benefit amount received by youth in each month during the year following random assignment. Impacts are shown in the figure by the difference between

[85] In Table VII.2, we report the estimated impacts on receipt and amount of SSA benefits for the full research sample. We also estimated impacts for the analytic sample (youth in the research sample who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey), and the estimates are very similar to those for the full research sample. Table A.9 provides benefit impact estimates for both samples.

[86] We identified the categories of annual benefit amount by considering the natural break points in the distribution of the annual benefit amount for the combined sample from the three original random assignment YTD projects (Colorado Youth WINS, Transition WORKS, and the CUNY YTDP).

**Table VII.2. Receipt and Amount of SSA Benefits (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Treatment Group | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | |
| Receipt of SSA Benefits (SSI, DI, or CDB) | | | | |
| Any benefit receipt during the year following random assignment | 97.4 | 97.8 | -0.5 | 0.67 |
| Number of months of benefit receipt during the year following random assignment | 11.3 | 11.2 | 0.1 | 0.30 |
| Annual Benefit Amount | | | | |
| Distribution of annual benefit amount | | | | 0.93 |
| None | 2.6 | 2.2 | 0.5 | |
| $1 to $6,500 | 27.8 | 29.0 | -1.2 | |
| More than $6,500 to $8,000 | 45.3 | 45.7 | -0.4 | |
| More than $8,000 | 24.3 | 23.1 | 1.2 | |
| Average annual benefit amount ($)[a] | 7,142 | 6,993 | 149 | 0.40 |

Source: SSA administrative records.

Notes: The sample includes all youth in the research sample less six youth identified as deceased at the time of the 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. The sample includes 457 treatment group youth and 380 control group youth.

[a]The average includes youth who did not receive benefits during the year following random assignment.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

the average benefit received by treatment group members and our estimate of what would have been the average benefit in the absence of the project. We found that none of the estimated impacts is statistically significant.[87] Thus, on average, the treatment group members would have received similar monthly amounts of SSA disability program benefits even if they had not been given the opportunity to participate in Transition WORKS.

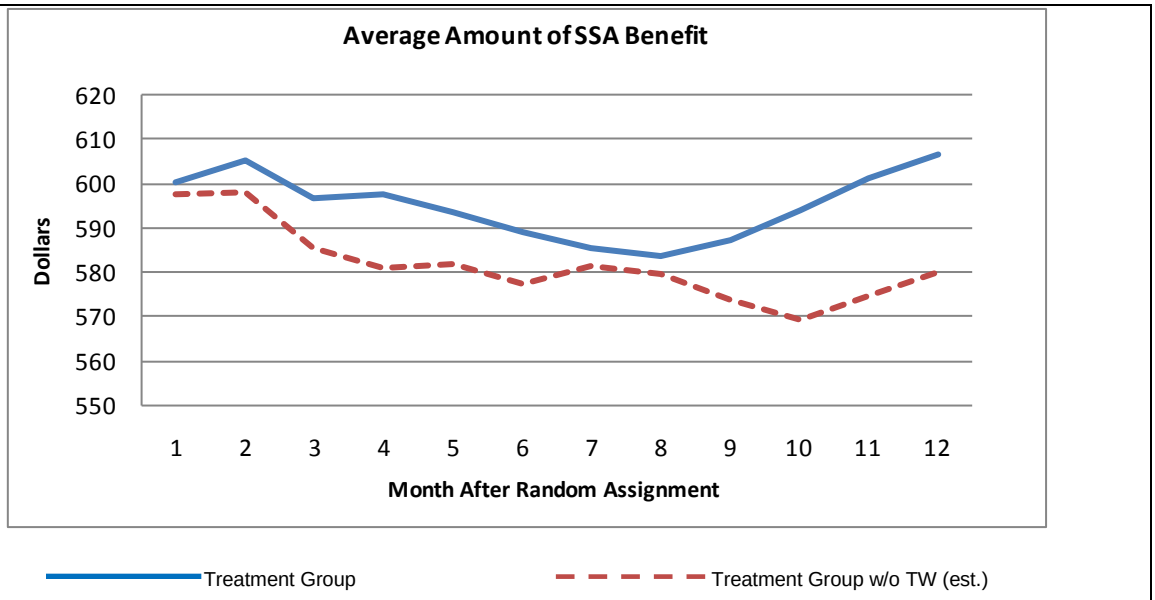
## B. Transition WORKS Had Positive Impacts on the Use of SSA Work Incentives

Treatment group youth who enrolled in Transition WORKS had the opportunity to use the five SSA waivers for YTD (see Appendix C for a description of these waivers).[88] Since each of the

[87] The Social Security benefit amount is the only outcome for which we have monthly values for the period before random assignment. The differences in the average monthly benefit amount between the treatment and control groups are small in the year prior to random assignment. Only in the seventh month prior to random assignment is the difference statistically significant (see Appendix A, Section F).

[88] Some of the SSA work incentives are applied automatically to disability program beneficiaries who meet the criteria for receiving the incentives: the EIE applies automatically to all SSI beneficiaries, and the Section-301 waiver applies automatically to youth participating in Transition WORKS. For these work incentives, we apply the term "use" of SSA work incentives loosely to indicate that youth were benefitting from them.

**Figure VII.2. SSA Benefit Amount by Month Following Random Assignment**




Source: SSA administrative records.

Notes: The sample includes all youth in the research sample less six youth identified as deceased at the time of the 12-month follow-up survey. The figure presents observed means for the treatment group and estimates of what the treatment group means would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS. We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records.

None of the impact estimates shown in the figure are significantly different from zero at the .10 level.

waivers enhanced an SSA work incentive available to the control group, we were able to analyze the impact of Transition WORKS on use of the specific incentives. For a number of reasons, the treatment group youth may have been more likely to use these work incentives as participants in Transition WORKS than in its absence. First, the project provided intensive benefits counseling; second, it led to increased awareness of the SSA work incentives (as discussed in Chapter IV); and third, the waivers were more generous than the work incentives alone. Using data from SSA administrative records, we constructed five supplementary outcome measures that captured the use of each incentive (namely, the EIE, SEIE, Section-301 waiver, PASS, and IDA, as described in Appendix C). We also constructed a composite outcome measure of the use of any of these work incentives.

We found that Transition WORKS increased the use of the collective SSA work incentives under consideration during the year following random assignment. Table VII.3 shows that 32 percent of treatment group youth used at least one of the five work incentives.[89] We estimated that these youth would have had about a 25 percent overall rate of work incentive use if they had not had the opportunity to participate in the project. The difference of seven percentage points is statistically significant at the five percent level.[90]

[89] We provide statistics on the use of YTD waivers by Transition WORKS participants in Table III.5.

[90] The estimated impact on the overall use of SSA work incentives for youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey is similar to that for the full research sample in Transition WORKS. In Table A.9, we provide work incentive impact estimates for both samples.

**Table VII.3. Use of SSA Work Incentives (percentages)**

| | Treatment Group | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | | P-Value |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | | |
| Use of SSA Work Incentives | | | | | |
| Used at least one SSA work incentive | 31.7 | 24.9 | 6.9 | ** | 0.02 |
| Used the SEIE | 10.5 | 8.0 | 2.5 | | 0.19 |
| Used the EIE | 24.3 | 18.8 | 5.5 | ** | 0.05 |
| Used the Section-301 waiver | 5.3 | 0.4 | 4.9 | *** | 0.00 |
| Established a PASS[a] | 0.4 | 0.0 | 0.4 | | 0.20 |
| Opened an IDA | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | | 1.00 |
| Reported any earnings to SSA | 37.4 | 35.0 | 2.4 | | 0.43 |

Source: SSA administrative records.

Notes: The sample includes all youth in the research sample less six youth identified as deceased at the time of the 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. The sample includes 457 treatment group youth and 380 control group youth.

[a]Since no control group member used this work incentive, we could not do regression-adjusted impact analysis. We present the impact estimate from a simple comparison of means.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

The positive impact of Transition WORKS on the use of any work incentive was driven by the project's statistically significant positive impacts on the use of the EIE and the Section-301 work incentive (Table VII.3). We estimated that the project increased the use of the EIE by fivepercentage points, from 19 percent to 24 percent.[91] In addition, we estimated that the project increased the use of the Section-301 incentive by five percentage points, from less than one percent to five percent. The use of the Section-301 incentive is unrelated to employment status and earnings because the incentive allows beneficiaries to continue receiving SSA program benefits as long as they are participating in a qualified program, such as YTD, if they are determined to be ineligible for medical reasons.[92]

Because Transition WORKS had no impact on employment and earnings (as discussed in Chapter V), it is important to account for the project's positive impact on use of the EIE, given that this incentive is triggered by earnings reported to SSA. Although the estimated impacts on employment and earnings are not statistically significant, we found positive differences between the observed mean values of these outcomes for treatment group members compared to what they

[91] Among treatment group youth who reported any earnings to SSA, 28 percent used the SEIE and 61 percent used the EIE. Among control group youth who reported any earnings to SSA, 21 percent used the SEIE and 54 percent used the EIE. Differences between treatment group youth and control group youth in these measures do not reflect impact estimates because the calculations are limited to those who reported earnings to SSA.

[92] For YTD, the Section-301 waiver applies for any treatment group youth who enrolled in project services, regardless of whether the youth continues to participate in these services.

would have been in the absence of the project.[93] The EIE is applied after the first $65 of a beneficiary's earned income has been excluded ($85 if an additional $20 unearned income exclusion is applicable). Therefore, small improvements in earnings for youth in the treatment group may have put some of them beyond the threshold and enabled them to use the EIE, which would not have happened in the absence of Transition WORKS. In this programmatic context, our finding of a positive and statistically significant impact of the intervention on use of the EIE is neither surprising nor inconsistent with our findings regarding the impacts on employment and earnings.

Transition WORKS had no significant impact on the use of the SEIE or on take-up rates for the PASS and IDAs. The latter two work incentives are rarely used in the broader beneficiary population.

## C. Transition WORKS Increased Coverage by Private Health Insurance

To understand whether Transition WORKS had any impact on broader indicators of the economic status of the youth in the study and their households, we analyzed measures of health insurance coverage and receipt of public assistance at the time of the 12-month follow-up survey. Looking first at self-reported health insurance coverage, we found that 95 percent of the treatment group youth were covered by public health insurance (Table VII.4).[94] We estimated that, in the absence of the project, the public health insurance coverage rate would have been 97 percent. The two percentage point difference is not statistically significant, indicating that the project had no impact on public health insurance coverage for youth.

We also considered self-reported private health insurance coverage, which included insurance provided by employers or unions (either those of the youth or the parents) and policies purchased by the youth or their parents. About 27 percent of the treatment group members were covered by private health insurance, and we estimated that the coverage rate would have been only 22 percent in the absence of Transition WORKS. The five percentage point difference is statistically significant, suggesting that the project increased private health insurance coverage for youth. However, in Chapter V, we reported that Transition WORKS did not have any impact on the likelihood of youth being employed on jobs that offered health insurance as a fringe benefit. In addition, we estimated that the project had no impact on the likelihood of youth being covered by employer-provided health insurance (not shown in table). Thus, the estimated positive impact on private health insurance coverage had to have been driven by an increase in coverage through parental policies. However, because no component of YTD or Transition WORKS was designed to influence the employment or health insurance choices of the parents of participating youth, we conclude that the estimated positive impact on private health insurance coverage was probably spurious. Following the same reasoning, we concluded that the positive estimated impact on coverage by *both* public and private health insurance also was likely to have been spurious.

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[93] We also found that treatment group youth were two percentage points more likely to have had any SSA-reported earnings than would have been the case in the absence of Transition WORKS (Table VII.3); however, this difference is not statistically significant.

[94] Most treatment and control group youth were covered by public health insurance at the time of the follow-up survey because most of them were SSI recipients at baseline and SSI recipients in New York are categorically eligible for Medicaid. Some of the sample members were receiving DI or CDB and were therefore eligible for Medicare. As explained in a footnote in Section A of this chapter, a small proportion of sample members were not receiving any disability benefits at baseline and, assuming no change in their status, they may not have been eligible for public health insurance at the time of the follow-up survey.

Almost all youth in the treatment group, about 97 percent, were covered by some form of health insurance, either public or private. We estimated that this coverage rate was unaffected by the intervention.

Transition WORKS had no impact on the receipt of public assistance, despite the fact that its benefits counselors tried to connect participants and their families to any additional public assistance for which they were possibly eligible. Table VII.4 shows that 45 percent of treatment group members lived in households that received SNAP benefits during the year following random assignment and seven percent lived in households that received TANF. The efforts of the project benefits counselors notwithstanding, we found no statistically significant evidence that the intervention influenced these measures of public assistance receipt.

## D. Transition WORKS had a Positive Impact on Income for Out-of-School Youth

Transition WORKS had a significant positive impact on total income for the subgroup of the target population that consisted of youth who were out of school at baseline, but had no significant impact on income for any of the other subgroups considered (Table VII.5). We estimated impacts on youth's total income for the same subgroups as in our analyses of the other outcome domains, defined by the following baseline characteristics of evaluation enrollees: (1) age 18 or older versus under 18, (2) in school versus out of school, and (3) had worked for pay versus had not worked for pay in the year before the baseline survey.

**Table VII.4. Health Insurance Coverage and Receipt of Other Public Assistance (percentages)**

| | Treatment Group | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | | P-Value |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | | |
| Youth Health Insurance Coverage | | | | | |
| Public health insurance | 94.7 | 96.7 | -2.1 | | 0.12 |
| Private health insurance | 26.8 | 22.0 | 4.8 | * | 0.07 |
| Both public and private health insurance | 24.8 | 20.6 | 4.2 | * | 0.10 |
| Either public or private health insurance | 96.8 | 98.2 | -1.4 | | 0.24 |
| Household Receipt of Public Assistance | | | | | |
| SNAP (food stamps) | 45.4 | 41.5 | 3.9 | | 0.26 |
| TANF | 6.5 | 7.6 | -1.0 | | 0.58 |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics using sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analysis sample includes 436 treatment group youth and 353 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Appendix Table A.5 for the sample sizes for all outcomes.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test test.

**Table VII.5. Youth Total Income—Earnings and SSA Benefits, by Subgroup ($)**

| | Treatment Group | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value | Treatment Group Size | Control Group Size |
| Age | | | | | | |
| Under age 18 at baseline | 7,308 | 7,401 | -93 | 0.85 | 101 | 79 |
| Age 18 or over at baseline | 9,576 | 9,298 | 269 | 0.46 | 315 | 251 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.55) | | |
| School Attendance | | | | | | |
| In school at baseline | 7,911 | 8,306 | -395 | 0.34 | 228 | 162 |
| Not in school at baseline | 10,344 | 9,571 | 773 * | 0.08 | 188 | 168 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | * | (0.05) | | |
| Paid Work Experience | | | | | | |
| Worked for pay in prior year | 10,589 | 10,193 | 396 | 0.48 | 146 | 121 |
| No work for pay in prior year | 8,218 | 8,153 | 66 | 0.85 | 270 | 208 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.61) | | |

Sources: YTD 12-month follow-up survey and SSA administrative records.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics using sample weights to account for interview non-response.

For all outcomes in this table, item non-response occurred conditionally in measuring earnings, depending on the values of other measures in the follow-up survey. The rate of missing data in various subgroups in the table ranges from 9.8 percent to 9.9 percent. We used a "multiple imputations" procedure to assign earnings when they were missing. See Appendix A, Section E, for more information on this procedure.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

On average, treatment group youth who were out of school at baseline had a total income (earnings plus disability benefits) of $10,344 in the year following random assignment. We estimated that this was $773 more than what their income would have been if they not been given the opportunity to participate in Transition WORKS, and the difference is statistically significant. Thus, our estimates suggest that Transition WORKS had a positive impact on total income for out-of-school youth. Conversely, we found that the project had no significant impact on total income for youth who were enrolled in school at baseline. Treatment group youth who were in school at baseline had an average total annual income of $7,911 and would have had a similar annual income in the absence of the project. Table VII.5 also shows that the difference in the estimated impact between in-school and out-of-school youth is statistically significant. Thus, Transition WORKS had differential impacts on youth income for the pair of subgroups defined by school attendance at baseline.

To better understand our finding of a statistically significant positive impact on total income for youth who were not in school at baseline, we conducted supplementary analyses of other income-related measures. We found that Transition WORKS had no significant impact on annual earnings for youth in the out-of-school subgroup (results not shown). Since total income was defined to consist of earnings plus benefits, the absence of an impact on earnings suggests that the impact on total income was due to an increase in benefits. Our estimates confirmed that notion, as we found that the project had a modest but statistically significant positive impact on the number of months of benefit receipt by out-of-school youth (Table VII.6). We also found that, on average, treatment

group youth who were not in school at baseline received $495 more in annual benefits than they would have received in the absence of the project.[95] We can explain the significant increase in benefit receipt by the positive impact on the use of SSA work incentives by out-of-school youth, namely the SEIE and the Section-301 waiver (results not shown).[96] Thus, despite Transition WORKS having had no impact on the earnings of out-of-school youth, their increased use of SSA work incentives resulted in greater benefits for these youth, which in turn, triggered the positive impact on their annual income.

**Table VII.6. Impacts on Annual Benefits and Work Incentive Use for In-School and Out-of-School Youth Subgroups (percentages unless otherwise noted)**

| | Treatment Group | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | | P-Value | Treatment Group Size | Control Group Size |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | | | | |
| Number of months of benefit receipt | | | | | | | |
| In school at baseline | 11.1 | 11.4 | -0.3 | | 0.19 | 228 | 162 |
| Not in school at baseline | 11.6 | 11.2 | 0.4 | * | 0.08 | 188 | 168 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | * | (0.03) | | |
| Average annual benefit amount ($)[a] | | | | | | | |
| In school at baseline | 6,603 | 6,796 | -193 | | 0.47 | 228 | 162 |
| Not in school at baseline | 7,858 | 7,363 | 495 | * | 0.07 | 188 | 168 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | * | (0.08) | | |

Source: SSA administrative records.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics using sample weights to account for interview non-response.

[a]The average includes youth who did not receive benefits during the year following random assignment.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level, using a two-tailed t-test.

[95] Table VII.6 also shows that the differences in estimated impacts on the number of months of benefit receipt and the annual benefit amount are statistically significant for the pair of subgroups defined by school attendance at baseline.

[96] Youth participating in Transition WORKS could benefit from the Section-301 and SEIE waivers without any changes in their employment and earnings. The Section-301 waiver allowed them to continue receiving benefits as a consequence of their participation in Transition WORKS, even if they had been determined to be medically ineligible. The SEIE waiver eliminated the age restriction on use of the student work incentive. Thus, our findings of positive impacts on use of the SEIE and Section-301 by out-of-school youth are not inconsistent with the absence of impacts on employment and earnings.

# VIII. IMPACTS ON ATTITUDES AND EXPECTATIONS

Transition WORKS, like all of the YTD projects, sought to provide youth who had severe disabilities with services and experiences that would instill in them a belief in their ability to succeed in life. The conceptual framework for the YTD evaluation (Figure I.1) thus posits near-term improvements in youths' expectations for their futures and sense of self-efficacy. Transition WORKS in particular was guided by a strong philosophy of youth empowerment, based on a person-centered, self-determination model. After an initial assessment, most youth were directed to one or two self-determination workshops. Youth who were deemed unable to benefit from group training due to cognitive limitations, or were unable to attend one of the scheduled self-determination workshops, were provided with individualized instruction (Chapter III).

The overarching goal of the YTD initiative is to promote economic self-sufficiency and independence. Accordingly, we specified the primary outcome in the domain of "attitudes and expectations" as whether a youth's goals included working and earning enough money to stop receiving disability benefits. The supplementary outcomes in this domain include additional measures of youth expectations and self-determination. If Transition WORKS was successful in empowering youth and fostering positive expectations, we should anticipate that treatment group members would demonstrate greater independence in daily activities, decision making, and social interactions. The supplementary outcomes thus also include measures of independence and social interactions.

Attitudes and expectations might be expected to be more malleable and subject to influence by Transition WORKS than many of the other outcome measures considered in this report. In particular, employment and income might be slow to respond to the intervention, given that about one-fourth of the youth in the research sample were under age 18 at baseline and roughly half were attending school. On the other hand, finding positive impacts on attitudes and expectations could foreshadow positive impacts on these and perhaps other outcomes in the longer run.

Attitudes and expectations are difficult to measure, however. Responses to survey questions on these topics are clearly subjective and research on the stability of self-reports indicates that the same person answering on different days may respond differently.[97] In addition, youth may feel pressure to respond in a way they feel is expected or socially accepted. Due to the difficulty in accurately measuring attitudes and expectations, some studies find no impacts on these measures, even when an objective outcome of interest (such as employment) shows an impact. The YTD follow-up survey was designed to include the best available measures used in other surveys. Nevertheless, even with widely used measures, the concepts of self-efficacy and future expectations are difficult to measure.

In addition, with respect to the primary outcome, it is possible for an intervention that successfully provides benefits counseling or paid work experience to have an unintentional adverse impact on whether a youth's goals included working and earning enough money to stop receiving disability benefits. To the extent that a YTD project increases awareness that working and receiving earnings may not eliminate the entire cash benefit and eligibility for medical insurance, this

[97] Research finds evidence of low-to-moderate stability in self-reports of social skills (Gresham and Elliott 1990) and self-concept (Marsh 1983). Also, for youth with developmental disabilities, stability likely would be lower. Stability is related to cognitive rather than chronological age. Younger children have more difficulty differentiating discrete areas of self-worth (Harper 1990).

awareness may result in fewer youth agreeing that their goals include working and earning enough to stop receiving disability benefits. As we showed in Chapter IV, Transition WORKS did increase youth awareness of a number of SSA work incentives, although the project did not have an impact on awareness that the entire cash benefit and medical insurance would not be lost once work begins.

Although Transition WORKS placed an emphasis on youth empowerment, we found no impact on our primary measure of attitudes and expectations—youth goals for future work and earnings. We also found no impacts on the supplementary measures in this domain. The absence of impacts is surprising, as our process analysis of Transition WORKS found that nearly 70 percent of youth who participated in project services received self-determination services and, among those who received these services, the median youth received them for 5.5 hours (the highest median of any of the specific services examined; see Table III.7). We caution that the lack of estimated impacts may reflect the difficulty of measuring these outcomes precisely.

## A. Transition WORKS Had No Impact on Goals for Future Work and Earnings

Our primary outcome measure in this domain is goals for future work and earnings. This measure is based on youth responses to the statement in the follow-up survey, "Your personal goals include someday working and earning enough to stop receiving Social Security disability benefits." [98] This is particularly relevant to the YTD evaluation because it measures whether youths' goals align with the goal of the YTD initiative for youth to maximize their economic self-sufficiency.

We found no impact on goals for future work and earnings. Among youth in the treatment group, slightly more than 67 percent agreed with the statement that their goals included working and earning enough to stop receiving disability benefits (Table VIII.1).[99] In the absence of Transition WORKS, we estimated that nearly 70 percent of those youth would have agreed with the statement. The estimated impact of negative two percentage points is not statistically significant at the 10 percent level. As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, Transition WORKS could have had an unintentional negative impact by increasing awareness that benefits do not cease when paid work begins. Because the impact estimate is not statistically significant, we conclude that there is no evidence of an unintentional negative impact. However, the lack of an impact on this outcome may reflect a combination of a positive impact for some treatment youth and an unintended negative impact for others.

[98] Youth were asked to respond to this statement in one of four categories: agree a lot, agree a little, disagree a little, and disagree a lot. We combined the first two categories to create a measure of whether the youth agreed with the statement. As a robustness check, we verified that there were no impacts of Transition WORKS on the share of youth responding "agree a lot" or on the distribution of responses across all four categories. Information on most of the measures of attitudes and expectations reported in this chapter were collected from youth only. In particular, the primary measure and locus of control measures were not asked of parents (or guardians). The three expectations measures (regarding independent living, employment, and education) were asked of both parents and youth. For these three measures, we report both youth and parent responses.

[99] Information on plans for the future and self-efficacy was missing for a large share of cases—roughly 20 percent for youth responses and up to 33 percent for parent responses. For youth responses, missing information for many cases occurred due to skip patterns in the survey for proxy respondents: 17 percent of youth had a proxy respondent for the follow-up survey; most of the proxy respondents were parents of the youth. Regarding plans for the future, proxy respondents who were parents provided information for the parent response only and proxy respondents who were not parents provided information for the youth response only. For self-efficacy, proxy respondents were not asked to provide any information. For parent responses, missing information mainly occurred when the parent (or guardian) was unavailable to respond to the survey.

**Table VIII.1. Expectations and Self- Efficacy (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Treatment Group | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value |
| **Primary Outcome** | | | | |
| Youth agrees that personal goals include working and earning enough to stop receiving Social Security benefits | 67.3 | 69.7 | -2.4 | 0.53 |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | |
| Plans and Goals for the Next Five Years | | | | |
| Plans to go further in school, youth response | 68.5 | 69.9 | -1.4 | 0.70 |
| Plans to go further in school, parent response | 61.4 | 62.0 | -0.6 | 0.88 |
| Expectations for Employment, Youth Response[a] | | | | 0.65 |
| Working for pay at the time of the follow-up survey | 24.0 | 22.0 | 1.9 | |
| Plans to start working for pay | 66.5 | 66.6 | -0.1 | |
| No plans to start working for pay | 9.6 | 11.4 | -1.8 | |
| Expectations for Employment, Parent Response[a] | | | | 0.56 |
| Working for pay at the time of the follow-up survey | 24.0 | 22.2 | 1.8 | |
| Plans to start working for pay | 61.8 | 60.6 | 1.2 | |
| No plans to start working for pay | 14.2 | 17.2 | -3.0 | |
| Plans to live on own (with or without help), youth response | 80.2 | 78.4 | 1.8 | 0.54 |
| Plans to live on own (with or without help), parent response | 53.1 | 46.8 | 6.3 | 0.13 |
| Internal locus of control (4-point index)[b] | 3.3 | 3.3 | 0.0 | 0.95 |
| External locus of control (4-point index)[b] | 2.7 | 2.7 | 0.0 | 0.87 |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics using sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analytic sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Appendix Table A.5 for the sample sizes for all outcomes.

[a]For these outcomes, item non-response occurred conditionally, depending on the values of other measures in the follow-up survey. The rate of missing information was 14.6 percent for youth responses on employment expectations and 26.0 percent for parent responses. We used a "multiple imputations" procedure to assign values when they were missing. See Appendix A, Section E for more information on this procedure.

[b]See text for further discussion of the measures of internal and external locus of control.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

We also found no effects of Transition WORKS on three supplementary measures of expectations and plans that relate specifically to the next five years after the follow-up survey. These measures capture whether the survey respondents expected to (1) go further in school, (2) start or continue working for pay, and (3) live on their own (as opposed to with parents or guardians). At baseline, about 79 percent of treatment group youth reported that they planned to go further in

school in the next five years (Table II.2).[100] In the follow-up survey, a smaller share, about 69 percent, reported that they planned to go further in school in this time period (Table VIII.1). The reduction in the share with plans for further schooling may reflect that some youth attained their education goals during the year (or more) between the surveys. We estimated that Transition WORKS had no impact on educational goals—in the absence of the project, an estimated 70 percent of treatment group youth would have planned to go further in school at the time of the follow-up survey. Similarly, about 10 percent of treatment group youth reported no plans to work for pay in the five years after the follow-up survey (this share is similar to the share at baseline, nine percent).[101] We estimated that, in the absence of Transition WORKS, roughly the same share would have had no plans for future paid work at the time of the follow-up survey. Finally, about 80 percent of treatment group youth reported plans to live independently in the future with or without help (the share is similar to the share at baseline, 78 percent). We estimated that the share would have been the same in the absence of Transition WORKS. We also found no impacts of Transition WORKS on parent responses about youth plans for going further in school, youth expectations for paid employment, and youth plans to live on their own. Based on these findings, we conclude that Transition WORKS did not affect youth expectations or plans.

To investigate the effects of the intervention on youths' feelings of self-efficacy, we created composite measures from a series of questions in the follow-up survey. The self-efficacy measures are based on a battery of questions that includes the Pearlin Mastery Scale (Pearlin and Schooler 1978). After analyzing the degree of correlation between these measures and the concepts measured, we determined that the measures could be combined into an "internal locus of control" and an "external locus of control." See Appendix A, Section H for further information on the creation of these measures.

In this evaluation, the internal locus of control reflects whether youth believe their life outcomes result primarily from their own behaviors and actions. The average value of this index for treatment group youth was 3.3, and we estimated that, in the absence of Transition WORKS, the average would have been the same. The external locus of control reflects the degree to which youth believe that others, fate, or chance primarily determine their life outcomes. The average value of this index for treatment group youth was 2.7. We estimated that these youth would have had essentially the same average value even if they had not been given the opportunity to participate in Transition WORKS.[102]

The findings of no impact of Transition WORKS on the primary outcome in this domain and no pattern of impacts on the supplementary outcomes suggest that the project did not affect the expectations, plans, or self-efficacy of youth in the treatment group. This conclusion is surprising, given that Transition WORKS had a strong focus on youth empowerment. Although it may be the

[100] For most outcome measures, we do not have similar measures at baseline. However, the baseline and follow-up survey used similar questions to ask about plans for the next five years for further schooling, working for pay, and living independently. The biggest difference between the surveys was that the follow-up survey did not ask youth who were working full time about plans for work.

[101] In the follow-up survey, youth who already were working full time were not asked about their plans for paid employment. We included all youth who were working for pay (part time or full time) at the time of the follow-up survey in a separate category in the analysis reported in Table VIII.1.

[102] Appendix A, Section H presents separate impact estimates for each of the 11 questions used to create the two indices. These additional impact estimates are consistent with the findings reported here that Transition WORKS did not have an impact on youth self-efficacy.

case that Transition WORKS indeed had no impact on expectations and attitudes, we caution that the findings may be due to the difficulty of measuring these outcomes.

## B. Transition WORKS Had No Impacts on Independence, Decision Making, and Social Interactions

In principle, feelings of greater self-efficacy for youth could lead them to display more independence in daily activities, play a bigger part in decision making, and engage in higher levels of social interaction. We examined measures of these outcomes as a supplementary analysis in the attitudes and expectations domain. However, the previous finding of no impact of Transition WORKS on self-efficacy suggests that the project was unlikely to have had impacts on these additional measures, even though self-determination workshops and other activities were designed to influence these outcomes.

Consistent with our finding of no impact on self-efficacy, we also found no impacts of Transition WORKS on independent activities, decision making, or social interactions (Table VIII.2).[103] We found that 91 percent of treatment group youth made snacks on their own, 53 percent rode public transportation alone, and 93 percent picked the clothes they wore each day. About 83 percent of treatment group members decided how to spend their own money and 93 percent decided how to spend their free time. About 71 percent of treatment group youth reported that they got together with friends "to have fun or hang out." We estimated that none of these percentages would have been statistically different in the absence of Transition WORKS.[104]

## C. Transition WORKS Had No Impact on Goals for Future Work and Earnings for Any Subgroup

Although Transition WORKS had no impact on the primary outcome in the domain of attitudes and expectations—goals for future work and earnings—for the entire target population, it nevertheless could have had impacts for certain subgroups. For example, the goals for work and earnings of youth who had not worked for pay in the year prior to random assignment might have been more malleable than those with work experience. Accordingly, we estimated the impacts of Transition WORKS on the primary outcome measure in this domain for the three pairs of subgroups of the target population defined by baseline age, school attendance, and paid work experience. We found that the estimated impacts are statistically insignificant for these subgroups and do not vary significantly across the subgroups within each pair (Table VIII.3).

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[103] We collected the measures of independence in daily activities, decision making, and social interaction from youth only. For the first five measures in Table VIII.2, we asked youth how often they do the activity by themselves. We combined "most of the time" and "some of the time" in a single category, which we interpreted as being indicative of the youth doing the activity on their own. The alternative response was "none of the time." As a robustness check, we verified that there were no impacts of Transition WORKS on the distribution of responses across all three categories for each activity. For social interaction, youth were asked how often they get together with friends "to have fun or hang out." We combined "sometimes" and "often" in a single category to measure having social interaction. The alternative responses were "never," "hardly ever," and "does not have friends." As a robustness check, we verified that there was no impact of Transition WORKS on the distribution of responses across all five categories.

[104] We asked the same battery of questions about independent activities and decision making in the baseline and follow-up surveys. The levels of independent activity and decision making reported in Table VIII.2 are very similar to baseline levels (Table A.2). For each activity or decision making area, the baseline level for the treatment group was within two percentage points of the follow-up level.

**Table VIII.2. Independent Activities, Decision Making, and Social Interactions (percentages)**

| | Treatment Group | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | |
| Independent Activities and Decision Making | | | | |
| Make snacks or sandwiches (most or some of the time) | 90.9 | 89.6 | 1.3 | 0.50 |
| Ride public transportation alone (most or some of the time) | 52.8 | 55.9 | -3.2 | 0.33 |
| Pick clothes to wear (most or some of the time) | 93.0 | 94.7 | -1.7 | 0.34 |
| Decide to spend own money (most or some of the time) | 83.1 | 82.7 | 0.4 | 0.88 |
| Decide how to spend free time (most or some of the time) | 92.7 | 92.9 | -0.2 | 0.92 |
| Social Interactions | | | | |
| Get together with friends (often or sometimes) | 71.3 | 71.7 | -0.3 | 0.92 |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics using sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analytic sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Appendix Table A.5 for the sample sizes for all outcomes.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

**Table VIII.3. Goals Include Working and Earning Enough to Stop Receiving Social Security Benefits, by Subgroup (percentages)**

| | Treatment Group | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value | Treatment Group Size | Control Group Size |
| Age | | | | | | |
| Under age 18 at baseline | 70.1 | 73.9 | -3.8 | 0.61 | 84 | 67 |
| Age 18 or over at baseline | 66.2 | 68.2 | -1.9 | 0.66 | 243 | 189 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.82) | | |
| School Attendance | | | | | | |
| In school at baseline | 70.6 | 73.3 | -2.6 | 0.61 | 176 | 118 |
| Not in school at baseline | 63.4 | 65.6 | -2.2 | 0.69 | 151 | 138 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.92) | | |
| Paid Work Experience | | | | | | |
| Worked for pay in prior year | 71.5 | 70.1 | 1.4 | 0.81 | 118 | 102 |
| No work for pay in prior year | 65.0 | 69.7 | -4.7 | 0.35 | 209 | 154 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.45) | | |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics using sample weights to account for interview non-response. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes, as indicated in the table.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

# IX. EXPLORATORY ANALYSES OF IMPACTS ON TRAINING AND PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES

While training is an investment that can improve employment and earning opportunities, it is not a key component of the YTD intervention. The YTD projects, including Transition WORKS, have not emphasized training as either a service input or an outcome. However, Transition WORKS may have improved training outcomes through its support for developing and pursuing life goals and emphasis on self-sufficiency. Specifically, some youth may have been motivated to obtain training as an important step on the path to those objectives stressed by Transition WORKS. Because of the importance of training for future employment and earnings and the potential for Transition WORKS to have influenced training, in this chapter we explore the project's impacts on training outcomes.

As a precursor to our planned longer-term analysis, our second exploratory analysis examines the impact of Transition WORKS on a composite measure of participation in productive activities during the year following random assignment—specifically, participation in education, training, and paid and unpaid employment. Participation in productive activities is a key longer-term outcome in the YTD conceptual framework.

In light of the lack of statistically significant impacts on school enrollment and employment, it is not surprising that we found no impact of Transition WORKS on training or the composite measure of productive activities.

## A. Transition WORKS Had No Impact on Participation in Training

Although Transition WORKS did not emphasize enrollment in training programs, its focus on self-sufficiency possibly could have induced some of its participants to enroll in training. However, we found no impacts of the intervention on training-related outcomes. A small share of treatment group youth, about 11 percent, was enrolled in a training program during the year following random assignment (Table IX.1).[105] We estimated that the proportion enrolled would have been about the same in the absence of Transition WORKS.

[105] At baseline, 38 percent of treatment group youth reported having received job training during the past year (Table II.2). The difference in the rate of receipt of training between the baseline and follow-up surveys may be due largely to differences in the way the surveys asked for this information. The baseline survey asked a very broad question about training in job skills, vocational education, career counseling, and help in finding a job. This measure of "job training" includes activities that fell in the employment services domain in the follow-up survey (as described in Chapter IV). That survey asked whether youth were "currently in a training program or taking classes to help you learn job skills or get a job?" If youth currently were not participating in training, the survey asked, "Did you go to school, attend a training program, or take any classes?" following the date of random assignment. We distinguished between schooling and training based on a follow-up question about the program type for each program reported. We coded educational institutions as schooling. We coded the remaining categories as training: "job skills training, job training, interviewing skills, computer skills, on the job training, assistance with finding a job"; "life skills, college preparation, transition programs, YTD"; and "day habilitation, day programs." Although some of these categories could be considered employment services, youth specifically were asked to report training programs and classes to learn job skills or get a job, whereas the service section of the survey asked more broadly about "services or training." For youth under the age of 18, we collected information on participation in training programs from parents or guardians.

**Table IX.1. Participation in Training Programs (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Treatment Group | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | |
| **Enrollment in Training** | | | | |
| Ever enrolled in a training program in the year following random assignment | 11.1 | 11.1 | -0.0 | 0.99 |
| **Intensity of Training** | | | | |
| Number of Months in a Training Program | | | | 0.89 |
| None | 88.9 | 88.9 | 0.0 | |
| Less than nine months | 3.0 | 3.6 | -0.6 | |
| Nine to twelve months | 8.1 | 7.5 | 0.5 | |
| (Average number of months in a training program) | 1.1 | 1.0 | 0.0 | 0.91 |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics using sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analytic sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Appendix Table A.5 for the sample sizes for all outcomes.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

The intervention also had no impact on the intensity of training activities, as measured by the number of months that youth were enrolled in training programs during the year following random assignment. Treatment group youth were enrolled in training for about one month, on average. We estimated that they would have experienced essentially the same duration in training in the absence of the intervention. Additionally, the distribution of months of enrollment in training was unaffected by the intervention.[106]

## B. Transition WORKS Had No Impact on a Composite Measure of Participation in Productive Activities

As a final exploratory analysis, we estimated the impact of Transition WORKS on a composite measure of participation in productive activities—specifically, participation in education, training,

[106] We calculated months of training from reported enrollment dates. The average months of training includes youth who did not participate in training (that is, zero months of training). We chose to group months of training in the same categories used for school enrollment (which were chosen to distinguish between a full academic year and less than an academic year). The training intensity measures do not include a small number of youth who participated in training but did not report information on the number of months of training. We chose not to use the multiple imputation procedure (see Appendix A, Section E) for the training intensity measures in this chapter due to the very small number of youth with missing information on these measures.

and paid and unpaid employment.[107] Youth who participated in any of these activities during the year following random assignment are considered to have participated in productive activities. In principle, if an intervention had positive impacts on several of the components of the composite measure, then the anticipated impact on the composite measure could be larger and potentially more statistically significant than the component impacts. Alternatively, an intervention's significant impacts on one or two components could be diluted in a composite measure that combines that component with others on which the program had no impacts.

We found that Transition WORKS had no impact on the composite measure of participation in productive activities. Almost 79 percent of treatment group youth participated in productive activities during the year following random assignment (Table IX.2).[108] We estimated that Transition WORKS did not increase this percentage significantly.[109]

**Table IX.2. Composite Measure of Participation in Productive Activities (percentages)**

| | Treatment Group | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value |
| **Supplementary Outcome** | | | | |
| Ever participated in school, training, unpaid employment, or paid employment in the year after random assignment | 78.6 | 74.1 | 4.5 | 0.13 |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model prior to random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics using sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analytic sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Appendix Table A.5 for the sample sizes for all outcomes.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

[107] For youth under the age of 18, we collected information on participation in education and training programs from parents (or guardians). We collected employment information directly from youth of all ages.

[108] The overall level of productive activity may seem high—more than three-fourths of treatment group youth as measured by the composite measure. However, we note that this measure includes participation in school, training, paid work, or unpaid work at any time throughout the entire year following random assignment, even if only for one day. A measure of activity at a point in time (for example, at the time of the 12-month survey) would show much lower levels of activity. In addition, this measure includes school enrollment and more than half of treatment group youth were enrolled in school at baseline (Table II.2).

[109] We found no statistically significant impacts of Transition WORKS on the composite measure of participation in productive activities for any of the six main subgroups we considered (defined by baseline age, school attendance, and prior work experience).

# X. CONCLUSION

This interim report has presented findings from a process analysis and an initial impact analysis of the Erie County, New York, YTD project: Transition WORKS. Through the process analysis, we found that the services offered by Transition WORKS broadly conformed to the YTD program model and focused on self-determination, benefits planning, employment, education, and case management. The project enrolled 83 percent of the randomly assigned treatment group members who had been referred by Mathematica and provided most of them with some services in each of these components. The impact analysis revealed that youth who had been given the opportunity to participate in Transition WORKS received more services designed to promote employment than they would have in the absence of the intervention. Nevertheless, we found no impacts of the project on youth employment during the year following random assignment. Neither did we find impacts on income, expectations for the future, and a composite measure of school enrollment or high school completion. Planned analyses of data that are now being collected may reveal impacts that take up to three years to manifest themselves.

We estimated the impacts of Transition WORKS in the year following random assignment on outcome measures in five domains. Within each domain, we based our principal conclusions on statistical results for a single primary outcome measure:

- Employment-promoting services
  - *Primary outcome*—receipt of any employment-promoting services
- Paid employment
  - *Primary outcome*—ever employed on a paid job
- Education
  - *Primary outcome*—ever enrolled in school during the year following random assignment, or had completed high school by the end of the year
- Youth income
  - *Primary outcome*—total income from earnings and benefits
- Attitudes and expectations
  - *Primary* outcome—goals include working and earning enough money to stop receiving SSA benefits

We found that Transition WORKS increased by 14 percentage points the proportion of treatment group youth who received any employment-promoting services. However, the intervention had no significant impacts on the primary measures in the domains of paid employment, education, youth income, and attitudes and expectations during the year following random assignment. Even when we expanded the analysis to include supplementary outcome measures in these domains, we found no consistent patterns of impacts. Furthermore, we obtained essentially the same results for subgroups of the full study sample defined on the basis of whether youth were under age 18 or age 18 or older at baseline, in or out of school at baseline, and did or did not work for pay during the year prior to random assignment.

The highly structured sequence of Transition WORKS services, geographic dispersion of the project's four service providers by function, and large caseloads for key project staff may have made

it challenging for participating youth to receive a level of intensity of project services sufficient to result in improvements in key outcome measures. Our analysis of data from the Transition WORKS management information system revealed that the median number of service contacts with youth who had received any such contacts was 10 and the median total duration of those contacts was eight hours. Half of the youth who received employment-related services had three or fewer service contacts with Transition WORKS staff for that purpose, lasting less than an hour in total.

It is important to recognize that this report has presented interim impact estimates based on just one of the six random assignment YTD projects and data pertaining to the first year in the evaluation's multiyear follow-up period. Many of the youth who were participating in Transition WORKS still were receiving project services when they completed the evaluation's 12-month follow-up survey. Interim evaluation findings from the other five random assignment YTD projects will enable us to extend the initial assessments presented in this report. As planned, the projects vary in the mix and intensity of services while broadly adhering to the YTD program model. We therefore expect that the full set of six interim evaluation reports will provide SSA with a better understanding of the challenges that youth with disabilities face in making transitions and the specific types of interventions that might assist more of them to succeed. Furthermore, the YTD evaluation's comprehensive final report will present impact estimates based on 36 months of follow-up data from all six of the random assignment projects. Our analyses of those data may reveal longer-term impacts of Transition WORKS in addition to the short-term impacts reported here.

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# APPENDIX A

# ADDITIONAL ANALYSES AND TECHNICAL DISCUSSION

In this appendix, we provide a detailed discussion of some of the analytic issues raised in Chapter II. We begin by examining baseline characteristics of youth who enrolled in the evaluation relative to those who did not, and of youth in the treatment group relative to those in the control group. We also provide simple unadjusted means for all outcome measures and compare impacts based on simple and regression-adjusted means for the primary outcomes. We then discuss response and non-response to the 12-month survey and our treatment of missing information for dependent and independent variables. In the final sections, we present monthly average benefit amounts for the annual periods before and following random assignment, examine outcomes for exploratory subgroups, and provide impact estimates for the component outcomes of the composite locus of control measures.

## A. Characteristics of Youth Who Enrolled in the Evaluation

Although we attempted to contact a representative sample of youth in Erie County, only about 26 percent of those we attempted to contact were recruited into the study and randomly assigned to the treatment or control groups. Those not randomly assigned, and thus not in the study, included (1) youth we were unable to reach, (2) youth we reached but who were not interested in participating and did not complete a baseline interview, (3) youth who completed a baseline interview but did not return a signed consent form, and (4) youth who returned a signed consent form but did not want to participate in the study.

To understand more fully the characteristics of study participants compared to those of the project's full target population, we used SSA administrative data to compare the characteristics of those recruited into the study to those who were not (Table A.1). Relative to youth who did not enroll, those who did enroll in the evaluation were a few months younger on average and slightly more likely to speak English. Enrollees also had a somewhat shorter duration of benefit receipt. A greater share of enrollees received benefits through their parent(s) as representative payees rather than directly or through other representative payees.

Although differences between enrollees and non-enrollees are statistically significant for several baseline characteristics, the overall differences are not large. The comparisons suggest that, among eligible youth in Erie County, the YTD program enrolled a broad group of disability beneficiaries and not merely a distinctive subset. Moreover, enrollees and non-enrollees did not differ in terms of the amount of benefits received, the share with earnings in the year before random assignment, or the average amount of those earnings.[110] We thus found no evidence that enrollees were a highly self-selected group. However, we suspect that Transition WORKS proved most attractive to youth motivated to work in the future; therefore, some self-selection on unobserved characteristics, such as motivation, likely occurred.[111]

[110] A somewhat higher share of enrollees had earnings two years prior to random assignment: 32 percent for enrollees and 27 percent for non-enrollees (the difference of about five percentage points is statistically significant at the one percent level). However, the difference in earnings two years prior to random assignment was only $19 and not statistically significant. There were no significant differences in employment or earnings three years prior to random assignment (values for two and three years prior to random assignment based on administrative records from the MEF; not shown in Table A.1).

[111] In future years, we can use administrative data to examine trends in work and earnings for enrollees and non-enrollees. At the time of this writing, administrative data on earnings are not available for the period after random assignment.

**Table A.1. Characteristics by Enrollment in the Evaluation (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | All | Enrollees | Non-Enrollees | Difference | | P-Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Administrative Data** | | | | | | |
| Demographic Characteristics | | | | | | |
| Male | 60.6 | 61.8 | 60.1 | 1.7 | | 0.37 |
| Age in Years | | | | | *** | 0.01 |
| 14–17 | 25.9 | 26.8 | 25.5 | 1.3 | | |
| 18–21 | 40.2 | 43.6 | 38.9 | 4.7 | | |
| 22–25 | 33.9 | 29.5 | 35.5 | -6.0 | | |
| Average age (years) | 19.9 | 19.7 | 20.0 | -0.3 | *** | 0.00 |
| Language | | | | | *** | 0.01 |
| English | 91.6 | 94.2 | 90.7 | 3.5 | | |
| Spanish | 3.7 | 2.2 | 4.3 | -2.1 | | |
| Other | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.2 | -0.1 | | |
| Unknown/missing | 4.5 | 3.5 | 4.8 | -1.3 | | |
| Benefits | | | | | | |
| SSA Beneficiary Status | | | | | | 0.80 |
| CDB or DI | 5.6 | 5.5 | 5.7 | -0.2 | | |
| SSI (only or concurrent with CDB or DI) | 94.4 | 94.5 | 94.3 | 0.2 | | |
| Duration of benefit entitlement (years) | 8.5 | 8.2 | 8.7 | -0.5 | ** | 0.05 |
| Representative Payee Type | | | | | *** | 0.00 |
| None | 17.1 | 15.9 | 17.6 | -1.7 | | |
| Natural/adoptive/stepparent | 61.2 | 66.5 | 59.1 | 7.3 | | |
| Other relative | 9.5 | 9.9 | 9.3 | 0.6 | | |
| Other | 12.2 | 7.7 | 13.9 | -6.2 | | |
| Benefit amount in prior year ($) | 6,904 | 6,969 | 6,880 | 89 | | 0.46 |
| Health Status | | | | | | |
| Primary Disabling Condition (SSA data) | | | | | | 0.24 |
| Mental illness | 20.4 | 18.0 | 21.3 | -3.3 | | |
| Cognitive/developmental disability | 43.9 | 44.2 | 43.8 | 0.4 | | |
| Learning disability/ADD | 12.0 | 13.4 | 11.5 | 1.9 | | |
| Physical disability | 17.7 | 18.4 | 17.4 | 0.9 | | |
| Speech, hearing, visual impairment | 6.0 | 6.0 | 6.0 | 0.0 | | |
| Duration of disability (years) | 9.8 | 9.7 | 9.9 | -0.2 | | 0.51 |
| Earnings | | | | | | |
| Positive earnings in prior year | 31.3 | 33.1 | 30.6 | 2.5 | | 0.18 |
| Amount of earnings in prior year ($) | 796 | 830 | 783 | 47 | | 0.62 |
| Sample Size | 3,183 | 880 | 2,303 | | | |

Sources: SSA administrative records. Most measures are from the TRF. Earnings are measured in the MEF.

Notes: Missing information resulted in a smaller sample sizes for some characteristics than indicated at the bottom of the table. The table includes all youth randomly selected from the sample frame. The enrollees include all youth who enrolled in the evaluation, including 37 youth who were not in the research sample because they were assigned to the treatment or control group to match the status of their siblings.

*/**/***Difference is significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

The share of youth with earnings in the year prior to random assignment may seem fairly high to readers familiar with employment among adults with disabilities: 33 percent for enrollees and 31 percent for non-enrollees (based on administrative records, Table A.1). These rates do not seem remarkably high for young people. For comparison, we examined national employment rates for youth ages 16 to 20 who had a disability and found overall employment rates of 28 percent.[112]

## B. Baseline Equivalence

We examined the baseline characteristics of the treatment and control groups to assess the equivalence of the samples before youths' participation in the evaluation. Most important, we assessed baseline equivalence in the analytic sample, which is the sample of all respondents to the 12-month follow-up survey and the source of most outcome measures. In Chapter II (Table II.2), we discuss the baseline equivalence for the analytic sample for several characteristics. In Table A.2, we show that the treatment and control groups were similar at baseline for several additional characteristics.[113]

We also examined baseline characteristics for the research sample, which is the full sample of youth randomized into the treatment and control groups, including those who did not respond to the 12-month follow-up survey.[114] We found that the two groups were highly similar at baseline, with a few more small differences than we found for the analytic sample (Table A.3). For the research sample (but not for the analytic sample), we found that youth in the treatment group were more likely to be attending school at baseline and less likely to have completed high school, worked for pay in the last month, and taken public transportation alone. Similar to the analytic sample, in the research sample we found that a lower share of treatment group youth expected to work for pay in the future and a higher share spoke English. However, the language difference is not statistically significant in the research sample.

The degree of difference between the treatment and control groups is about what we would expect due to chance. For example, of the 50 baseline characteristics we investigated, we would expect about five characteristics to be statistically different at the 10 percent significance level or lower. We found two statistically significant differences at this level in the analytic sample and five in the research sample.

[112] The national employment rate reported here is from the American Community Survey, as reported by Bjelland et al. (2008). We found similar employment rates for YTD youth in Colorado (31 percent in the overall sample for both Erie and Colorado). We found lower employment rates for YTD youth in Bronx County (just over 10 percent), perhaps reflecting the greater share of youth under age 18 in that YTD project. We have not yet analyzed baseline employment for the other three YTD projects.

[113] In addition, for the analytic and research samples, we found no statistically significant differences between treatment and control group youth in employment or earnings for the three years before random assignment (based on administrative records from the MEF; not shown in Tables A.2 and A.3).

[114] For the research sample, which includes non-respondents to the 12-month follow-up survey, we can estimate impacts only for outcomes in administrative data (Appendix A, Section D).

**Table A.2. Additional Baseline Characteristics of the Analysis Sample (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | All | Treatment | Control | Difference | P-Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Baseline Survey Data** | | | | | |
| Education | | | | | |
| Attainment—Highest Grade Completed | | | | | 0.56 |
| 9th grade or less | 7.9 | 9.1 | 6.5 | 2.5 | |
| 10th or 11th grade | 31.2 | 31.4 | 30.9 | 0.5 | |
| 12th grade | 43.0 | 41.8 | 44.5 | -2.8 | |
| College or technical school | 3.6 | 2.8 | 4.5 | -1.7 | |
| Other | 14.3 | 14.9 | 13.5 | 1.4 | |
| Ever received special education | 82.9 | 82.4 | 83.5 | -1.1 | 0.69 |
| Health Insurance Coverage | | | | | |
| Covered by public health insurance | 96.1 | 96.9 | 95.2 | 1.7 | 0.24 |
| Covered by private health insurance | 24.3 | 25.4 | 23.0 | 2.4 | 0.45 |
| Covered by either public or private health insurance | 98.4 | 98.8 | 97.8 | 1.0 | 0.29 |
| Covered by both public and private health insurance | 21.4 | 23.0 | 19.4 | 3.6 | 0.24 |
| Family Socioeconomic Status | | | | | |
| Public Assistance | | | | | |
| TANF/family assistance | 9.9 | 8.9 | 11.1 | -2.2 | 0.33 |
| SNAP (food stamps) | 37.8 | 39.3 | 35.9 | 3.4 | 0.37 |
| Parents' Employment Status | | | | | |
| Mother currently employed | 48.4 | 48.1 | 48.7 | -0.6 | 0.88 |
| Father currently employed | 57.8 | 58.0 | 57.5 | 0.5 | 0.90 |
| Assistance | | | | | |
| Reading, hearing, speaking, or walking aids | 16.3 | 15.2 | 17.6 | -2.4 | 0.39 |
| Help with personal care needs | 18.2 | 16.5 | 20.3 | -3.8 | 0.19 |
| Independent Activities and Decision Making | | | | | |
| Make snacks or sandwiches (most or some of the time) | 90.4 | 89.3 | 91.7 | −2.4 | 0.28 |
| Ride public transportation alone (most or some of the time) | 56.3 | 53.6 | 59.5 | −5.8 | 0.12 |
| Pick clothes to wear (most or some of the time) | 93.9 | 93.3 | 94.6 | −1.4 | 0.45 |
| Decide how to spend own money (most or some of the time) | 84.3 | 84.3 | 84.3 | 0.0 | 1.00 |
| Decide how to spend free time (most or some of the time) | 93.0 | 93.8 | 92.0 | 1.8 | 0.34 |
| Random Assignment Cohort | | | | | 0.78 |
| Year 1 cohort | 84.4 | 84.7 | 84.0 | 0.7 | |
| Year 2 cohort | 15.6 | 15.3 | 16.0 | -0.7 | |
| Region in Erie County | | | | | 0.95 |
| Buffalo | 57.2 | 56.8 | 57.7 | -0.9 | |
| North Erie | 25.2 | 25.7 | 24.6 | 1.0 | |
| South Erie | 17.6 | 17.5 | 17.6 | -0.1 | |
| **Administrative Data** | | | | | |
| Benefits | | | | | |
| Representative Payee Type | | | | | 0.33 |
| None | 16.4 | 16.3 | 16.4 | 0.0 | |
| Natural/adoptive/stepparent | 65.6 | 66.1 | 65.0 | 1.1 | |
| Other relative | 10.2 | 11.2 | 9.0 | 2.2 | |
| Other | 7.9 | 6.4 | 9.7 | -3.3 | |
| Benefit amount in prior year ($) | 7,040 | 6,961 | 7,136 | -175 | 0.37 |
| Sample Size | 746 | 416 | 330 | | |

Sources: YTD baseline survey and SSA administrative records.

Notes: We weighted statistics to adjust for non-response to the 12-month survey. Baseline survey non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for some characteristics than indicated at the bottom of the table.

*/**/***Difference is significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

**Table A.3. Baseline Characteristics of the Research Sample (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | All | Treatment | Control | Difference | | P-Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Baseline Survey Data** | | | | | | |
| Demographic Characteristics | | | | | | |
| Race | | | | | | 0.62 |
| White | 55.4 | 55.8 | 54.9 | 0.8 | | |
| Black | 35.3 | 33.8 | 37.2 | -3.5 | | |
| American Indian/AK/HI/Pacific Islander | 1.1 | 1.3 | 0.8 | 0.5 | | |
| Asian | 0.5 | 0.4 | 0.5 | -0.1 | | |
| Other or unknown | 7.7 | 8.7 | 6.5 | 2.2 | | |
| Hispanic | 9.0 | 8.8 | 9.2 | -0.4 | | 0.83 |
| Primarily speaks English at home | 96.3 | 96.5 | 96.1 | 0.4 | | 0.74 |
| Education | | | | | | |
| School Attendance | | | | | * | 0.08 |
| Does not attend school | 48.3 | 44.9 | 52.5 | -7.6 | | |
| Attends regular high school | 25.6 | 28.0 | 22.7 | 5.3 | | |
| Attends special high school | 8.2 | 7.7 | 8.9 | -1.2 | | |
| Attends other school | 17.9 | 19.5 | 15.9 | 3.5 | | |
| Attainment | | | | | | |
| High school diploma, GED, or certificate of completion | 40.1 | 37.4 | 43.3 | -5.9 | * | 0.08 |
| Employment | | | | | | |
| Received job training in last year | 38.3 | 37.8 | 38.8 | -1.1 | | 0.75 |
| Worked as a volunteer in last year | 10.0 | 9.8 | 10.2 | -0.4 | | 0.85 |
| Worked for pay in last year | 35.3 | 33.6 | 37.3 | -3.8 | | 0.25 |
| Worked for pay in last month | 18.7 | 16.6 | 21.4 | -4.8 | * | 0.08 |
| Never worked for pay at baseline | 42.2 | 43.4 | 40.9 | 2.5 | | 0.47 |
| Living Arrangements and Household Composition | | | | | | |
| Living Arrangements | | | | | | 0.91 |
| Two-parent family | 32.3 | 33.1 | 31.3 | 1.9 | | |
| Single-parent family | 49.7 | 49.2 | 50.3 | -1.0 | | |
| Group home | 2.1 | 1.7 | 2.6 | -0.9 | | |
| Other institution | 3.2 | 3.3 | 3.1 | 0.1 | | |
| Lives alone or with friends | 12.7 | 12.6 | 12.8 | -0.1 | | |
| Average number of people in household | 3.6 | 3.7 | 3.6 | 0.1 | | 0.40 |
| Lives with others with disabilities | 43.0 | 44.0 | 41.6 | 2.4 | | 0.52 |
| Family Socioeconomic Status | | | | | | |
| Annual Income | | | | | | 0.39 |
| Less than $10,000 | 32.6 | 34.4 | 30.5 | 3.8 | | |
| $10,000 – $24,999 | 33.6 | 31.6 | 36.0 | -4.4 | | |
| $25,000 or more | 33.8 | 34.1 | 33.5 | 0.6 | | |
| Parents' Education | | | | | | |
| Mother high school graduate | 73.6 | 75.4 | 71.5 | 3.9 | | 0.21 |
| Father high school graduate | 73.7 | 75.4 | 71.4 | 4.0 | | 0.25 |
| Self-Reported Health Status | | | | | | 0.44 |
| Excellent | 18.7 | 17.9 | 19.6 | -1.7 | | |
| Very good/good | 61.6 | 63.5 | 59.3 | 4.3 | | |
| Fair/poor | 19.7 | 18.6 | 21.1 | -2.6 | | |
| Expectations About the Future | | | | | | |
| Expects to live independently (w/ or w/o help) | 76.0 | 76.1 | 75.9 | 0.2 | | 0.95 |
| Expects to continue education | 76.3 | 78.4 | 73.8 | 4.7 | | 0.16 |
| Expects to work at least part-time for pay | 92.6 | 90.3 | 95.4 | -5.0 | ** | 0.01 |
| Independent Activities and Decision Making | | | | | | |
| Ride public transportation alone (most or some of the time | 56.6 | 53.8 | 59.9 | -6.1 | * | 0.07 |

| | All | Treatment | Control | Difference | P-Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Administrative Data** | | | | | |
| Demographic Characteristics | | | | | |
| Male | 61.7 | 62.5 | 60.7 | 1.9 | 0.58 |
| Age in Years | | | | | 0.60 |
| 14–17 | 24.6 | 25.3 | 23.7 | 1.6 | |
| 18–21 | 44.1 | 44.9 | 43.2 | 1.7 | |
| 22–25 | 31.3 | 29.8 | 33.1 | -3.2 | |
| Average age (years) | 19.9 | 19.8 | 20.0 | -0.2 | 0.29 |
| Language | | | | | 0.13 |
| English | 94.3 | 95.9 | 92.4 | 3.4 | |
| Spanish | 2.1 | 2.0 | 2.3 | -0.4 | |
| Other | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.3 | -0.3 | |
| Unknown/missing | 3.4 | 2.2 | 4.9 | -2.8 | |
| Benefits | | | | | |
| SSA Beneficiary Status | | | | | 0.64 |
| CDB or DI | 5.3 | 5.0 | 5.7 | -0.7 | |
| SSI (only or concurrent with CDB or DI) | 94.7 | 95.0 | 94.3 | 0.7 | |
| Duration of benefit entitlement (years) | 8.2 | 8.2 | 8.3 | -0.2 | 0.70 |
| Health Status | | | | | |
| Primary Disabling Condition (SSA data) | | | | | 0.18 |
| Mental illness | 17.7 | 16.9 | 18.6 | -1.7 | |
| Cognitive/developmental disability | 44.1 | 45.6 | 42.3 | 3.3 | |
| Learning disability/ADD | 13.3 | 15.1 | 11.1 | 4.1 | |
| Physical disability | 18.8 | 16.5 | 21.6 | -5.1 | |
| Speech, hearing, visual impairment | 6.1 | 5.9 | 6.5 | -0.6 | |
| Duration of disability (years) | 9.8 | 9.6 | 10.0 | -0.4 | 0.35 |
| Earnings in prior year ($) | 852 | 886 | 812 | 74 | 0.63 |
| Sample Size | 843 | 459 | 384 | | |

Sources: YTD baseline survey and SSA administrative records.

Notes: The research sample includes respondents and non-respondents to the 12-month survey. The table includes the six research sample youth who were deceased at the time of the 12-month survey. We did not weight statistics for non-response to the 12-month survey. The table includes all of the main baseline characteristics (all those included in Table II.2). The table also includes the one additional baseline characteristic for which the difference between the treatment and control group is statistically significant at the .10 level (ride public transportation alone). Baseline survey non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for some characteristics than indicated at the bottom of the table. Missing information on primary disabling condition resulted in a smaller sample size for this characteristic than shown at the bottom of the table.

*/**/***Treatment-control difference is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

## C. Comparison of Means and Regression- Adjusted Means

In the text, we report regression-adjusted impact estimates. We estimated the regressions by using ordinary least squares (OLS) for continuous variables, logistic regression for binary variables, and multinomial logistic regression for categorical variables.[115] The regression adjustments control for small differences in baseline characteristics between the treatment and control groups. In addition, the regression-adjusted approach tends to yield more precise estimates—that is, estimates with smaller standard errors—thereby providing greater statistical power to detect small impacts. In Table A.4, we list the variables in the regression models.[116]

**Table A.4. Control Variables for Regression- Adjusted Analysis of Impacts**

| Characteristics | Control Variables |
|---|---|
| Demographic | Male<br>Age: less than 18 years, 18–21 years (reference 22–25)<br>Race: white |
| Education and employment | Enrolled in school at baseline<br>Attained high school diploma, GED, or certificate<br>Worked for pay in year prior to random assignment |
| Disability benefit | SSI beneficiary – SSI only or concurrent with CDB or DI<br>Duration of benefit entitlement: less than 3 years, 3 years to less than 10 years (reference: more than 10 years) |
| Health | Self-reported health status: good/very good/excellent<br>Primary disabling conditions: mental illness, cognitive/developmental disability, learning disability/ADD, physical disability (reference: speech, hearing, visual impairment)<br>Requires help with personal care needs |
| Family resources | Living arrangement: two-parent family, single-parent family (reference: does not live with either parent)<br>High school graduate mother |
| Expectations | Expects to live independently |
| Project-specific factors | 2006 cohort of random assignment |

Notes: All control variables are categorical. For variables with more than two categories, the table shows the reference category in parentheses.

[115] For the logistic and multinomial logistic regressions, we computed the estimated impact as the difference between the estimated outcome if all sample youth were in the treatment group (that is, the predicted value with the treatment dummy equal to one) less the estimated outcome if all sample youth were in the control group (that is, the predicted value with the treatment dummy equal to zero). The reported p-value for the estimated impact is the p-value on the treatment dummy in the regression model.

[116] The control variables in the regression model were chosen, in part, to include characteristics for which the baseline difference between treatment and control groups was substantial and/or statistically significant. The regression model used here for Transition WORKS is largely the same as the model used for the interim analysis of Colorado Youth WINS. For Transition WORKS, we added an indicator for completion of high school (or GED or certificate), due to the five percentage point higher value among control youth compared to treatment youth (the difference is not statistically significant).

Some recent concern has suggested that the use of OLS multivariate regression models may not always be justified for impact estimation, even with the availability of control variables with significant power to explain the variation in outcome measures (Freedman 2006). Freedman's argument is that multivariate models, under some circumstances, may lead to biases in the standard errors of impact estimates. Schochet (2010) examined data from several large-scale random assignment evaluations and found that, in practice, regression adjustments did not lead to biases in the standard errors of impact estimates. In general, as long as there is a fairly even split in the sample between treatment and control groups, the regression-adjusted estimates do not lead to biases in the standard errors of impact estimates. The Transition WORKS analytic sample is only slightly unbalanced (56 percent treatment group) and so should not introduce significant issues with respect to regression-based standard errors.

To provide a relevant reference point for understanding the regression-adjusted impact estimates, we report the observed mean (or percentage) for the treatment group in the text tables.[117] This provides a reference mean (or percentage) for the outcome for youth who had the opportunity to participate in Transition WORKS. We also report the estimated mean (or percentage) for the treatment group in the absence of Transition WORKS. We computed this estimated mean as the observed treatment group mean less the estimated regression-adjusted impact. For most important outcome measures, the unadjusted control group means (Table A.5) do not differ substantially from the estimated means for the treatment group in the absence of Transition WORKS (Chapters IV through IX). In reporting impact estimates, we provide a note whenever a statistically significant impact would differ substantially in proportional terms if considered relative to the observed control group mean rather than to the estimated mean for the treatment group in the absence of Transition WORKS. In Table A.5, we provide the simple mean impact estimates for all outcomes.

We compared results from the simple mean and regression-adjusted mean differences for the primary outcomes (Table A.6). For receipt of employment services, both methods produced an estimated impact of about 14 or 15 percentage points (statistically significant at the one percent level). For the other primary outcomes, the estimated impacts differ, but in no case do they differ statistically from zero. For most of these outcomes, the estimated impacts differ by a relatively small amount. For total income, the estimate based on the simple mean difference ($43) is much smaller than the estimate with the regression adjustment ($183). The regression adjustment increases the magnitude of the estimated impact because youth in the control group have a number of baseline characteristics associated with greater income: they are more likely to be out of school, be over age 21, and have completed high school. Adjusting for these differences improves the estimate of the impact but, under either method, the conclusion remains that Transition WORKS had no statistically significant impact on income.

[117] All continuous variables without a specified range (for example, earnings has no specified range, but number of months of service receipt has a range of 0 to 12) were top-coded by assigning to the highest two percent of observations the value of the 98th percentile.

**Table A.5. Descriptive Statistics on Outcomes by Treatment Status and Unadjusted Estimated Impacts (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Treatment Group | | | Control Group | | | Unadjusted | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outcome | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | Impact (Treatment -Control) | | P-Value |
| **Service Utilization Domain** | | | | | | | | | |
| Received any employment-promoting service | 404 | 66.3 | 49.6 | 321 | 51.1 | 53.7 | 15.2 | *** | 0.00 |
| Received career counseling | 401 | 37.7 | 50.8 | 319 | 28.0 | 48.2 | 9.7 | *** | 0.01 |
| Support for resume writing and job search activities | 402 | 38.6 | 51.1 | 319 | 21.6 | 44.2 | 17.0 | *** | 0.00 |
| Job shadowing, apprenticeship/internship | 401 | 15.6 | 38.1 | 319 | 10.9 | 33.5 | 4.7 | * | 0.07 |
| Received other employment-focused services (basic skills training, computer classes, problem solving, and social skills training) | 401 | 5.0 | 23.0 | 319 | 4.1 | 21.4 | 0.9 | | 0.57 |
| Received counseling on SSA benefits and work incentives | 404 | 33.8 | 49.6 | 321 | 20.1 | 43.1 | 13.7 | *** | 0.00 |
| Received other (non-employment) services | 402 | 81.5 | 40.7 | 320 | 72.4 | 48.0 | 9.1 | *** | 0.00 |
| Received services related to discussion about youth's general interest, life, and future plans | 402 | 77.3 | 44.0 | 320 | 63.4 | 51.8 | 13.9 | *** | 0.00 |
| Received life skills training | 401 | 34.5 | 49.9 | 319 | 31.8 | 50.0 | 2.8 | | 0.44 |
| Received help getting into a school or training program | 401 | 24.4 | 45.0 | 319 | 18.3 | 41.6 | 6.0 | * | 0.05 |
| Received help with accommodations | 401 | 25.1 | 45.5 | 319 | 25.4 | 46.8 | -0.3 | | 0.92 |
| Received referrals to other agencies | 401 | 4.5 | 21.6 | 319 | 1.2 | 11.6 | 3.3 | ** | 0.01 |
| Received transportation services | 401 | 6.9 | 26.6 | 319 | 5.0 | 23.4 | 1.9 | | 0.29 |
| Received health services | 401 | 10.3 | 31.8 | 319 | 8.4 | 29.9 | 1.8 | | 0.41 |
| Received case management services | 401 | 4.3 | 21.2 | 319 | 2.5 | 16.7 | 1.8 | | 0.20 |
| Other non-employment services | 401 | 15.2 | 37.7 | 319 | 8.9 | 30.6 | 6.3 | ** | 0.01 |
| Received any employment or non-employment service | 405 | 86.4 | 35.9 | 322 | 76.6 | 45.5 | 9.8 | *** | 0.00 |
| Months of service (average)[a] | 374 | 8.3 | 4.6 | 302 | 7.5 | 5.2 | 0.8 | ** | 0.04 |
| Number of contacts with providers (average)[a] | 371 | 115.7 | 143.3 | 297 | 99.8 | 127.6 | 15.9 | | 0.14 |
| Hours of service (average)[a] | 362 | 445.7 | 674.7 | 289 | 301.5 | 521.1 | 144.2 | *** | 0.00 |
| Number of providers (average) | 405 | 2.2 | 1.9 | 322 | 1.6 | 1.47 | 0.6 | *** | 0.00 |
| Any unmet service need | 408 | 20.2 | 42.2 | 323 | 14.7 | 38.0 | 5.5 | * | 0.05 |
| Unmet service need: help finding a job | 402 | 6.3 | 25.4 | 321 | 5.8 | 25.1 | 0.5 | | 0.80 |
| Unmet service need: other employment services | 402 | 9.7 | 31.0 | 321 | 7.6 | 28.4 | 2.1 | | 0.32 |
| Unmet service need: basic skills training | 402 | 3.1 | 18.2 | 321 | 2.3 | 16.2 | 0.8 | | 0.54 |
| Unmet service need: other | 402 | 8.9 | 29.9 | 321 | 9.7 | 31.8 | -0.8 | | 0.72 |

| | Treatment Group | | | Control Group | | | Unadjusted | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outcome | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | Impact (Treatment -Control) | | P-Value |
| Understands working does not stop Social Security benefits immediately | 406 | 69.4 | 48.3 | 323 | 72.4 | 48.0 | -3.0 | | 0.38 |
| Understands working does not stop medical coverage immediately | 406 | 81.1 | 41.0 | 323 | 78.6 | 44.0 | 2.5 | | 0.41 |
| Ever heard of EIE | 406 | 51.7 | 52.4 | 323 | 37.9 | 52.0 | 13.8 | *** | 0.00 |
| Ever heard of SEIE | 406 | 24.3 | 45.0 | 323 | 15.3 | 38.7 | 9.0 | *** | 0.00 |
| Ever heard of CDR/Age-18 medical redetermination | 291 | 54.4 | 52.2 | 241 | 51.8 | 53.6 | 2.6 | | 0.55 |
| Ever heard of PASS | 406 | 32.9 | 49.3 | 323 | 16.0 | 39.4 | 16.9 | *** | 0.00 |
| Ever heard of IDA (parent report) | 291 | 13.2 | 35.4 | 241 | 11.0 | 33.5 | 2.2 | | 0.45 |
| Ever heard of IDA (youth report) | 347 | 16.3 | 38.8 | 275 | 8.7 | 30.4 | 7.6 | *** | 0.01 |
| Ever heard of Medicaid-while-working or continued Medicaid eligibility | 406 | 39.0 | 51.2 | 323 | 31.0 | 49.7 | 8.0 | ** | 0.03 |
| Potential source of information on work and benefits: Transition WORKS | 405 | 18.2 | 40.5 | 323 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 18.2 | *** | 0.00 |
| Potential source of information on work and benefits: Social Security office | 405 | 60.8 | 51.2 | 323 | 72.8 | 47.8 | -12.0 | *** | 0.00 |
| Potential source of information on work and benefits: Social Security website | 405 | 6.3 | 25.4 | 323 | 7.0 | 27.5 | -0.8 | | 0.69 |
| Potential source of information on work and benefits: Friends and family | 405 | 11.0 | 32.8 | 323 | 13.8 | 37.0 | -2.8 | | 0.26 |
| Potential source of information on work and benefits: Internet | 405 | 8.4 | 29.2 | 323 | 13.1 | 36.3 | -4.7 | ** | 0.04 |
| Potential source of information on work and benefits: Vocational rehabilitation agency | 405 | 3.3 | 18.6 | 323 | 4.4 | 22.0 | -1.1 | | 0.44 |
| Potential source of information on work and benefits: Benefits planner | 405 | 3.6 | 19.5 | 323 | 1.9 | 14.6 | 1.7 | | 0.18 |
| Potential source of information on work and benefits: Other | 403 | 26.2 | 46.1 | 322 | 18.7 | 41.9 | 7.5 | ** | 0.02 |
| Type of service provider: Transition WORKS and legal services | 396 | 42.7 | 51.9 | 316 | 0.6 | 8.4 | 42.1 | *** | 0.00 |
| Type of service provider: Schools or school districts | 396 | 34.9 | 50.0 | 316 | 32.0 | 50.1 | 2.9 | | 0.42 |
| Type of service provider: Vocational rehabilitation agency | 396 | 7.4 | 27.5 | 316 | 8.7 | 30.3 | -1.3 | | 0.52 |
| Type of service provider: Work-related, sheltered workshop, employment agency, job training | 396 | 4.5 | 21.7 | 316 | 4.0 | 21.0 | 0.5 | | 0.75 |

| | Treatment Group | | | Control Group | | | Unadjusted | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outcome | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | Impact (Treatment -Control) | | P-Value |
| Type of service provider: Social Security Administration office | 396 | 2.6 | 16.9 | 316 | 5.5 | 24.5 | -2.9 | * | 0.05 |
| Type of service provider: Health services providers | 396 | 4.1 | 20.8 | 316 | 5.9 | 25.3 | -1.8 | | 0.27 |
| Type of service provider: Other providers serving primarily people with disabilities | 396 | 31.2 | 48.6 | 316 | 35.0 | 51.2 | -3.8 | | 0.29 |
| Type of service provider: All other providers | 396 | 28.0 | 47.1 | 316 | 14.8 | 38.2 | 13.2 | *** | 0.00 |
| **Employment Domain** | | | | | | | | | |
| Ever employed on paid jobs | 414 | 43.6 | 52.0 | 330 | 40.8 | 52.8 | 2.8 | | 0.45 |
| Ever employed on any (paid or unpaid) job | 416 | 46.8 | 52.3 | 330 | 42.0 | 53.0 | 4.8 | | 0.20 |
| Ever employed on unpaid jobs (but not on paid jobs) | 414 | 2.9 | 17.6 | 330 | 1.1 | 11.4 | 1.8 | | 0.10 |
| Percentage of weeks since RA employed on any (paid or unpaid) jobs[a] | 400 | 28.6 | 38.5 | 321 | 25.7 | 37.8 | 2.9 | | 0.31 |
| Percentage of weeks since RA employed on paid jobs[a] | 399 | 26.2 | 37.1 | 321 | 24.3 | 37.0 | 1.9 | | 0.51 |
| Percentage of weeks since RA employed on unpaid jobs[a] | 413 | 1.8 | 11.6 | 330 | 0.9 | 9.1 | 0.9 | | 0.25 |
| Employment status at time of survey | | | | | | | | | 0.95 |
| Employed on paid job | 398 | 25.1 | | 312 | 23.9 | | 1.2 | | |
| Employed on unpaid job | 398 | 1.8 | | 312 | 1.5 | | 0.3 | | |
| Not employed, looking for work | 398 | 13.2 | | 312 | 12.5 | | 0.7 | | |
| Not employed, out of the work force | 398 | 60.0 | | 312 | 62.1 | | -2.1 | | |
| Number of jobs (paid and unpaid)[a] | | | | | | | | | 0.44 |
| 0 | 392 | 54.0 | | 316 | 58.7 | | -4.7 | | |
| 1 | 392 | 34.1 | | 316 | 30.0 | | 4.2 | | |
| 2 or more | 392 | 11.9 | | 316 | 11.4 | | 0.5 | | |
| Number of jobs (average, paid and unpaid)[a] | 392 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 316 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 0.1 | | 0.38 |
| Number of paid jobs (average)[a] | 392 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 316 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 0.0 | | 0.48 |
| Number of unpaid jobs (average)[a] | 411 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 329 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 0.0 | | 0.23 |
| Employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month after RA: Month 1[a] | 400 | 24.7 | 42.0 | 323 | 23.3 | 40.7 | 1.4 | | 0.67 |
| Employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month after RA: Month 2[a] | 400 | 25.8 | 42.4 | 324 | 23.6 | 41.5 | 2.2 | | 0.50 |
| Employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month after RA: Month 3[a] | 400 | 27.5 | 43.0 | 324 | 24.0 | 42.2 | 3.6 | | 0.28 |
| Employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month after RA: Month 4[a] | 401 | 30.1 | 45.1 | 324 | 26.8 | 43.6 | 3.2 | | 0.34 |

| | Treatment Group | | | Control Group | | | Unadjusted | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outcome | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | Impact (Treatment -Control) | P-Value |
| Employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month after RA: Month 5[a] | 403 | 33.2 | 46.1 | 324 | 27.9 | 44.1 | 5.2 | 0.14 |
| Employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month after RA: Month 6[a] | 403 | 32.2 | 45.6 | 324 | 26.8 | 43.9 | 5.3 | 0.12 |
| Employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month after RA: Month 7[a] | 402 | 31.1 | 45.6 | 324 | 28.2 | 44.9 | 2.8 | 0.41 |
| Employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month after RA: Month 8[a] | 401 | 31.7 | 45.6 | 324 | 28.7 | 44.7 | 3.0 | 0.39 |
| Employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month after RA: Month 9[a] | 400 | 32.0 | 45.2 | 324 | 29.6 | 45.8 | 2.4 | 0.49 |
| Employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month after RA: Month 10[a] | 400 | 33.4 | 46.1 | 324 | 27.8 | 44.7 | 5.6 | 0.10 |
| Employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month after RA: Month 11[a] | 399 | 31.5 | 42.2 | 324 | 27.1 | 44.2 | 4.5 | 0.19 |
| Employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month after RA: Month 12[a] | 399 | 29.6 | 43.2 | 323 | 27.5 | 44.6 | 2.1 | 0.53 |
| Employment rate on paid jobs by month after RA: Month 1[a] | 398 | 22.9 | 39.7 | 322 | 22.4 | 40.6 | 0.5 | 0.86 |
| Employment rate on paid jobs by month after RA: Month 2[a] | 398 | 23.7 | 40.1 | 323 | 22.7 | 41.7 | 1.0 | 0.76 |
| Employment rate on paid jobs by month after RA: Month 3[a] | 398 | 25.7 | 39.4 | 323 | 22.8 | 41.5 | 2.9 | 0.37 |
| Employment rate on paid jobs by month after RA: Month 4[a] | 399 | 28.0 | 43.3 | 323 | 25.7 | 41.4 | 2.3 | 0.49 |
| Employment rate on paid jobs by month after RA: Month 5[a] | 401 | 31.5 | 44.9 | 323 | 27.0 | 43.5 | 4.5 | 0.19 |
| Employment rate on paid jobs by month after RA: Month 6[a] | 401 | 29.9 | 45.2 | 324 | 25.7 | 43.3 | 4.2 | 0.21 |
| Employment rate on paid jobs by month after RA: Month 7[a] | 399 | 28.8 | 43.5 | 324 | 26.9 | 44.2 | 1.9 | 0.56 |
| Employment rate on paid jobs by month after RA: Month 8[a] | 399 | 29.5 | 44.0 | 324 | 27.1 | 44.4 | 2.4 | 0.48 |
| Employment rate on paid jobs by month after RA: Month 9[a] | 398 | 29.9 | 44.8 | 324 | 27.8 | 44.9 | 2.1 | 0.53 |
| Employment rate on paid jobs by month after RA: Month 10[a] | 398 | 31.0 | 45.3 | 324 | 25.9 | 43.4 | 5.1 | 0.13 |
| Employment rate on paid jobs by month after RA: Month 11[a] | 397 | 29.6 | 43.5 | 324 | 25.4 | 42.7 | 4.2 | 0.21 |

| | Treatment Group | | | Control Group | | | Unadjusted | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outcome | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | Impact (Treatment -Control) | | P-Value |
| Employment rate on paid jobs by month after RA: Month 12[a] | 397 | 27.1 | 43.6 | 323 | 25.8 | 43.7 | 1.3 | | 0.68 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month following RA: Month 1[a] | 400 | 24.7 | 41.0 | 323 | 23.3 | 42.0 | 1.3 | | 0.67 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month following RA: Month 2[a] | 400 | 26.6 | 41.7 | 324 | 24.5 | 41.6 | 2.1 | | 0.53 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month following RA: Month 3[a] | 400 | 28.7 | 43.2 | 324 | 25.4 | 43.2 | 3.3 | | 0.32 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month following RA: Month 4[a] | 401 | 32.1 | 45.9 | 324 | 28.1 | 44.5 | 4.1 | | 0.24 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month following RA: Month 5[a] | 403 | 35.3 | 46.9 | 324 | 29.4 | 45.4 | 6.0 | * | 0.09 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month following RA: Month 6[a] | 403 | 36.5 | 46.9 | 324 | 31.0 | 45.9 | 5.5 | | 0.12 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month following RA: Month 7[a] | 403 | 37.9 | 48.3 | 324 | 33.0 | 47.0 | 4.9 | | 0.17 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month following RA: Month 8[a] | 403 | 40.4 | 49.0 | 324 | 34.9 | 47.8 | 5.6 | | 0.13 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month following RA: Month 9[a] | 403 | 42.0 | 49.2 | 324 | 37.1 | 48.6 | 4.9 | | 0.18 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month following RA: Month 10[a] | 403 | 43.8 | 49.7 | 324 | 37.6 | 48.6 | 6.2 | * | 0.09 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month following RA: Month 11[a] | 403 | 45.2 | 49.8 | 324 | 39.6 | 49.2 | 5.6 | | 0.13 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid and unpaid jobs by month following RA: Month 12[a] | 403 | 45.8 | 50.0 | 324 | 41.0 | 49.5 | 4.8 | | 0.19 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid jobs by month following RA: Month 1[a] | 398 | 23.0 | 39.5 | 322 | 22.3 | 40.8 | 0.7 | | 0.82 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid jobs by month following RA: Month 2[a] | 398 | 24.4 | 40.9 | 323 | 23.5 | 41.8 | 0.9 | | 0.77 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid jobs by month following RA: Month 3[a] | 398 | 26.4 | 42.9 | 323 | 24.4 | 40.9 | 2.0 | | 0.54 |

| | Treatment Group | | | Control Group | | | Unadjusted | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outcome | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | Impact (Treatment -Control) | P-Value |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid jobs by month following RA: Month 4[a] | 399 | 30.2 | 45.3 | 323 | 27.1 | 44.0 | 3.1 | 0.35 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid jobs by month following RA: Month 5[a] | 401 | 33.4 | 47.0 | 323 | 28.5 | 44.8 | 4.9 | 0.15 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid jobs by month following RA: Month 6[a] | 401 | 34.0 | 46.1 | 323 | 30.0 | 45.4 | 4.0 | 0.26 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid jobs by month following RA: Month 7[a] | 400 | 35.0 | 47.2 | 323 | 31.9 | 46.6 | 3.1 | 0.37 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid jobs by month following RA: Month 8[a] | 400 | 37.6 | 48.1 | 324 | 34.0 | 47.4 | 3.7 | 0.31 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid jobs by month following RA: Month 9[a] | 400 | 38.7 | 48.0 | 324 | 35.6 | 48.1 | 3.0 | 0.40 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid jobs by month following RA: Month 10[a] | 400 | 40.6 | 49.0 | 324 | 36.5 | 48.4 | 4.1 | 0.26 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid jobs by month following RA: Month 11[a] | 400 | 42.3 | 49.4 | 324 | 38.2 | 48.8 | 4.1 | 0.26 |
| Cumulative employment rate on paid jobs by month following RA: Month 12[a] | 400 | 42.8 | 49.6 | 324 | 39.7 | 49.3 | 3.1 | 0.40 |
| Total hours worked on paid and unpaid jobs[a] | | | | | | | | 0.28 |
| Not employed | 390 | 53.2 | | 316 | 58.0 | | -4.8 | |
| >0 to 260 hours | 390 | 18.3 | | 316 | 13.0 | | 5.3 | |
| >260 to 1,040 hours | 390 | 19.8 | | 316 | 19.5 | | 0.3 | |
| >1,040 hours | 390 | 8.6 | | 316 | 9.4 | | -0.8 | |
| Total hours worked on paid and unpaid jobs (average)[a] | 390 | 249.7 | 398.8 | 316 | 247.8 | 431.5 | 1.9 | 0.95 |
| Total hours worked on paid jobs[a] | | | | | | | | 0.64 |
| No paid employment | 390 | 56.1 | | 316 | 59.2 | | -3.0 | |
| >0 to 260 hours | 390 | 16.6 | | 316 | 13.3 | | 3.3 | |
| >260 to 1,040 hours | 390 | 18.7 | | 316 | 18.0 | | 0.6 | |
| >1,040 hours | 390 | 8.6 | | 316 | 9.5 | | -0.9 | |
| Total hours worked on paid jobs (average)[a] | 390 | 241.2 | 405.3 | 316 | 242.0 | 428.9 | -0.8 | 0.98 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid or unpaid jobs, by month following RA: Month 1[a] | 390 | 3.9 | 8.2 | 316 | 4.5 | 9.4 | -0.5 | 0.42 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid or unpaid jobs, by month following RA: Month 2[a] | 390 | 4.4 | 9.0 | 316 | 4.5 | 9.6 | -0.2 | 0.81 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid or unpaid jobs, by month following RA: Month 3[a] | 390 | 4.6 | 9.0 | 316 | 4.8 | 9.8 | -0.2 | 0.76 |

| | Treatment Group | | | Control Group | | | Unadjusted | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outcome | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | Impact (Treatment -Control) | P-Value |
| Average hours worked per week in paid or unpaid jobs, by month following RA: Month 4[a] | 390 | 5.0 | 9.5 | 316 | 5.4 | 10.5 | -0.4 | 0.62 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid or unpaid jobs, by month following RA: Month 5[a] | 390 | 5.5 | 9.4 | 316 | 5.4 | 10.4 | 0.1 | 0.94 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid or unpaid jobs, by month following RA: Month 6[a] | 390 | 5.2 | 9.0 | 316 | 5.2 | 10.3 | 0.0 | 0.97 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid or unpaid jobs, by month following RA: Month 7[a] | 390 | 4.9 | 8.8 | 316 | 5.1 | 9.9 | -0.2 | 0.81 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid or unpaid jobs, by month following RA: Month 8[a] | 390 | 5.2 | 9.1 | 316 | 5.2 | 9.6 | 0.1 | 0.92 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid or unpaid jobs, by month following RA: Month 9[a] | 390 | 5.4 | 9.5 | 316 | 5.2 | 9.3 | 0.2 | 0.76 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid or unpaid jobs, by month following RA: Month 10[a] | 390 | 5.6 | 9.4 | 316 | 4.9 | 9.8 | 0.7 | 0.37 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid or unpaid jobs, by month following RA: Month 11[a] | 390 | 5.5 | 9.4 | 316 | 4.9 | 9.7 | 0.6 | 0.42 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid or unpaid jobs, by month following RA: Month 12[a] | 390 | 4.8 | 7.3 | 316 | 4.6 | 9.1 | 0.2 | 0.75 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid jobs, by month following RA: Month 1[a] | 391 | 3.8 | 7.9 | 317 | 4.3 | 9.1 | -0.5 | 0.46 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid jobs, by month following RA: Month 2[a] | 391 | 4.2 | 8.4 | 317 | 4.4 | 9.6 | -0.2 | 0.74 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid jobs, by month following RA: Month 3[a] | 391 | 4.4 | 8.7 | 317 | 4.7 | 9.7 | -0.2 | 0.74 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid jobs, by month following RA: Month 4[a] | 391 | 4.8 | 9.4 | 317 | 5.2 | 10.5 | -0.4 | 0.62 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid jobs, by month following RA: Month 5[a] | 391 | 5.3 | 9.9 | 317 | 5.3 | 10.4 | 0.0 | 0.95 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid jobs, by month following RA: Month 6[a] | 391 | 5.0 | 8.8 | 317 | 5.1 | 10.3 | -0.1 | 0.86 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid jobs, by month following RA: Month 7[a] | 391 | 4.7 | 9.0 | 317 | 5.0 | 9.9 | -0.3 | 0.63 |

| | Treatment Group | | | Control Group | | | Unadjusted | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outcome | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | Impact (Treatment -Control) | P-Value |
| Average hours worked per week in paid jobs, by month following RA: Month 8[a] | 391 | 4.9 | 9.0 | 317 | 5.1 | 9.8 | -0.2 | 0.82 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid jobs, by month following RA: Month 9[a] | 391 | 5.1 | 8.2 | 317 | 5.1 | 9.6 | 0.1 | 0.93 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid jobs, by month following RA: Month 10[a] | 391 | 5.2 | 8.6 | 317 | 4.8 | 9.8 | 0.5 | 0.50 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid jobs, by month following RA: Month 11[a] | 391 | 5.2 | 8.1 | 317 | 4.8 | 9.8 | 0.4 | 0.61 |
| Average hours worked per week in paid jobs, by month following RA: Month 12[a] | 391 | 4.5 | 8.6 | 317 | 4.4 | 9.0 | 0.1 | 0.94 |
| Annual earnings[a] | | | | | | | | 0.74 |
| No paid employment | 371 | 56.1 | | 302 | 59.2 | | -3.0 | |
| $1 to $1,000 | 371 | 13.2 | | 302 | 10.7 | | 2.5 | |
| $1,001 to $5,000 | 371 | 17.2 | | 302 | 16.2 | | 1.0 | |
| More than $5,000 | 371 | 13.5 | | 302 | 14.0 | | -0.5 | |
| Annual earnings (average, $)[a] | 371 | 1842 | 3,393 | 302 | 1845 | 3,363 | -4.0 | 0.99 |
| Earnings per month worked [a] | | | | | | | | 0.62 |
| No paid employment | 371 | 56.1 | | 302 | 59.7 | | -3.5 | |
| $1 to $500 | 371 | 23.1 | | 302 | 20.8 | | 2.3 | |
| More than $500 | 371 | 20.8 | | 302 | 19.5 | | 1.2 | |
| Earnings per working month (average, $)[a] | 380 | 241 | 328 | 302 | 311 | 400 | 3.4 | 0.91 |
| Average monthly earnings by month following RA: Month 1 ($)[a] | 379 | 120 | 275 | 310 | 136 | 294 | -15.2 | 0.51 |
| Average monthly earnings by month following RA: Month 2 ($)[a] | 379 | 139 | 314 | 310 | 144 | 314 | -4.7 | 0.85 |
| Average monthly earnings by month following RA: Month 3 ($)[a] | 379 | 141 | 299 | 310 | 148 | 325 | -7.1 | 0.77 |
| Average monthly earnings by month following RA: Month 4 ($)[a] | 378 | 152 | 306 | 309 | 169 | 355 | -17.0 | 0.52 |
| Average monthly earnings by month following RA: Month 5 ($)[a] | 378 | 169 | 307 | 309 | 167 | 346 | 2.6 | 0.92 |
| Average monthly earnings by month following RA: Month 6 ($)[a] | 377 | 158 | 318 | 309 | 163 | 354 | -4.8 | 0.85 |
| Average monthly earnings by month following RA: Month 7 ($)[a] | 375 | 143 | 281 | 310 | 159 | 321 | -16.2 | 0.51 |
| Average monthly earnings by month following RA: Month 8 ($)[a] | 375 | 150 | 286 | 307 | 154 | 302 | -4.8 | 0.84 |
| Average monthly earnings by month following RA: Month 9 ($)[a] | 376 | 154 | 295 | 306 | 152 | 307 | 2.0 | 0.94 |

| | Treatment Group | | | Control Group | | | Unadjusted | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outcome | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | Impact (Treatment -Control) | P-Value |
| Average monthly earnings by month following RA: Month 10 ($)[a] | 375 | 153 | 299 | 307 | 142 | 260 | 11.4 | 0.62 |
| Average monthly earnings by month following RA: Month 11 ($)[a] | 375 | 155 | 298 | 307 | 144 | 316 | 10.7 | 0.66 |
| Average monthly earnings by month following RA: Month 12 ($)[a] | 375 | 129 | 270 | 308 | 134 | 286 | -4.5 | 0.84 |
| Cumulative earnings by month following RA: Month 1 ($)[a] | 380 | 123 | 276 | 311 | 136 | 298 | -12.8 | 0.58 |
| Cumulative earnings by month following RA: Month 2 ($)[a] | 380 | 256 | 483 | 311 | 277 | 640 | -21.4 | 0.65 |
| Cumulative earnings by month following RA: Month 3 ($)[a] | 380 | 397 | 762 | 311 | 426 | 973 | -29.4 | 0.68 |
| Cumulative earnings by month following RA: Month 4 ($)[a] | 381 | 544 | 1,175 | 311 | 599 | 1,332 | -54.9 | 0.57 |
| Cumulative earnings by month following RA: Month 5 ($)[a] | 381 | 694 | 1,386 | 312 | 743 | 1,608 | -49.3 | 0.68 |
| Cumulative earnings by month following RA: Month 6 ($)[a] | 381 | 863 | 1,584 | 312 | 918 | 1,947 | -54.9 | 0.72 |
| Cumulative earnings by month following RA: Month 7 ($)[a] | 381 | 984 | 1,908 | 312 | 1,048 | 2,202 | -64.1 | 0.70 |
| Cumulative earnings by month following RA: Month 8 ($)[a] | 381 | 1,139 | 2,162 | 312 | 1,198 | 2,504 | -59.1 | 0.75 |
| Cumulative earnings by month following RA: Month 9 ($)[a] | 381 | 1,288 | 2,587 | 312 | 1,353 | 2,791 | -64.9 | 0.75 |
| Cumulative earnings by month following RA: Month 10 ($)[a] | 381 | 1,453 | 2,871 | 313 | 1,488 | 3,028 | -35.7 | 0.88 |
| Cumulative earnings by month following RA: Month 11 ($)[a] | 381 | 1,568 | 2,931 | 313 | 1,611 | 3,174 | -42.4 | 0.86 |
| Cumulative earnings by month following RA: Month 12 ($)[a] | 381 | 1,700 | 3,112 | 313 | 1,718 | 3,325 | -18.5 | 0.94 |
| Tenure on primary job[a] | | | | | | | | 0.89 |
| Not employed | 390 | 56.1 | | 314 | 59.2 | | -3.0 | |
| 1 month or less | 390 | 4.5 | | 314 | 4.6 | | -0.1 | |
| More than 1 month to 6 months or less | 390 | 14.8 | | 314 | 14.3 | | 0.6 | |
| More than 6 months to 11 months or less | 390 | 11.6 | | 314 | 9.5 | | 2.2 | |
| More than 11 months | 390 | 13.0 | | 314 | 12.6 | | 0.4 | |
| Months of tenure (average)[a] | 390 | 3.0 | 4.4 | 314 | 2.7 | 4.3 | 0.2 | 0.48 |

| Outcome | Treatment Group N | Treatment Group Mean | Treatment Group Standard Deviation | Control Group N | Control Group Mean | Control Group Standard Deviation | Unadjusted Impact (Treatment -Control) | | P-Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Usual hours per week on primary job[a] | | | | | | | | | 0.26 |
| Not employed | 371 | 56.1 | | 302 | 59.2 | | -3.0 | | |
| 10 hours or less | 371 | 14.7 | | 302 | 9.4 | | 5.2 | | |
| More than 10 hours to 20 hours or less | 371 | 14.2 | | 302 | 15.7 | | -1.5 | | |
| More than 20 hours | 371 | 15.0 | | 302 | 15.7 | | -0.7 | | |
| Hours per week on primary job (average)[a] | 371 | 8.1 | 8.5 | 302 | 8.1 | 12.1 | 0.0 | | 0.98 |
| Hourly wage rate on primary job[a] | | | | | | | | | 0.58 |
| Not employed | 372 | 56.1 | | 302 | 59.2 | | -3.1 | | |
| Less than $7 | 372 | 17.0 | | 302 | 14.5 | | 2.5 | | |
| $7 to $9 | 372 | 18.3 | | 302 | 19.8 | | -1.6 | | |
| More than $9 | 372 | 8.6 | | 302 | 6.5 | | 2.1 | | |
| Health insurance coverage on primary job[a] | | | | | | | | | 0.64 |
| Not employed | 374 | 56.1 | | 303 | 59.2 | | -3.0 | | |
| Employed without health insurance | 374 | 32.1 | | 303 | 30.9 | | 1.1 | | |
| Employed with health insurance | 374 | 11.8 | | 303 | 9.9 | | 1.9 | | |
| Paid vacation/sick leave on primary job[a] | | | | | | | | | 0.51 |
| Not employed | 382 | 56.1 | | 306 | 59.2 | | -3.0 | | |
| Employed w/o paid vacation/sick leave | 382 | 33.5 | | 306 | 29.4 | | 4.1 | | |
| Employed with paid vacation/sick leave | 382 | 10.4 | | 306 | 11.4 | | -1.0 | | |
| **Education Domain** | | | | | | | | | |
| Ever enrolled in school in the year following random assignment or completed high school by the time of the 12-month follow-up survey | 406 | 82.0 | 40.3 | 326 | 85.6 | 37.8 | -3.6 | | 0.20 |
| Ever enrolled in school | 405 | 51.3 | 52.5 | 326 | 46.0 | 53.6 | 5.3 | | 0.16 |
| High school diploma/GED/certificate or higher | 413 | 49.0 | 52.5 | 328 | 58.3 | 53.0 | -9.2 | ** | 0.01 |
| Type of School Attended | | | | | | | | | 0.19 |
| Did not attend | 403 | 49.0 | | 325 | 54.2 | | -5.2 | | |
| Elementary/middle/ regular high school | 403 | 22.6 | | 325 | 16.2 | | 6.5 | | |
| Special school for the disabled or home school | 403 | 9.3 | | 325 | 8.2 | | 1.1 | | |
| Postsecondary institution | 403 | 16.7 | | 325 | 17.6 | | -0.9 | | |
| GED/Adult continuing education | 403 | 2.4 | | 325 | 3.9 | | -1.5 | | |

| | Treatment Group | | | Control Group | | | Unadjusted | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outcome | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | Impact (Treatment -Control) | P-Value |
| Number of months in school | | | | | | | | 0.40 |
| None | 400 | 49.3 | | 326 | 54.0 | | -4.7 | |
| Less than nine months | 400 | 13.4 | | 326 | 11.1 | | 2.3 | |
| Nine or more months | 400 | 37.3 | | 326 | 34.9 | | 2.4 | |
| **Income Domain** | | | | | | | | |
| Annual income from earnings and SSA benefits (average, $)[a] | 371 | 9,013 | 4,139 | 302 | 8,970 | 4,109 | 42.9 | 0.90 |
| Distribution of total annual income[a] | | | | | | | | 0.97 |
| Less than $5,000 | 371 | 8.7 | | 302 | 8.8 | | -0.1 | |
| $5,000 to $7,000 | 371 | 19.0 | | 302 | 18.1 | | 1.0 | |
| $7,000 to $10,000 | 371 | 44.7 | | 302 | 46.3 | | -1.7 | |
| $10,000 or more | 371 | 27.6 | | 302 | 26.8 | | 0.8 | |
| Percentage of total annual income from earnings[a] | 371 | 14.4 | 23.3 | 302 | 14.7 | 24.2 | -0.3 | 0.85 |
| Youth income by month following RA: Month 1 ($)[a] | 380 | 719 | 373 | 311 | 742 | 382 | -23.7 | 0.42 |
| Youth income by month following RA: Month 2 ($)[a] | 379 | 744 | 389 | 310 | 748 | 374 | -4.5 | 0.88 |
| Youth income by month following RA: Month 3 ($)[a] | 379 | 740 | 372 | 310 | 744 | 397 | -3.2 | 0.91 |
| Youth income by month following RA: Month 4 ($)[a] | 378 | 752 | 378 | 309 | 761 | 408 | -8.9 | 0.77 |
| Youth income by month following RA: Month 5 ($)[a] | 378 | 767 | 390 | 309 | 762 | 403 | 5.5 | 0.86 |
| Youth income by month following RA: Month 6 ($)[a] | 377 | 751 | 388 | 309 | 756 | 414 | -4.4 | 0.88 |
| Youth income by month following RA: Month 7 ($)[a] | 375 | 732 | 371 | 310 | 755 | 379 | -22.3 | 0.44 |
| Youth income by month following RA: Month 8 ($)[a] | 375 | 738 | 376 | 307 | 748 | 368 | -10.5 | 0.72 |
| Youth income by month following RA: Month 9 ($)[a] | 376 | 744 | 381 | 306 | 736 | 370 | 8.0 | 0.78 |
| Youth income by month following RA: Month 10 ($)[a] | 375 | 750 | 394 | 307 | 721 | 323 | 28.9 | 0.31 |
| Youth income by month following RA: Month 11 ($)[a] | 375 | 758 | 402 | 307 | 729 | 359 | 29.8 | 0.30 |
| Youth income by month following RA: Month 12 ($)[a] | 375 | 740 | 375 | 308 | 724 | 339 | 15.7 | 0.56 |
| Any benefit receipt during the year following random assignment[b] | 457 | 97.4 | 16.0 | 380 | 97.9 | 14.4 | -0.5 | 0.62 |
| Number of months of benefit receipt during the year following RA (average)[b] | 457 | 11.3 | 2.5 | 380 | 11.3 | 2.5 | 0.0 | 0.92 |
| Distribution of annual benefit amount[b] | | | | | | | | 0.97 |
| None | 457 | 2.6 | | 380 | 2.1 | | 0.5 | |
| $1 to $6,500 | 457 | 27.8 | | 380 | 27.6 | | 0.2 | |
| $6,500 to $8,000 | 457 | 45.3 | | 380 | 45.4 | | -0.2 | |
| Greater than $8,000 | 457 | 24.3 | | 380 | 24.7 | | -0.4 | |
| Annual benefit amount (average, $)[b] | 457 | 7,142 | 2,684 | 380 | 7,059 | 2,726 | 82.5 | 0.66 |

| | Treatment Group | | | Control Group | | | Unadjusted | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outcome | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | Impact (Treatment -Control) | | P-Value |
| SSA benefit amount by month following RA: Month 1($)[b] | 457 | 600 | 229 | 380 | 603 | 243 | -3.1 | | 0.85 |
| SSA benefit amount by month following RA: Month 2 ($)[b] | 457 | 605 | 224 | 380 | 601 | 240 | 4.4 | | 0.79 |
| SSA benefit amount by month following RA: Month 3 ($)[b] | 457 | 597 | 228 | 380 | 590 | 255 | 6.3 | | 0.71 |
| SSA benefit amount by month following RA: Month 4 ($)[b] | 457 | 598 | 233 | 380 | 586 | 248 | 11.3 | | 0.50 |
| SSA benefit amount by month following RA: Month 5 ($)[b] | 457 | 593 | 238 | 380 | 587 | 248 | 6.3 | | 0.71 |
| SSA benefit amount by month following RA: Month 6 ($)[b] | 457 | 589 | 244 | 380 | 585 | 247 | 4.8 | | 0.78 |
| SSA benefit amount by month following RA: Month 7 ($)[b] | 457 | 586 | 251 | 380 | 589 | 241 | -3.0 | | 0.86 |
| SSA benefit amount by month following RA: Month 8 ($)[b] | 457 | 584 | 252 | 380 | 587 | 239 | -2.8 | | 0.87 |
| SSA benefit amount by month following RA: Month 9 ($)[b] | 457 | 587 | 251 | 380 | 580 | 236 | 7.5 | | 0.66 |
| SSA benefit amount by month following RA: Month 10 ($)[b] | 457 | 594 | 270 | 380 | 575 | 247 | 19.2 | | 0.29 |
| SSA benefit amount by month following RA: Month 11($)[b] | 457 | 601 | 262 | 380 | 580 | 250 | 21.5 | | 0.23 |
| SSA benefit amount by month following RA: Month 12 ($)[b] | 457 | 606 | 264 | 380 | 586 | 246 | 20.9 | | 0.24 |
| Used at least one SSA work incentive[b] | 457 | 31.7 | 46.6 | 380 | 24.5 | 43.0 | 7.2 | ** | 0.02 |
| Used the SEIE[b] | 457 | 10.5 | 30.7 | 380 | 7.4 | 26.2 | 3.1 | | 0.12 |
| Used the EIE[b] | 457 | 24.3 | 42.9 | 380 | 19.5 | 39.7 | 4.8 | * | 0.10 |
| Used the Section-301 waiver[b] | 457 | 5.3 | 22.3 | 380 | 0.8 | 8.9 | 4.5 | *** | 0.00 |
| Established a PASS[b] | 457 | 0.4 | 6.6 | 380 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.4 | | 0.20 |
| Opened an IDA[b] | 457 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 380 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | | |
| Reported any earnings to SSA[b] | 457 | 37.4 | 48.4 | 380 | 34.5 | 47.6 | 2.9 | | 0.38 |
| Public health insurance coverage | 411 | 94.7 | 23.6 | 327 | 96.8 | 19.1 | -2.1 | | 0.18 |
| Private health insurance | 406 | 26.8 | 46.5 | 319 | 21.5 | 44.2 | 5.4 | * | 0.10 |
| Covered by both public and private health insurance | 404 | 24.8 | 45.3 | 318 | 19.8 | 42.8 | 5.0 | | 0.11 |
| Either public or private health insurance | 411 | 96.8 | 18.5 | 327 | 98.5 | 13.2 | -1.7 | | 0.15 |
| Household receipt of SNAP | 382 | 45.4 | 52.4 | 315 | 43.4 | 53.3 | 2.0 | | 0.60 |
| Household receipt of TANF | 380 | 6.5 | 25.9 | 312 | 7.7 | 28.7 | -1.2 | | 0.55 |
| **Attitudes and Expectations Domain** | | | | | | | | | |
| Youth agrees that personal goals include working and earning enough to stop receiving Social Security benefits | 327 | 67.3 | 49.2 | 256 | 68.2 | 50.0 | -0.9 | | 0.81 |
| Plans to go further in school, youth response | 343 | 68.5 | 48.7 | 259 | 68.6 | 49.8 | -0.1 | | 0.98 |
| Plans to go further in school, parent response | 274 | 61.4 | 50.9 | 225 | 60.0 | 52.7 | 1.4 | | 0.75 |

| | Treatment Group | | | Control Group | | | Unadjusted | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outcome | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | Impact (Treatment -Control) | P-Value |
| Expectations for employment, youth response[a] | | | | | | | | 0.59 |
| Working for pay at the time of the follow-up survey | 361 | 24.0 | | 276 | 22.6 | | 1.4 | |
| Plans to start working for pay | 361 | 66.5 | | 276 | 65.4 | | 1.1 | |
| No plans start working for pay | 361 | 9.6 | | 276 | 12.1 | | -2.5 | |
| Expectations for employment, parent response[a] | | | | | | | | 0.45 |
| Working for pay at the time of the follow-up survey | 301 | 24.0 | | 251 | 22.5 | | 1.4 | |
| Plans to start working for pay | 301 | 61.8 | | 251 | 59.3 | | 2.5 | |
| No plans start working for pay | 301 | 14.2 | | 251 | 18.2 | | -3.9 | |
| Plans to live on own (with or without help), youth response | 341 | 80.2 | 41.8 | 260 | 75.6 | 46.2 | 4.7 | 0.18 |
| Plans to live on own (with or without help), parent response | 279 | 53.1 | 52.3 | 229 | 46.0 | 53.4 | 7.2 | 0.11 |
| Internal locus of control (average of index) | 336 | 3.3 | 0.69 | 259 | 3.3 | 0.66 | 0.0 | 0.84 |
| External locus of control (average of index) | 335 | 2.69 | 0.77 | 256 | 2.7 | 0.79 | 0.0 | 1.00 |
| Make snacks or sandwiches (most or some of the time) | 414 | 90.9 | 30.2 | 329 | 88.6 | 34.1 | 2.3 | 0.31 |
| Ride public transportation alone (most or some of the time) | 414 | 52.8 | 52.4 | 328 | 55.7 | 53.4 | -2.9 | 0.43 |
| Pick clothes to wear (most or some of the time) | 414 | 93.0 | 26.7 | 329 | 94.0 | 25.6 | -0.9 | 0.62 |
| Decide to spend own money (most or some of the time) | 412 | 83.1 | 39.3 | 329 | 82.6 | 40.8 | 0.5 | 0.85 |
| Decide how to spend free time (most or some of the time) | 414 | 92.7 | 27.2 | 328 | 92.6 | 28.1 | 0.1 | 0.94 |
| Get together with friends often or sometimes | 413 | 71.3 | 47.5 | 327 | 70.2 | 49.1 | 1.1 | 0.74 |
| **Exploratory Analysis** | | | | | | | | |
| Ever enrolled in training in the year following random assignment | 410 | 11.1 | 33.0 | 329 | 11.2 | 33.9 | -0.1 | 0.96 |
| Number of months in a training program | | | | | | | | 0.79 |
| None | 410 | 88.9 | | 329 | 88.8 | | 0.1 | |
| Less than nine months | 410 | 3.0 | | 329 | 3.8 | | -0.8 | |
| Nine or more months | 410 | 8.1 | | 329 | 7.4 | | 0.7 | |
| Number of months in a training program (average) | 410 | 1.1 | 3.4 | 329 | 1.0 | 3.5 | 0.0 | 0.93 |

| | Treatment Group | | | Control Group | | | Unadjusted | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outcome | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | Impact (Treatment -Control) | | P-Value |
| Participated in any productive activity | 410 | 78.6 | 43.1 | 326 | 72.4 | 48.0 | 6.2 | * | 0.06 |
| Analytic Sample Size | 416 | | | 330 | | | | | |
| Research Sample Size | 457 | | | 380 | | | | | |

Sources: YTD 12-month follow-up survey and SSA administrative records.

Notes: We weighted statistics to adjust for non-response to the 12-month survey.

[a]Indicates outcome measures for which we used a multiple imputation procedure for missing information. See Section E of this appendix.

[b]Indicates outcomes based on SSA administrative records. For all outcomes from administrative records, we used the full research sample and did not weight to adjust for non-response to the 12-month survey.

RA = random assignment

**Table A.6. Difference in Simple Means Versus Regression- Adjusted Means for Primary Outcomes (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Simple Mean Difference | | P-Value | Adjusted Mean Difference | | P-Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Received any employment-promoting service | 15.2 | *** | 0.00 | 13.7 | *** | 0.00 |
| Ever employed on a paid job during first year after random assignment | 2.8 | | 0.45 | 2.9 | | 0.39 |
| Ever enrolled in school in the year following random assignment or completed high school by the time of the 12-month follow-up survey | -3.6 | | 0.20 | -3.0 | | 0.22 |
| Total annual income (earnings and SSA benefits) ($)[a] | 43 | | 0.90 | 183 | | 0.55 |
| Youth agrees that personal goals include working and earning enough to stop receiving Social Security benefits | -0.9 | | 0.81 | -2.4 | | 0.53 |

Sources: YTD 12-month follow-up survey and SSA administrative records.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the study's 12-month follow-up survey. We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment, using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analytic sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes. See Table A.5 for sample sizes for all outcomes.

[a]For this outcome, item non-response occurred conditionally, depending on values of other measures in the follow-up survey. The rate of missing data was about 10 percent for average total income. We used a multiple imputation procedure to assign values when they were missing. See Section E of this appendix for more information on this procedure.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

## D. Non- Response to the 12- Month Follow- Up Survey and Survey Weights

For the 12-month follow-up survey, if respondents differed systematically from non-respondents in terms of characteristics that also were correlated with the outcomes of interest, the estimated impacts could be biased if we did not account for the differences. We found that respondents did differ from non-respondents on several baseline characteristics; for example, respondents were more likely to have finished high school, have received job training, be covered by private health insurance, and have a cognitive/developmental disability (Table A.7). Respondents also had a slightly longer duration of disability.

Nearly all youth received SSA benefits during the year before baseline, and the annual benefit amount received by respondents is not statistically different from that received by non-respondents (Table A.8).[118] In the year following baseline, however, non-respondents received a lower average annual benefit amount relative to respondents. One reason for the difference is that youth no longer receiving benefits were more difficult to locate through SSA records using the most recent beneficiary contact information. Thus, youth who terminated benefits at some point during the year were more likely to be non-respondents. Even though the results showed some selectivity in who

[118] All youth in the research sample were on the SSA benefit rolls at the time data were extracted for the sample; however, a small percentage of them were not in "current pay" status. Subsequent analysis of benefit records showed that two percent of youth in the research sample did not receive benefits in the year prior to random assignment. These youth were considered to be at high risk of returning to "current pay" status in the future.

responded, we did not find that the estimated impact of Transition WORKS on benefit receipt differed between the respondent sample and the full research sample (Table A.9). Furthermore, across all outcomes measured in administrative records, we found little difference in levels or estimated impacts between the respondent and full research samples. The only exception was that the estimated impact on use of EIE is statistically significant in the research sample but not in the respondent sample.

In our analysis, we used weights that adjust for survey non-response to make respondent cases more representative of the original sample and reduce the potential for non-response bias. For the weight adjustments, we used forward and backward stepwise logistic models to estimate the propensity for a sample member to respond. We used the inverse of the propensity score as the non-response weight. We computed the models separately for treatment and control observations within Erie County. To select variables in the logistic model, we included variables with a statistical significance level of 0.30 or lower (instead of the standard 0.05) because the purpose of the model was to improve estimation of the propensity score, not to identify statistically significant factors related to response. For both the control and treatment groups, the explanatory variables included representative payee type; primary disabling condition; duration benefit entitlement; school attendance; highest grade completed; income level; receipt of SNAP benefits; living arrangement; number of people in the household; receipt of job training in the last year; and use of reading, hearing, or walking aid. Additional characteristics for the control group included age and self-reported health status. For the treatment group, additional characteristics included duration of disability and worked for pay in the last year.

## E. Missing Information for Independent and Dependent Variables

For most of the explanatory characteristics (independent variables) used in our regression models, we had few observations with missing information. For these variables, generally with far fewer than five percent of observations missing information, we replaced the missing information with the mean value from the non-missing observations. For two variables with a larger share of missing observations, we used dummy variables to indicate that the information was missing: mother's education (4.3 percent missing)[119] and expects to live independently in the future (22.5 percent missing). For the subgroup analysis, we omitted observations if the subgroup information was missing.

We typically excluded observations with missing information on an outcome measure (dependent variable) from any analysis of that outcome. For some outcome measures, however, the elimination of missing observations would produce potential bias. Specifically, the potential for bias occurs when the outcome is known to have a specific value for some observations conditional on another outcome. For example, for youth reporting that they did not work for pay in the year following random assignment, earnings in that year are known to be zero. Missing information thus arises only for observations of youth who worked for pay during the year. In this example, the elimination of missing observations would imply elimination only of observations for youth who worked for pay, resulting in an underestimate of average earnings. The degree to which the earnings

[119] In the analysis of one-year impacts for the Colorado Youth WINS YTD project, six percent of observations were missing information for mother's education. For this reason, we included a dummy variable in the regression to indicate this information was missing. We chose to keep this aspect of the model consistent for the analysis of one-year impacts of Transition WORKS.

**Table A.7. Baseline Characteristics for Respondents and Non-Respondents (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | All | Respondents | Non-Respondents | Difference | | P-Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Baseline Survey Data** | | | | | | |
| Demographic Characteristics | | | | | | |
| Race | | | | | | 0.38 |
| White | 55.3 | 56.3 | 47.3 | 9.0 | | |
| Black | 35.5 | 34.5 | 44.0 | -9.5 | | |
| American Indian/AK/HI/Pacific Islander | 1.1 | 1.2 | 0.0 | 1.2 | | |
| Asian | 0.5 | 0.4 | 1.1 | -0.7 | | |
| Other or unknown | 7.6 | 7.6 | 7.7 | -0.1 | | |
| Hispanic | 9.0 | 9.1 | 8.8 | 0.3 | | 0.93 |
| Primarily Speaks English at Home | 96.3 | 96.5 | 94.5 | 2.0 | | 0.34 |
| Education | | | | | | |
| School Attendance | | | | | | 0.68 |
| Does not attend school | 48.2 | 47.8 | 51.1 | -3.3 | | |
| Attends regular high school | 25.5 | 25.8 | 23.3 | 2.5 | | |
| Attends special high school | 8.3 | 8.6 | 5.6 | 3.0 | | |
| Attends other school | 18.0 | 17.7 | 20.0 | -2.3 | | |
| Attainment | | | | | | |
| High school diploma, GED, or certificate of completion | 39.9 | 41.9 | 24.2 | 17.7 | *** | 0.00 |
| Employment | | | | | | |
| Received Job training in last year | 38.3 | 40.2 | 23.1 | 17.1 | *** | 0.00 |
| Worked as a volunteer in last year | 10.0 | 10.1 | 8.8 | 1.3 | | 0.70 |
| Worked for pay in last year | 35.3 | 35.8 | 30.8 | 5.1 | | 0.34 |
| Worked for pay in last month | 18.8 | 19.0 | 16.5 | 2.6 | | 0.56 |
| Never worked for pay at baseline | 42.1 | 42.1 | 41.8 | 0.3 | | 0.95 |
| Living Arrangements and Household Composition | | | | | | |
| Living Arrangements | | | | | | 0.26 |
| Two-parent family | 32.1 | 33.2 | 23.1 | 10.2 | | |
| Single-parent family | 49.8 | 49.2 | 54.9 | -5.7 | | |
| Group home | 2.2 | 2.0 | 3.3 | -1.3 | | |
| Other institution | 3.2 | 3.4 | 2.2 | 1.2 | | |
| Lives alone or with friends | 12.7 | 12.2 | 16.5 | -4.3 | | |
| Average number of people in household | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.9 | -0.3 | | 0.12 |
| Lives with others with disabilities | 43.2 | 42.9 | 45.6 | -2.7 | | 0.65 |
| Health Insurance Coverage | | | | | | |
| Public health insurance | 96.0 | 96.1 | 95.5 | 0.6 | | 0.78 |
| Private health insurance | 23.6 | 24.8 | 14.4 | 10.3 | ** | 0.03 |
| Either public or private health insurance | 98.3 | 98.4 | 97.8 | 0.63 | | 0.67 |
| Both public and private health insurance | 20.6 | 21.8 | 11.1 | 10.7 | ** | 0.02 |
| Family Socioeconomic Status | | | | | | |
| Annual Income Level | | | | | | 0.71 |
| Less than $10,000 | 32.7 | 33.0 | 29.7 | 3.3 | | |
| $10,000 – $24,999 | 33.7 | 33.2 | 37.8 | -4.7 | | |
| $25,000 or more | 33.7 | 33.8 | 32.4 | 1.4 | | |
| Parents' Education | | | | | | |
| Mother high school graduate | 73.5 | 73.9 | 68.3 | 5.7 | | 0.33 |
| Father high school graduate | 73.5 | 73.5 | 75.0 | -1.5 | | 0.87 |
| Self-Reported Health Status | | | | | | 0.52 |
| Excellent | 18.8 | 18.3 | 23.1 | -4.8 | | |
| Very good/good | 61.6 | 62.1 | 57.1 | 5.0 | | |
| Fair/poor | 19.6 | 19.6 | 19.8 | -0.2 | | |
| Expectations About the Future | | | | | | |
| Expects to live independently (w/ or w/o help) | 76.0 | 75.4 | 80.6 | -5.1 | | 0.34 |
| Expects to continue education | 76.3 | 76.2 | 76.7 | -0.5 | | 0.92 |
| Expects to work at least part-time for pay | 92.7 | 92.8 | 91.8 | 1.1 | | 0.74 |

| | All | Respondents | Non-Respondents | Difference | | P-Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Administrative Data** | | | | | | |
| Demographic Characteristics | | | | | | |
| Male | 61.6 | 61.1 | 65.9 | -4.8 | | 0.37 |
| Age in Years | | | | | | 0.71 |
| 14–17 | 24.5 | 24.1 | 27.5 | -3.3 | | |
| 18–21 | 44.3 | 44.8 | 40.7 | 4.1 | | |
| 22–25 | 31.2 | 31.1 | 31.9 | -0.8 | | |
| Average age (years) | 19.9 | 19.9 | 19.7 | 0.3 | | 0.42 |
| Language | | | | | | 0.90 |
| English | 94.3 | 94.1 | 95.6 | -1.5 | | |
| Spanish | 2.2 | 2.3 | 1.1 | 1.2 | | |
| Other | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.1 | | |
| Unknown/missing | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 0.2 | | |
| Benefits | | | | | | |
| SSA Beneficiary Status | | | | | | 0.35 |
| CDB or DI | 5.4 | 5.6 | 3.3 | 2.3 | | |
| SSI (only or concurrent with CDB or DI) | 94.6 | 94.4 | 96.7 | -2.3 | | |
| Duration of benefit entitlement (years) | 8.3 | 8.3 | 8.2 | 0.1 | | 0.94 |
| Health Status | | | | | | |
| Primary Disabling Condition (SSA data) | | | | | *** | 0.01 |
| Mental illness | 17.6 | 16.0 | 30.3 | -14.3 | | |
| Cognitive/developmental disability | 44.4 | 45.8 | 33.7 | 12.1 | | |
| Learning disability/ADD | 13.4 | 13.9 | 9.0 | 4.9 | | |
| Physical disability | 18.4 | 18.5 | 18.0 | 0.5 | | |
| Speech, hearing, visual impairment | 6.2 | 5.8 | 9.0 | -3.1 | | |
| Duration of disability (years) | 9.8 | 10.0 | 8.7 | 1.3 | * | 0.09 |
| Earnings in prior year ($) | 850 | 872 | 672 | 200 | | 0.42 |
| Sample Size | 837 | 746 | 91 | | | |

Sources: YTD baseline survey and SSA administrative records.

Notes: The table includes all of the main baseline characteristics (all of those included in Table II.2) and any baseline characteristics for which differences between respondents and non-respondents are statistically significant at the .10 level. The analysis does not include the six research sample youth who were deceased at the time of the 12-month survey. Baseline survey non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for some characteristics than indicated at the bottom of the table. Missing information on primary disabling condition resulted in a smaller sample size for this characteristic than shown at the bottom of the table.

*/**/***Difference is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

**Table A.8. Annual SSA Benefit Receipt for Respondents and Non- Respondents**

| | All | Respondents | Non-Respondents | Difference | | P-Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Benefit Receipt (%) | | | | | | |
| Any SSA benefits in year before random assignment[a] | 98.2 | 98.1 | 98.9 | -0.8 | | 0.60 |
| Any SSA benefits in year after random assignment | 97.6 | 97.7 | 96.7 | 1.0 | | 0.55 |
| Benefit Amount ($) | | | | | | |
| SSA benefits in year before random assignment | 7,057 | 7,051 | 7,112 | -61 | | 0.83 |
| SSA benefits in year after random assignment | 7,104 | 7,162 | 6,632 | 530 | * | 0.08 |
| Sample Size | 837 | 746 | 91 | | | |

Source: SSA administrative records.

Notes: We adjusted all benefit amount variables for inflation to 2008 dollars using the average wage index. We defined the previous year as the 12 months preceding the date of random assignment (not including the month in which the key date falls). We defined the year following random assignment as the 12 months following the month of random assignment, which includes the date of random assignment. The analysis does not include the six research sample youth who were deceased at the time of the 12-month survey.

[a]All youth in the research sample were on the SSA benefit rolls at the time data were extracted for the sample; however, a small percentage of them were not in "current pay" status. Subsequent analysis of benefit records showed that some youth in the research sample did not receive benefits in the year prior to random assignment.

*/**/***Difference is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

**Table A.9. Impacts on Outcomes Measured with Administrative Records, Respondent and Full Sample (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | 12-Month Survey Respondent Sample | | | | | Full Randomly Assigned Sample | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Treatment Group | | | | | Treatment Group | | | | |
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | | P-Value | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | | P-Value |
| Receipt of SSA Benefits (SSI, DI, or CDB) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Any SSA benefits | 97.6 | 97.8 | -0.2 | | 0.88 | 97.4 | 97.8 | -0.5 | | 0.67 |
| Number of months of benefit receipt during the year following random assignment | 11.3 | 11.3 | 0.0 | | 0.91 | 11.3 | 11.2 | 0.1 | | 0.75 |
| Benefit Amount | | | | | | | | | | |
| Distribution of annual benefit amount | | | | | 0.93 | | | | | 0.93 |
| None | 2.4 | 2.1 | 0.3 | | | 2.6 | 2.2 | 0.5 | | |
| $1 to $6,500 | 27.9 | 29.1 | -1.1 | | | 27.8 | 29.0 | -1.2 | | |
| $6,501 to $8,000 | 44.9 | 45.5 | -0.7 | | | 45.3 | 45.7 | -0.4 | | |
| More than $8,000 | 24.8 | 23.3 | 1.5 | | | 24.3 | 23.1 | 1.2 | | |
| Annual benefit amount ($) | 7,171 | 7,024 | 147 | | 0.44 | 7,142 | 6,993 | 149 | | 0.40 |
| Use of SSA Work Incentives | | | | | | | | | | |
| Used at least one SSA work incentive | 33.0 | 26.1 | 6.9 | ** | 0.03 | 31.7 | 24.9 | 6.9 | ** | 0.02 |
| Used the EIE | 25.2 | 20.2 | 5.0 | | 0.11 | 24.3 | 18.8 | 5.5 | ** | 0.05 |
| Used the SEIE | 11.2 | 8.2 | 3.0 | | 0.14 | 10.5 | 8.0 | 2.5 | | 0.19 |
| Used the Section-301 waiver | 5.3 | 0.3 | 5.0 | *** | 0.00 | 5.3 | 0.4 | 4.9 | *** | 0.00 |
| Established a PASS[a] | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.5 | | 0.22 | 0.4 | 0.0 | 0.4 | | 0.20 |
| Opened an IDA | 0.0 | 0.0 | ----- | | ----- | 0.0 | 0.0 | ----- | | ----- |

Source: SSA administrative records.

Notes: The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. For the respondent sample, we calculated all statistics using sample weights to account for interview non-response. The 12-month survey respondent sample (also referred to as the analytic sample) includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. The full randomly assigned sample (also referred to as the research sample) includes 457 treatment group youth and 380 control group youth.

We adjusted all benefit amount variables for inflation to 2008 dollars using the average wage index. This analysis does not include six research sample youth who were deceased at the time of the 12-month survey.

[a] The control group members did not use this work incentive. Hence, the table reports the unadjusted means and unadjusted impacts.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using either a two-tailed t-test or a chi-square test.

estimate is too low could differ by treatment status (for example, if treatment youth were more likely to work for pay and just as likely to respond to questions on earnings). For almost all outcome measures with conditionally missing data, no more than 13 percent of observations were missing. The one exception is expectations for future work (about 15 percent missing for youth responses and 26 percent missing for parent responses). In Table A.5, we provide the sample sizes for all outcome measures.

For outcome measures for which information was missing conditional on another outcome, we used a multiple imputation procedure, as described in Puma et al. (2009). Here, we provide a conceptual description of the imputation process. We first imputed the missing values by using a stochastic regression model. The imputation model included all variables in our impact analysis model plus key outcome measures and a stochastic residual term to match the observed variance in the sample. We performed the process 10 times to create 10 separate analytic data sets. We then conducted the impact analysis separately on each of the 10 data sets. The impact estimate is computed as the simple average of the impact estimates across the 10 data sets. The standard error of the combined impact estimate is calculated from within-imputation variance and between-imputation variance components. To implement the analysis, we used Stata procedures written by Royston (2007), Carlin et al. (2008), and Royston et al. (2009).[120]

## F. Monthly SSA Benefit Amount Before and After Random Assignment

In Figure A.1 and Table A.10, we present the unadjusted average monthly benefit amount for youth in the treatment and control groups before and after random assignment. There was no strong pattern of differences in the average monthly benefit amount between the two groups. The differences were small and statistically significant only in the seventh month prior to random assignment (a difference of $34, statistically significant at the five percent level).

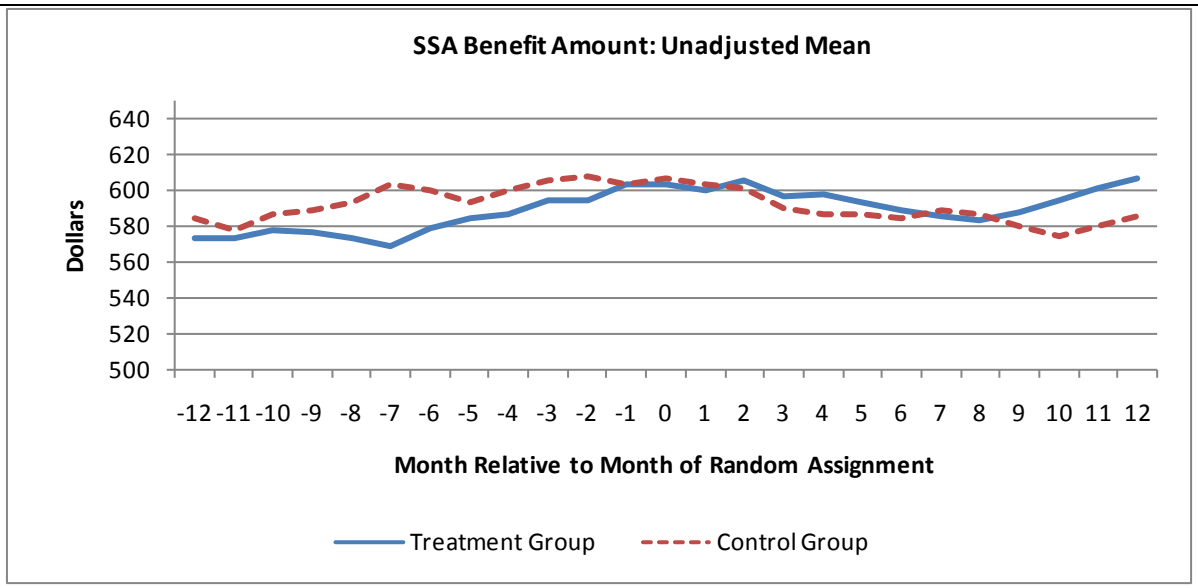
## G. Exploratory Subgroups

In the evaluation design report (Rangarajan et al. 2009a), we hypothesized the potential for differential impacts across a number of subgroups. To be responsive to the multiple comparisons problem, we limited the main subgroups discussed in the text to those with the strongest conceptual reasons for likely differential impacts: pairs of subgroups defined by age, school attendance, and work experience. In this section, we examine differential impacts for several exploratory subgroups. For these subgroups, we hypothesized the potential for differential impacts but decided before the analysis that the potential was lower than for the main subgroups discussed in the text.

We conducted exploratory analysis of the impact of Transition WORKS on the primary outcomes for six exploratory subgroup pairs:

[120] Impact estimates for outcomes with conditionally missing data would be biased if we did not adjust for missing information. However, when we calculated the biased impact estimates by dropping observations with missing outcome information, we found results very similar to those of the multiple imputation procedure. The impact estimates were slightly different, but the pattern of statistical significance was the same. The similarity in the findings is not surprising, given the relatively small share of observations with missing outcome information.

**Figure A.1. Average SSA Benefit Amount by Months Before and After Random Assignment**




Source: SSA administrative records.

Notes: The analysis includes all youth who were randomly assigned, with the exception of six youth who were deceased at the time of the 12-month survey. The figure presents observed means for the treatment and control groups.

The estimated difference between the treatment and control groups at seven months before random assignment is statistically significant at the .05 level. All other differences are not significantly different from zero at the .10 level.

- **Enrollment cohort.** Impacts may differ between early and later cohorts because project services differ over time (attributable, for example, to differences in staff experience or turnover) and because other conditions differ over time (for example, job availability in the labor market). To divide the sample somewhat evenly, we considered youth randomly assigned by August 2007 as the early cohort.[121] The early cohort comprised slightly more than half of the youth (51 percent).[122]

- **Time between baseline survey and consent.** To examine whether impacts differed for hard-to-enroll youth, we estimated impacts separately for youth who provided written consent to enroll within 21 days of completing the baseline survey versus youth who took longer than 21 days. The youth who enrolled within 21 days made up 48 percent of the sample.

[121] In Chapter III, we described Transition WORKS service provision in two cohorts according to the period of enrollment in project services. For the impact analysis, we based the definition of cohorts on the date of random assignment, which applied to all treatment and control youth (whereas date of enrollment in services was defined only for youth in the treatment group who participated in services).

[122] We set the cut-off date between the early and later cohorts to yield a relatively even share of youth in each cohort. By making the two groups similar in size, we maximized the statistical power for detecting differences between groups in the estimated impact. We followed this approach for all exploratory subgroups defined by a continuous variable: enrollment cohort, time between baseline survey and consent, and duration on SSA benefits.

**Table A.10. Average SSA Benefit Amount by Months Before and After Random Assignment ($)**

| Month Relative to Random Assignment | Treatment Group | Control Group | Difference | | P-Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12 months before | 574 | 584 | -11 | | 0.53 |
| 11 months before | 573 | 578 | -5 | | 0.77 |
| 10 months before | 578 | 587 | -9 | | 0.61 |
| 9 months before | 577 | 589 | -13 | | 0.45 |
| 8 months before | 574 | 593 | -20 | | 0.25 |
| 7 months before | 569 | 603 | -34 | ** | 0.04 |
| 6 months before | 578 | 600 | -22 | | 0.19 |
| 5 months before | 584 | 593 | -9 | | 0.59 |
| 4 months before | 587 | 599 | -13 | | 0.43 |
| 3 months before | 595 | 605 | -10 | | 0.54 |
| 2 months before | 595 | 608 | -13 | | 0.43 |
| 1 month before | 603 | 603 | 0 | | 0.99 |
| Month of random assignment | 603 | 607 | -4 | | 0.82 |
| 1 month after | 600 | 603 | -3 | | 0.85 |
| 2 months after | 605 | 601 | 4 | | 0.79 |
| 3 months after | 597 | 590 | 6 | | 0.71 |
| 4 months after | 598 | 586 | 11 | | 0.50 |
| 5 months after | 593 | 587 | 6 | | 0.71 |
| 6 months after | 589 | 585 | 5 | | 0.78 |
| 7 months after | 586 | 589 | -3 | | 0.86 |
| 8 months after | 584 | 587 | -3 | | 0.87 |
| 9 months after | 587 | 580 | 7 | | 0.66 |
| 10 months after | 594 | 575 | 19 | | 0.29 |
| 11 months after | 601 | 580 | 22 | | 0.23 |
| 12 months after | 606 | 586 | 21 | | 0.24 |
| Sample Size | 457 | 380 | | | |

Source: SSA administrative records.

Notes: The analysis includes all youth who were randomly assigned, with the exception of six youth who were deceased at the time of the 12-month survey. The table reports observed means for the treatment and control groups and the difference between the observed means for the two groups.

*/**/***Difference is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

- **Duration on SSA benefits.** To examine whether impacts differed for youth who had received SSA benefits for a shorter period, we estimated impacts separately for youth who had received benefits for less than five years (41 percent) versus those who had received them for five years or more (59 percent).
- **Physical primary disabling condition.** Impacts may differ for youth with a physical primary disability, including speech, hearing, and visual impairment (27 percent), compared to those with a mental, cognitive/developmental, or learning disability (73 percent).
- **Two-parent family.** To examine whether impacts differed by socioeconomic status, we estimated separate impacts for those who lived with both parents (33 percent) compared to all other youth (67 percent). We chose this measure of socioeconomic status due to the likelihood of a high degree of error in our measure of family income and the relatively uneven sample split by mother's education (about 74 percent of the sample had a mother who completed high school; also, about four percent were missing information on mother's education).

- **Time between random assignment and 12-month follow-up survey.** Ideally, the 12-month follow-up survey would have occurred exactly 12 months after random assignment for all youth. In practice, 61 percent of respondents completed the survey in the 12th or 13th month; the remaining 39 percent of respondents completed the survey in a later month.[123] To examine whether the timing of the follow-up survey affected impact estimates, we estimated separate impact estimates for youth interviewed by the end of the 13th month and those interviewed later. The purpose of this subgroup analysis is to examine the fidelity of the research approach; this analysis is the only subgroup pair for which the defining characteristics were not measured at baseline.

In general, we found no consistent patterns of differential impacts (Tables A.11 through A.15). We found only 3 cases (out of 30 total cases) for which the difference in impacts between the subgroup pairs is statistically significant. Among youth who had received SSA disability benefits for less than five years relative to youth with longer periods of benefits receipt, the findings suggest that Transition WORKS may have had larger impacts on service utilization and employment. Among youth who live with both parents relative to youth who live in other types of households, the findings suggest Transition WORKS may have had a larger impact on youth income. However, given that we have conducted 30 tests of the exploratory subgroup pairs (six subgroups for each of five primary outcomes), we would have expected to find some statistically significant differences attributable to chance. In light of the lack of a pattern of differences for any subgroup, we conclude that there is no evidence that any impacts differed meaningfully for the subgroups.

## H. Additional Self- Efficacy Outcomes

In Chapter VIII, we reported that Transition WORKS did not have statistically significant impacts on either the internal or external locus of control. We created these composite measures from a series of questions in the follow-up survey. The self-efficacy measures are based on a battery of 12 questions that includes the Pearlin Mastery Scale (Pearlin and Schooler 1978). We selected one of these questions, on goals for future work and earnings, as the primary outcome in this domain because of its relevance to the YTD initiative. We used factor analysis to determine that the remaining 11 questions could be aggregated into two factors based on the high degree of correlation of the measures within the two groupings. After examining the concepts in each group of questions, we labeled the first group "internal locus of control" and the second group "external locus of control."[124]

It is preferable to use the two composite outcomes instead of estimating impacts separately for each question because the questions are meant to assess the same underlying concept (self-efficacy) and the responses are highly correlated within two factors. The composite measures have lower random variation than the separate measures, and the approach addresses the multiple comparisons problem (Chapter II). Specifically, with 11 outcomes, we would expect to find one statistically significant impact because of random variation even if Transition WORKS had no impact on self-efficacy.

[123] The earliest completion occurred at 11.4 months, 50 percent of youth completed before 12.6 months, 85 percent of youth completed by the end of the 15th month, and the latest completion occurred at month 22.2.

[124] The factor analysis showed that the questions in each group had a high degree of correlation, so it is appropriate to combine the separate questions in a single measure for each group. Furthermore, the results of the factor analysis are consistent with grouping the questions conceptually, based on whether they affirm or suggest a lack of self-efficacy.

**Table A.11. Impact on Use of Employment Services for Additional Subgroups (percentages)**

| | Treatment Group | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | | P-Value | Treatment Group Size | Control Group Size |
| Enrollment Cohort | | | | | | | |
| Enrolled by August 2007 | 64.0 | 54.7 | 9.3 | * | 0.07 | 210 | 160 |
| Enrolled after August 2007 | 68.9 | 50.3 | 18.7 | *** | 0.00 | 194 | 161 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | | (0.18) | | |
| Time Between Baseline Survey and Consent | | | | | | | |
| 21 days or less | 71.8 | 58.4 | 13.3 | *** | 0.01 | 184 | 169 |
| More than 21 days | 61.7 | 46.5 | 15.2 | *** | 0.00 | 220 | 152 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | | (0.90) | | |
| Duration on SSA benefits | | | | | | | |
| Less than 5 years | 72.1 | 47.1 | 25.1 | *** | 0.00 | 170 | 137 |
| 5 years or more | 62.0 | 57.9 | 4.1 | | 0.39 | 234 | 184 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | *** | (0.00) | | |
| Primary Disabling Condition | | | | | | | |
| Physical disability (including speech, hearing, and visual) | 65.8 | 47.1 | 18.7 | ** | 0.01 | 86 | 83 |
| Mental illness, cognitive/ developmental, and learning disability | 66.1 | 54.8 | 11.3 | *** | 0.01 | 303 | 227 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | | (0.40) | | |
| Two-Parent Family | | | | | | | |
| Lives with both parents | 72.3 | 51.6 | 20.8 | *** | 0.00 | 138 | 107 |
| Does not live with both parents | 63.3 | 52.9 | 10.4 | ** | 0.02 | 266 | 214 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | | (0.15) | | |
| Time Between Random Assignment and Follow-up Survey | | | | | | | |
| Completed survey by the end of 13th month | 68.3 | 52.8 | 15.5 | *** | 0.00 | 249 | 198 |
| Completed survey after 13th month | 63.3 | 52.3 | 10.9 | * | 0.07 | 155 | 123 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | | (0.52) | | |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics by using sample weights to account for interview non-response. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes, as indicated in the table.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

**Table A.12. Impact on Ever Employed in a Paid Job for Additional Subgroups (percentages)**

| | Treatment Group | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | | P-Value | Treatment Group Size | Control Group Size |
| Enrollment Cohort | | | | | | | |
| Enrolled by August 2007 | 44.0 | 42.5 | 1.5 | | 0.75 | 213 | 163 |
| Enrolled after August 2007 | 43.2 | 38.9 | 4.3 | | 0.34 | 201 | 167 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | | (0.67) | | |
| Time Between Baseline Survey and Consent | | | | | | | |
| 21 days or less | 41.4 | 41.8 | -0.3 | | 0.95 | 189 | 172 |
| More than 21 days | 45.5 | 39.4 | 6.0 | | 0.18 | 225 | 158 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | | (0.34) | | |
| Duration on SSA benefits | | | | | | | |
| Less than 5 years | 45.7 | 35.1 | 10.6 | ** | 0.04 | 170 | 138 |
| 5 years or more | 42.2 | 45.2 | -3.0 | | 0.49 | 244 | 192 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | ** | (0.04) | | |
| Primary Disabling Condition | | | | | | | |
| Physical disability (including speech, hearing, and visual) | 42.3 | 41.8 | 0.5 | | 0.93 | 88 | 87 |
| Mental illness, cognitive/ developmental, and learning disability | 44.7 | 41.0 | 3.6 | | 0.36 | 310 | 232 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | | (0.68) | | |
| Two-Parent Family | | | | | | | |
| Lives with both parents | 50.3 | 40.4 | 9.9 | * | 0.07 | 139 | 108 |
| Does not live with both parents | 40.3 | 40.8 | -0.05 | | 0.91 | 275 | 222 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | | (0.13) | | |
| Time Between Random Assignment and Follow-up Survey | | | | | | | |
| Completed survey by the end of 13th month | 46.9 | 45.6 | 1.4 | | 0.75 | 254 | 203 |
| Completed survey after 13th month | 38.4 | 33.3 | 5.1 | | 0.35 | 160 | 127 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | | (0.59) | | |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes, as indicated in the table.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

**Table A.13. Impact on Ever Enrolled in School or Has Completed High School for Additional Subgroups (percentages)**

| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | | P-Value | Treatment Group Size | Control Group Size |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Enrollment Cohort | | | | | | | |
| Enrolled by August 2007 | 80.2 | 85.8 | -5.6 | | 0.15 | 210 | 162 |
| Enrolled after August 2007 | 83.9 | 84.9 | -1.0 | | 0.79 | 196 | 164 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | | (0.43) | | |
| Time Between Baseline Survey and Consent | | | | | | | |
| 21 days or less | 80.9 | 86.1 | -5.2 | | 0.17 | 184 | 171 |
| More than 21 days | 82.9 | 84.7 | -1.8 | | 0.65 | 222 | 155 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | | (0.52) | | |
| Duration on SSA benefits | | | | | | | |
| Less than 5 years | 77.2 | 85.2 | -7.9 | * | 0.08 | 167 | 137 |
| 5 years or more | 85.4 | 85.7 | -0.3 | | 0.92 | 239 | 189 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | | (0.21) | | |
| Primary Disabling Condition | | | | | | | |
| Physical disability (including speech, hearing, and visual) | 90.1 | 93.2 | -3.1 | | 0.51 | 88 | 86 |
| Mental illness, cognitive/ developmental, and learning disability | 79.2 | 82.5 | -3.4 | | 0.31 | 304 | 229 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | | (0.80) | | |
| Two-Parent Family | | | | | | | |
| Lives with both parents | 83.7 | 91.9 | -8.2 | * | 0.07 | 139 | 105 |
| Does not live with both parents | 81.1 | 82.3 | -1.1 | | 0.74 | 267 | 221 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | | (0.14) | | |
| Time Between Random Assignment and Follow-up Survey | | | | | | | |
| Completed survey by the end of 13th month | 82.8 | 87.2 | -4.3 | | 0.19 | 248 | 201 |
| Completed survey after 13th month | 80.7 | 82.6 | -1.9 | | 0.68 | 158 | 125 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | | (0.61) | | |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes, as indicated in the table.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

**Table A.14. Impact on Income for Additional Subgroups ($)**

| | Treatment Group | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value | Treatment Group Size | Control Group Size |
| Enrollment Cohort | | | | | | |
| Enrolled by August 2007 | 9,014 | 8,931 | 83 | 0.84 | 215 | 163 |
| Enrolled after August 2007 | 9,012 | 8,775 | 237 | 0.60 | 201 | 167 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.80) | | |
| Time Between Baseline Survey and Consent | | | | | | |
| 21 days or less | 8,995 | 8,839 | 116 | 0.79 | 189 | 172 |
| More than 21 days | 9,061 | 8,827 | 235 | 0.57 | 227 | 158 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.84) | | |
| Duration on SSA benefits | | | | | | |
| Less than 5 years | 8,834 | 8,827 | 7 | 0.99 | 171 | 138 |
| 5 years or more | 9,140 | 8,916 | 225 | 0.57 | 245 | 192 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.72) | | |
| Primary Disabling Condition | | | | | | |
| Physical disability (including speech, hearing, and visual) | 9,040 | 9,226 | -186 | 0.80 | 88 | 87 |
| Mental illness, cognitive/ developmental, and learning disability | 8,998 | 8,736 | 252 | 0.45 | 312 | 232 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.58) | | |
| Two-Parent Family | | | | | | |
| Lives with both parents | 9,137 | 8,276 | 861 * | 0.07 | 140 | 108 |
| Does not live with both parents | 8,951 | 9,118 | -167 | 0.67 | 276 | 222 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | * | (0.09) | | |
| Time Between Random Assignment and Follow-up Survey | | | | | | |
| Completed survey by the end of 13th month | 9,201 | 8,924 | 277 | 0.46 | 225 | 203 |
| Completed survey after 13th month | 8,716 | 8,732 | -16 | 0.97 | 161 | 127 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.63) | | |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes, as indicated in the table.

For the outcome in this table, item non-response occurred conditionally, depending on the values of other measures in the follow-up survey. The rate of missing data was about 10 percent for average total income. We used a multiple imputations procedure to assign values when they were missing. See Section E of this appendix for more information on this procedure.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

**Table A.15. Impact on Goals Include Working and Earning Enough to Stop Receiving Social Security Benefits for Additional Subgroups (percentages)**

| | Treatment Group | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value | Treatment Group Size | Control Group Size |
| Enrollment Cohort | | | | | | |
| Enrolled by August 2007 | 68.4 | 69.3 | -0.9 | 0.86 | 174 | 130 |
| Enrolled after August 2007 | 66.0 | 70.5 | -4.5 | 0.41 | 153 | 126 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.65) | | |
| Time Between Baseline Survey and Consent | | | | | | |
| 21 days or less | 69.1 | 68.1 | 1.0 | 0.86 | 147 | 133 |
| More than 21 days | 65.8 | 72.2 | -6.5 | 0.23 | 180 | 123 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.33) | | |
| Duration on SSA benefits | | | | | | |
| Less than 5 years | 71.8 | 80.1 | -8.2 | 0.14 | 131 | 103 |
| 5 years or more | 64.2 | 62.9 | 1.3 | 0.81 | 196 | 153 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.18) | | |
| Primary Disabling Condition | | | | | | |
| Physical disability (including speech, hearing, and visual) | 78.1 | 82.1 | -4.0 | 0.55 | 76 | 66 |
| Mental illness, cognitive/developmental, and learning disability | 63.5 | 65.7 | -2.2 | 0.64 | 238 | 184 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.75) | | |
| Two-Parent Family | | | | | | |
| Lives with both parents | 67.4 | 76.3 | -8.9 | 0.16 | 106 | 84 |
| Does not live with both parents | 67.2 | 66.9 | 0.3 | 0.96 | 221 | 172 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.24) | | |
| Time Between Random Assignment and Follow-up Survey | | | | | | |
| Completed survey by the end of 13th month | 69.4 | 69.1 | 0.3 | 0.95 | 196 | 159 |
| Completed survey after 13th month | 64.1 | 71.3 | -7.2 | 0.25 | 131 | 97 |
| (P-value of difference in impacts) | | | | (0.35) | | |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response. Survey item non-response may have resulted in smaller sample sizes for specific outcomes, as indicated in the table.

*/**/***Impact estimate is significantly different from zero at the .10/.05/.01 level using a two-tailed t-test.

In this evaluation, the internal locus of control reflects whether youth believe their life outcomes result primarily from their own behaviors and actions. Our measure of the internal locus of control is an index based on the degree to which youth agreed with the following five statements:

- What happens to you in the future mostly depends on you.
- You can do just about anything you really set your mind to.
- You tell other people how you feel when they upset you or hurt your feelings.
- You know how to get the information you need.
- You have a good sense of the path you want to take in life and the steps to get there.

The index for the internal locus of control runs from 1 to 4, with 1 signaling strong disagreement with the statements and 4 signaling strong agreement. The average value of this index for treatment group youth is 3.3, and we estimated that, in the absence of Transition WORKS, the average would have been the same.

The external locus of control reflects the degree to which youth believe that others, fate, or chance primarily determine their life outcomes. Our measure of the external locus of control is an index based on the degree to which youth agreed with the following six statements:

- You have little control over the things that happen to you.
- There is really no way you can solve some of the problems you have.
- There is little you can do to change many of the things in your life.
- You often feel helpless in dealing with the problems of life.
- Sometimes you feel like you are being pushed around in life.
- Your job opportunities will be limited by discrimination because of your gender, race, or disability.

This index also runs from 1 to 4, with 1 signaling strong agreement with the statements and 4 signaling strong disagreement. The average value of this index for the external locus of control for treatment group youth is 2.7. We estimated that these youth would have had essentially the same average value of this index even if they had not been given the opportunity to participate in Transition WORKS.

As a robustness check for the findings from the two composite measures, we also estimated the impact estimates for each question separately. Consistent with the findings for the composite outcomes, we found no statistically significant impacts for any of the 11 questions (Table A.16).

**Table A.16. Self- Efficacy (percentages)**

| | Treatment Group | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value |
| **Supplementary Outcomes** | | | | |
| Internal Locus of Control | | | | |
| What happens to you in the future mostly depends on you | | | | 0.25 |
| Agree a lot | 69.6 | 69.5 | 0.1 | |
| Agree a little | 13.3 | 12.1 | 1.2 | |
| Disagree a little | 7.3 | 11.4 | -4.0 | |
| Disagree a lot | 9.8 | 7.1 | 2.8 | |
| You can do just about anything you really set your mind to | | | | 0.49 |
| Agree a lot | 73.4 | 73.7 | -0.3 | |
| Agree a little | 15.6 | 13.9 | 1.7 | |
| Disagree a little | 7.3 | 6.3 | 1.0 | |
| Disagree a lot | 3.6 | 6.1 | -2.5 | |
| You tell other people how you feel when they upset you or hurt your feelings | | | | 0.23 |
| Agree a lot | 55.5 | 58.8 | -3.3 | |
| Agree a little | 22.9 | 16.4 | 6.5 | |
| Disagree a little | 8.0 | 8.0 | 0.0 | |
| Disagree a lot | 13.6 | 16.8 | -3.2 | |
| You know how to get the information you need | | | | 0.74 |
| Agree a lot | 54.5 | 54.7 | -0.2 | |
| Agree a little | 25.8 | 23.1 | 2.7 | |
| Disagree a little | 8.7 | 11.0 | -2.3 | |
| Disagree a lot | 11.0 | 11.2 | -0.2 | |
| You have a good sense of the path you want to take in life and the steps to get there | | | | 0.50 |
| Agree a lot | 58.3 | 64.1 | -5.7 | |
| Agree a little | 21.8 | 17.2 | 4.6 | |
| Disagree a little | 10.7 | 9.9 | 0.8 | |
| Disagree a lot | 9.2 | 8.9 | 0.3 | |
| External Locus of Control | | | | |
| You have little control over the things that happen to you | | | | 0.79 |
| Agree a lot | 21.5 | 18.4 | 3.1 | |
| Agree a little | 21.0 | 23.3 | -2.3 | |
| Disagree a little | 24.6 | 25.6 | -1.0 | |
| Disagree a lot | 32.9 | 32.7 | 0.3 | |
| There is really no way you can solve some of the problems you have | | | | 0.24 |
| Agree a lot | 25.0 | 23.6 | 1.4 | |
| Agree a little | 21.1 | 22.1 | -1.0 | |
| Disagree a little | 23.6 | 17.8 | 5.8 | |
| Disagree a lot | 30.4 | 36.6 | -6.2 | |
| There is little you can do to change many of the important things in your life | | | | 0.72 |
| Agree a lot | 26.2 | 29.7 | -3.5 | |
| Agree a little | 19.2 | 16.2 | 3.0 | |
| Disagree a little | 21.2 | 20.3 | 1.0 | |
| Disagree a lot | 33.4 | 33.9 | -0.5 | |

| | Treatment Group | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Observed Mean | Estimated Mean w/o Transition WORKS | Impact | P-Value |
| You often feel helpless in dealing with the problems of life | | | | 0.75 |
| Agree a lot | 21.0 | 20.1 | 0.8 | |
| Agree a little | 17.2 | 19.1 | -1.9 | |
| Disagree a little | 23.9 | 20.7 | 3.1 | |
| Disagree a lot | 38.0 | 40.0 | -2.1 | |
| Sometimes you feel like you are being pushed around in life | | | | 0.91 |
| Agree a lot | 25.3 | 26.4 | -1.0 | |
| Agree a little | 20.8 | 22.6 | -1.8 | |
| Disagree a little | 15.3 | 14.4 | 0.9 | |
| Disagree a lot | 38.6 | 36.6 | 2.0 | |
| Your job opportunities will be limited by discrimination because of your gender, race, or disability | | | | 0.62 |
| Agree a lot | 21.7 | 26.4 | -4.7 | |
| Agree a little | 17.8 | 16.3 | 1.6 | |
| Disagree a little | 18.2 | 17.6 | 0.6 | |
| Disagree a lot | 42.3 | 39.7 | 2.6 | |

Source: YTD 12-month follow-up survey.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the 12-month follow-up survey. The table reports observed means or percentages for the treatment group, estimates of what the treatment group means or percentages would have been in the absence of Transition WORKS, and regression-adjusted impact estimates (see Chapter II, Section A.4). We measured explanatory variables in the regression model before random assignment using data from the study's baseline survey and SSA administrative records. We calculated all statistics with sample weights to account for interview non-response. The analytic sample includes 416 treatment group youth and 330 control group youth. For the outcomes in this table, survey item non-response resulted in smaller sample sizes that varied by a few observations across outcomes: 332 to 337 treatment group youth and 254 to 260 control group youth.

None of the estimated impacts are significantly different from zero at the .10 level.

# APPENDIX B

# SUPPORTING TABLES FOR CHAPTER III

**Table B.1. Receipt of Case Management/Support Services and Referrals (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Transition WORKS Participants |
|---|---|
| **Ever Received Service** | |
| Any case management or support service | 68.7 |
| Type of case management or support service | |
| General check-in | 47.9 |
| Family support | 5.8 |
| Transportation | 4.2 |
| Case review | 11.6 |
| Life skills | 6.1 |
| Vocational rehabilitation | 8.9 |
| Housing services | 3.4 |
| Mental health | 3.2 |
| Legal information | 5.0 |
| Other Benefits Programs | 9.5 |
| Other | 24.5 |
| **Timing of Service Use** | |
| Number of days between enrollment and first service contact | |
| Distribution of days | |
| 0 | 0.0 |
| 1 – 30 | 31.8 |
| 31 – 90 | 29.1 |
| 91 - 180 | 16.5 |
| 181 or more | 22.6 |
| Average (days) | 106.2 |
| Median (days) | 63.0 |
| First contact occurred within 30 days | 31.8 |
| First contact occurred with 180 days | 77.4 |
| Number of days between enrollment and second service contact | |
| Average (days) | 131.4 |
| Median (days) | 89.0 |
| Second contact occurred within 30 days | 17.7 |
| Second contact occurred with 180 days | 72.6 |
| **Intensity of Service Use** | |
| Number of contacts per participant | |
| Distribution of contacts | |
| 0 | 0.0 |
| 1 | 33.0 |
| 2 | 18.8 |
| 3 or 4 | 21.5 |
| 5 to 10 | 19.5 |
| 11 or more | 7.3 |
| Average (contacts) | 2.0 |
| Median (contacts) | 3.9 |

*(continued)*

**Table B.1. (continued)**

| | Transition WORKS Participants |
|---|---|
| Hours of services per participant | |
| Distribution of hours | |
| 0 | 0.0 |
| Less than 1 | 64.4 |
| 1 to less than 2 | 16.9 |
| 2 to less than 4 | 10.7 |
| 4 or more | 8.0 |
| Average (hours) | 1.6 |
| Median (hours) | 0.5 |
| Minutes of services per contact | |
| Average (minutes) | 21.9 |
| Median (minutes) | 10.0 |
| Percent of contacts lasting longer than 30 minutes | 14.3 |
| **Referrals to Other Service Providers** | |
| Any referral | 25.0 |
| Type of referral | |
| Legal services | 15.3 |
| State vocational rehabilitation services | 7.3 |
| Education and trainings services | 3.8 |
| One-Stop Workforce Center | 3.4 |
| Social services | 3.1 |
| Mental health services | 2.3 |
| Respite/day providers | 1.9 |
| Developmental Disability Services | 1.5 |
| Health services | 1.1 |
| Transportation services | 0.8 |
| Housing services | 0.8 |
| Community rehabilitation providers | 0.4 |
| Benefits/entitlement services | 0.4 |
| Other | 4.6 |
| **Sample Size** | **380** |

Source: The Transition WORKS ETO management information system.

Notes: We excluded service contacts of less than two minutes and those made on the day of enrollment from this analysis. The sample size for results in the section "ever received service" is 380. The sample size for other results, except those pertaining to second contacts, is 261, which is the number of sample members who received any case management services.

**Table B.2. Receipt of Benefits Planning Services (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Transition WORKS Participants |
|---|---|
| **Ever Received Service** | |
| Any benefits planning service | 74.5 |
| Type of benefits planning service | |
| Benefits overview | 23.7 |
| Benefits analysis and advisement | 57.6 |
| Benefits assessment | 16.8 |
| Any waiver or work incentive discussion | 74.5 |
| Additional waiver or work incentive discussions | |
| Additional discussions of YTD waivers (beyond general overview)[a] | 50.8 |
| Additional discussions of non-YTD SSA work incentives (beyond gen. overview) | 41.3 |
| Discussions of non-SSA work incentives (e.g., TANF and SNAP) | 3.4 |
| Other benefits planning service | 6.6 |
| **Timing of Service Use** | |
| Number of days between enrollment and first service contact | |
| Distribution of days | |
| 0 | 0.0 |
| 1 – 30 | 25.8 |
| 31 – 90 | 31.1 |
| 91 - 180 | 27.9 |
| 181 or more | 15.2 |
| Average (days) | 99.8 |
| Median (days) | 72.0 |
| First contact occurred within 30 days | 25.8 |
| First contact occurred with 180 days | 84.8 |
| Number of days between enrollment and second service contact | |
| Average (days) | 132.5 |
| Median (days) | 114.0 |
| Second contact occurred within 30 days | 10.6 |
| Second contact occurred with 180 days | 73.1 |
| **Intensity of Service Use** | |
| Number of contacts per participant | |
| Distribution of contacts | |
| 1 | 13.4 |
| 2 - 4 | 19.1 |
| 5 - 7 | 18.4 |
| 8 - 10 | 19.8 |
| 11- 20 | 24.7 |
| 21 or more | 4.6 |
| Average (contacts) | 8.6 |
| Median (contacts) | 7.0 |
| Hours of services per participant | |
| Distribution of hours | |
| 0 | 12.0 |
| more than 0 to 1 | 23.3 |
| more than 1 to 2 | 11.7 |
| more than 2 to 4 | 21.9 |
| more than 4 to 6 | 15.2 |
| more than 6 | 15.9 |
| Average (hours) | 3.5 |
| Median (hours) | 2.3 |
| Minutes of services per contact | |
| Average (minutes) | 29.1 |
| Median (minutes) | 15.0 |
| Percent of contacts lasting longer than 30 minutes | 24.2 |
| **Sample Size** | **380** |

Source: The Transition WORKS ETO management information system.

Notes: We excluded service contacts of less than two minutes and those made on the day of enrollment from this analysis. The sample size for results in the section "ever received service" is 380. The sample size for other results, except those pertaining to second contacts, is 283, which is the number of sample members who received any benefits planning services.

[a]"Additional discussions of YTD waivers" includes only focused discussions of specific individual waivers or of all five waivers. It does not include general discussions that may have taken place during an enrollment meeting or a benefits assessment. See Table B.3 for details on additional YTD waiver discussions.

**Table B.3. Receipt of Additional Discussions About the SSA Waivers for YTD (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Transition WORKS Participants |
|---|---|
| **Ever Received Service** | |
| Additional discussions of the SSA waivers for YTD (beyond general overview)[a] | 50.8 |
| Type of additional YTD waiver discussions | |
| EIE (earned income exclusion) | 47.4 |
| IDA (individual development account) | 15.3 |
| PASS (plan for achieving self-support) | 37.6 |
| CDR (continuing disability review) | 36.6 |
| SEIE (student earned income exclusion) | 36.6 |
| **Timing of Service Use** | |
| Number of days between enrollment and first service contact | |
| Distribution of days | |
| 0 | 0.0 |
| 1 – 30 | 28.0 |
| 31 – 90 | 33.2 |
| 91 - 180 | 26.4 |
| 181 – 360 | 12.4 |
| Average (days) | 89.1 |
| Median (days) | 68.0 |
| First contact occurred within 30 days | 28.0 |
| First contact occurred within 180 days | 87.6 |
| Number of days between enrollment and second service contact | |
| Average (days) | 132.3 |
| Median (days) | 117.0 |
| Second contact occurred within 30 days | 8.0 |
| Second contact occurred within 180 days | 75.4 |
| **Intensity of Service Use** | |
| Number of contacts per participant | |
| Distribution of contacts | |
| 0 | 0.0 |
| 1 - 5 | 19.2 |
| 6 - 10 | 39.4 |
| 11 - 15 | 24.4 |
| 16 - 20 | 10.9 |
| 21 or more | 6.2 |
| Average (contacts) | 10.8 |
| Median (contacts) | 9.0 |
| **Sample Size** | **380** |

Source: The Transition WORKS ETO management information system.

Notes: Discussions of the SSA waivers for YTD were recorded in ETO without time measurements, so the hours of services per participants and the minutes of services per contact could not be calculated. We excluded service contacts of less than two minutes from this analysis. The sample size for results in the section "ever received service" is 380. The sample size for other results, except those pertaining to second contacts, is 193, which is the number of sample members who received any additional waiver discussions.

[a]"Additional discussions of the SSA waivers for YTD" includes only focused discussions of specific individual waivers or of all five waivers. It does not include general discussions of the waivers that may have taken place during an enrollment meeting or a benefits assesement.

**Table B.4. Receipt of Employment- Related Services (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Transition WORKS Participants |
|---|---|
| **Ever Received Service** | |
| Any employment-related service | 85.0 |
| Type of employment-related service | |
| Career exploration and job search | 82.9 |
| Direct employment service | 25.3 |
| Employment skills training | 8.7 |
| Other | 19.2 |
| **Timing of Service Use** | |
| Number of days between enrollment and first service contact | |
| Distribution of days | |
| 0 | 0.0 |
| 1 – 30 | 14.9 |
| 31 – 90 | 27.6 |
| 91 - 180 | 24.1 |
| 181 or more | 33.4 |
| Average (days) | 138.4 |
| Median (days) | 117.0 |
| First contact occurred within 30 days | 14.9 |
| First contact occurred within 180 days | 66.6 |
| Number of days between enrollment and second service contact | |
| Average (days) | 149.1 |
| Median (days) | 118.0 |
| Second contact occurred within 30 days | 10.1 |
| Second contact occurred within 180 days | 63.0 |
| **Intensity of Service Use** | |
| Number of contacts per participant | |
| Distribution of contacts | |
| 0 | 0.0 |
| 1 | 35.6 |
| 2 - 4 | 24.8 |
| 5 - 10 | 14.2 |
| 11 - 20 | 11.1 |
| 21 or more | 14.2 |
| Average (contacts) | 8.6 |
| Median (contacts) | 3.0 |
| Hours of services per participant | |
| Distribution of hours | |
| 0 | 0.0 |
| more than 0 to 0.5 | 47.7 |
| more than 0.5 to 2 | 12.7 |
| more than 2 to 7 | 16.4 |
| more than 7 to 20 | 13.6 |
| more than 20 | 9.6 |
| Average (hours) | 5.8 |
| Median (hours) | 0.8 |
| Minutes of services per contact | |
| Average (minutes) | 34.4 |
| Median (minutes) | 15.0 |
| Percent of contacts lasting longer than 30 minutes | 24.3 |
| **Sample Size** | **380** |

Source: The Transition WORKS ETO management information system.

Notes: We excluded service contacts of less than two minutes and those made on the day of enrollment from this analysis. The sample size for results in the section "ever received service" is 380. The sample size for other results, except those pertaining to second contacts, is 323, which is the number of sample members who received any employment services.

**Table B.5. Receipt of Education- Related Services (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Transition WORKS Participants | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | All | In School at Baseline | Out of School at Baseline |
| **Ever Received Service** | | | |
| Any education-related service | 16.8 | 16.3 | 17.6 |
| Type of education-related service | | | |
| Registration or enrollment assistance | 5.0 | 3.7 | 6.7 |
| Preparing for or attending IEPs or transition meetings | 1.1 | 1.9 | 0.0 |
| Accessing financial aid | 2.9 | 3.3 | 2.4 |
| Assistance with accommodations or student support services | 2.1 | 2.3 | 1.8 |
| Education counseling or academic advisement | 5.0 | 4.2 | 6.1 |
| Retention activities | 1.1 | 1.4 | 0.6 |
| Other | 8.9 | 8.8 | 9.1 |
| **Enrolled in New Education Program Since Random Assignment** | 18.4 | 25.1 | 9.7 |
| **Timing of Service Use** | | | |
| Number of days between enrollment and first service contact | | | |
| Distribution of days | | | |
| 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 1 – 30 | 26.6 | 34.3 | 17.2 |
| 31 – 90 | 28.1 | 22.9 | 34.5 |
| 91 - 180 | 15.6 | 11.4 | 20.7 |
| 181 – 360 | 29.7 | 31.4 | 27.6 |
| Average (days) | 118.9 | 118.3 | 119.6 |
| Median (days) | 77.5 | 78.0 | 74.0 |
| First contact occurred within 30 days | 26.6 | 34.3 | 17.2 |
| First contact occurred within 180 days | 70.3 | 68.6 | 72.4 |
| Number of days between enrollment and second service contact | | | |
| Average (days) | 140.2 | 150.0 | 129.8 |
| Median (days) | 117.0 | 122.0 | 91.0 |
| Second contact occurred within 30 days | 15.4 | 20.0 | 10.5 |
| Second contact occurred within 180 days | 66.7 | 65.0 | 68.4 |
| **Intensity of Service Use** | | | |
| Number of contacts per participant | | | |
| Distribution of contacts | | | |
| 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 1 | 39.1 | 42.9 | 34.5 |
| 2 | 21.9 | 14.3 | 31.0 |
| 3 - 4 | 17.2 | 17.1 | 17.2 |
| 5 - 10 | 15.6 | 17.1 | 13.8 |
| 11 or more | 6.3 | 8.6 | 3.4 |
| Average (contacts) | 3.6 | 3.9 | 3.1 |
| Median (contacts) | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.0 |
| Hours of services per participant | | | |
| Distribution of hours | | | |
| 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| more than 0 to 0.5 | 37.5 | 31.4 | 44.8 |
| more than 0.5 to 2 | 32.8 | 34.3 | 31.0 |
| more than 2 to 7 | 23.4 | 25.7 | 20.7 |
| more than 7 | 6.3 | 8.6 | 3.4 |
| Average (hours) | 2.2 | 2.7 | 1.6 |
| Median (hours) | 0.9 | 1.1 | 0.8 |
| Minutes of services per contact | | | |
| Average (minutes) | 32.0 | 40.8 | 33.8 |
| Median (minutes) | 10.0 | 23.3 | 16.2 |
| Percent of contacts lasting longer than 30 minutes | 22.7 | 24.2 | 20.2 |
| **Sample Size** | **380** | **215** | **165** |

Source: The Transition WORKS ETO management information system.

Notes: We excluded service contacts of less than two minutes and those made on the day of enrollment from this analysis. The sample sizes for results in the sections "ever received service" and "enrolled in new education program since random assignment" are 380, 215, and 165. The sample sizes for other results, except those pertaining to second contacts, are 64, 35, and 29, which are the numbers of sample members who received any education services.

**Table B.6. Receipt of Self- Determination Services (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Transition WORKS Participants |
|---|---|
| **Ever Received Service** | |
| Any self-determination service | 69.2 |
| Type of self-determination service | |
| Workshop attendence | 63.2 |
| Any person-centered plan | 57.1 |
| Any transition plan | 54.2 |
| Binder workshop | 43.4 |
| Transition planning workshop | 51.6 |
| Self-determination 1 workshop | 44.7 |
| Self-determination 2 workshop | 33.4 |
| **Timing of Service Use** | |
| Number of days between enrollment and first service contact | |
| Distribution of days | |
| 0 | 0.0 |
| 1 – 30 | 54.4 |
| 31 – 90 | 32.3 |
| 91 - 180 | 7.6 |
| 181 or more | 5.7 |
| Average (days) | 49.3 |
| Median (days) | 27.0 |
| First contact occurred within 30 days | 54.4 |
| First contact occurred with 180 days | 100.0 |
| Number of days between enrollment and second service contact | |
| Average (days) | 53.9 |
| Median (days) | 44.0 |
| Second contact occurred within 30 days | 28.8 |
| Second contact occurred with 180 days | 100.0 |
| **Intensity of Service Use** | |
| Number of contacts per participant | |
| Distribution of contacts | |
| 0 | 0.0 |
| 1 | 27.4 |
| 2 | 28.9 |
| 3 | 20.2 |
| 4 | 23.6 |
| 5 or more | 0.0 |
| Average (contacts) | 2.4 |
| Median (contacts) | 2.0 |
| Hours of services per participant | |
| Distribution of hours | |
| 0 | 0.0 |
| less than 2 | 13.7 |
| 2 - 3 | 26.2 |
| 4 - 5 | 12.5 |
| 6 - 7 | 19.8 |
| 8 or more | 27.8 |
| Average (hours) | 5.4 |
| Median (hours) | 5.5 |
| Minutes of services per contact | |
| Average (minutes) | 119.3 |
| Median (minutes) | 120.0 |
| Percent of contacts lasting longer than 30 minutes | 95.4 |
| **Sample Size** | **380** |

Source: The Transition WORKS ETO management information system.

Notes: We excluded service contacts of less than two minutes and those made on the day of enrollment from this analysis. The sample size for results in the section "ever received service" is 380. The sample size for other results, except those pertaining to second contacts, is 263, which is the number of sample members who received any self-determination services.

**Table B.7. Intensity of Transition WORKS Services: Service Time per Participant (percentages, unless otherwise noted)**

| | Transition WORKS Participants |
|---|---|
| **Any Contact** | |
| Average (hours) | 12.7 |
| Median (hours) | 8.0 |
| Less than 2 hours | 23.4 |
| Between 2 and 16 hours | 49.7 |
| 16 or more hours | 26.8 |
| **Sample Size** | **380** |
| **Youth- Involved Contacts Only** | |
| Average (hours) | 9.7 |
| Median (hours) | 6.5 |
| Less than 2 hours | 15.6 |
| Between 2 and 16 hours | 65.9 |
| 16 or more hours | 18.5 |
| **Sample Size** | **308** |

Source: The Transition WORKS ETO management information system.

Note: We excluded contacts of less than two minutes and those made on the day of enrollment from this analysis. This analysis does not include time spent in workshops for service types other than self determination.

**Table B.8. Enrollment Contacts, by Mode (percentages)**

| | All Enrollment Contacts |
|---|---|
| **Mode of Contact (all contacts)** | |
| Face-to-face | 25.4 |
| Phone | 71.4 |
| Other | 3.2 |
| **Location of Contacts (face- to- face contacts only)** | |
| In youth's home | 89.9 |
| Not in youth's home | 10.1 |
| **Distribution of Total Enrollment Contact Time, by Mode of Contact** | |
| Face-to-face | 80.3 |
| Phone | 17.3 |
| Other | 2.4 |
| **Sample Size** | **1,524** |

Source: The Transition WORKS ETO management information system.

# APPENDIX C

# THE SSA WAIVERS FOR YTD

An important element of YTD is the modification of selected SSA program rules for project participants. These modifications, or waivers, have been designed to encourage and reward the efforts of youth to begin working, increase their earnings, or continue their education.

**Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE).** Under the SEIE, Social Security disregards up to $1,460 per month of a student's earnings, subject to a cap of $5,910 for the year (in 2006—the monthly and yearly amounts are adjusted for inflation each year.) Normally, the SEIE applies only to students who are age 21 or younger. For YTD participants, the SEIE applies regardless of age. As long as a YTD participant regularly attends school, he or she is eligible for the SEIE.

**Earned Income Exclusion (EIE).** For all SSI recipients who work, Social Security disregards $65 plus half of any earnings over that amount when it determines eligibility for SSI. For YTD participants, Social Security disregards $65 plus three-fourths of any additional earnings. This waiver allows YTD participants to keep more of their SSI benefits when they work. (The EIE is applied to earnings in addition to all other applicable exclusions, including the SEIE.)

**Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS).** Normally, a PASS must specify a particular employment or self-employment goal, list the steps that will be taken to achieve the goal, and identify the income and/or assets (other than SSI benefits) that will be used to meet the plan's expenses. YTD participants may specify postsecondary education or career exploration as the goal of a PASS.

If Social Security approves a PASS, it disregards the funds used to pursue the plan when it determines eligibility for SSI. Such funds may include, for example wages, SSDI benefits, childhood disability benefits, or deemed parental income. If the individual is eligible for SSI without the PASS, SSI benefits replace all of the funds used for PASS expenses. If the PASS creates eligibility for SSI (which generally conveys eligibility for Medicaid, as well), SSI benefits replace part of the funds used for PASS expenses.

**Individual Development Accounts (IDAs).** This waiver expands the options for YTD participants to acquire certain kinds of assets. IDAs are trust-like savings accounts. For each dollar of earnings the account holder deposits, a participating nonprofit organization sets aside a matching contribution of 50 cents to four dollars (the average is one dollar). In IDA programs that involve federal funds, a federal match also is set aside. Federally funded IDAs must be used to help buy a home, pay for postsecondary education, or start a small business. All IDA participants undergo financial literacy training.

Under current rules, Social Security deducts account-holder deposits from countable earned income and disregards matching deposits, IDA account balances, and any interest earned by the account when determining SSI eligibility for someone who has a federally funded IDA. For YTD participants, these disregards also apply to IDAs that do not involve federal funds, including those that may be used for purposes other than the purchase of a home, postsecondary education, or a business startup. The IDA may be part of an existing state or local program, or a program established by a YTD project for its participants.

**Continuing Disability Review (CDR) or Age-18 Medical Redetermination.** YTD participants will receive coverage under Section 301 that will allow for continued benefit eligibility throughout the project, regardless of the outcome of a continuing disability review (CDR) or age-18 medical redetermination. Under existing SSA rules, a CDR is scheduled to determine whether there has been an improvement in a disabling condition. Moreover, when an SSI recipient turns 18, there is a medical redetermination in which the SSI recipient must meet the adult criteria for disability. While this coverage does not eliminate these reviews, YTD participants who are determined ineligible for benefits for medical reasons can continue to receive SSI benefit payments under Section 301.

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