Colorado Youth WINS

Final Report to Social Security Administration

For the SSA YTD Demonstration Project - Award # 12-Y-30003-8-01

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Colorado Youth WINS Final Report to SSA
Executive Summary

March 19, 2010

The Colorado Youth WINS (Work Incentive Network of Supports) demonstration project was designed to assist youth, aged 14-25, who are currently receiving SSI (Supplemental Security Income), SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance), or CDB (Childhood Disability Benefit), to maximize their economic self-sufficiency and career advancement. This intervention model serves youth with disabilities through a workforce-based delivery system which means the One-Stop Career Centers are the primary system for coordinating the delivery of services for youth with disabilities. This system is based on the Workforce Investment Act, established to consolidate, coordinate, and improve employment, training, literacy, and vocational rehabilitation programs in the United States and ensure universal access for all its customers. The Colorado Youth WINS (CYW) Independence Team (I-TEAM) intervention was made up of a program navigator, benefits planner, and career counselor to serve the youth participants. A three-pronged, multidimensional model based on local and state buy-in was used to implement the project:

- beneficiary control of benefits,
- access to services through the Workforce System, and
- access to direct employment supports.

All three of these services and supports were highlighted by the National Council on Disability (2005)[1] in the Individual Placement Supports model. To implement this multi-faceted approach, Colorado established an I-TEAM housed at four Colorado One-Stop Career Centers. The I-TEAM positions were established to address three employment barriers for the target population: fear that working may place the youth's federal benefits and health insurance in jeopardy; lack of access to information about the range of resources and support options available; and, lack of access to individualized career planning assistance. In addition, participants receiving services from the I-TEAM had access to five Social Security Administration (SSA) waivers.

Each position on the I-TEAM was designed to address a barrier. The benefits planner position addressed the fear of jeopardizing benefits through accurate information and education on how to manage benefits while working. The program navigator provided services to increase access to the community resources and supports, and the career counselor provided individualized career planning services.

CYW provided services to a total of 418 youth, 401 of those youth were considered to be research participants. There were 17 youth enrolled in CYW who were not considered to be research participants because they were not randomly assigned and were identified as being a sibling or spouse of a research participant.

[1] National Council on Disability (2005). *The Social Security Administration's efforts to promote employment for people with disabilities: New solutions for old problems*. Retrieved from http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/publications/2005/ssa-promoteemployment.htm#vi

Project Outcomes

- 52% of the participants (n=207 of 401) worked at 300 paid jobs.
- The average wage for participants, who obtained a job after enrolling in the project, was $9.17 per hour.
- The average number of hours worked per week for participants who obtained a job after enrollment was 21.4 hours per week.
- 93 youth (23.2% of 401) completed 97 educational experiences while participating in the demonstration.
- 98% of the youth received benefits planning services
- 47% received referrals to other community agencies, and
- 82% received pre-employment or employment services.

Given the data presented, it is likely that I-TEAMs providing these services to participants along with the SSA waivers helped address these employment barriers. For youth with disabilities to become employed, they need assistance in understanding how employment affects their benefits, connecting to community resources, and attaining employment.

COLORADO YOUTH WINS

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Intervention

This section describes the overall service model, the types of services provided, the participant assessments completed, staff positions, and the flow of the service delivered.

Overall Service Model

The overarching goal of the Colorado Youth WINS (CYW) demonstration project is to remove major barriers and disincentives to work for youth who received SSA disability benefits to maximize their economic self-sufficiency and career advancement. Historically, national statistics reveal that less than 1% of beneficiaries with disabilities ever leave SSA rolls to enter the workforce[2]. Individuals who want to work are typically faced with program barriers that create disincentives to work. These barriers are magnified for youth who are subject to SSA's Age 18-Medical Redetermination, in which they must demonstrate that they are still able to qualify for benefits under the more stringent adult criteria.

Based on results of Colorado's pilot study during the demonstration and current research, the CYW model was designed to address the needs of youth with disabilities seeking independence and/or employment by:

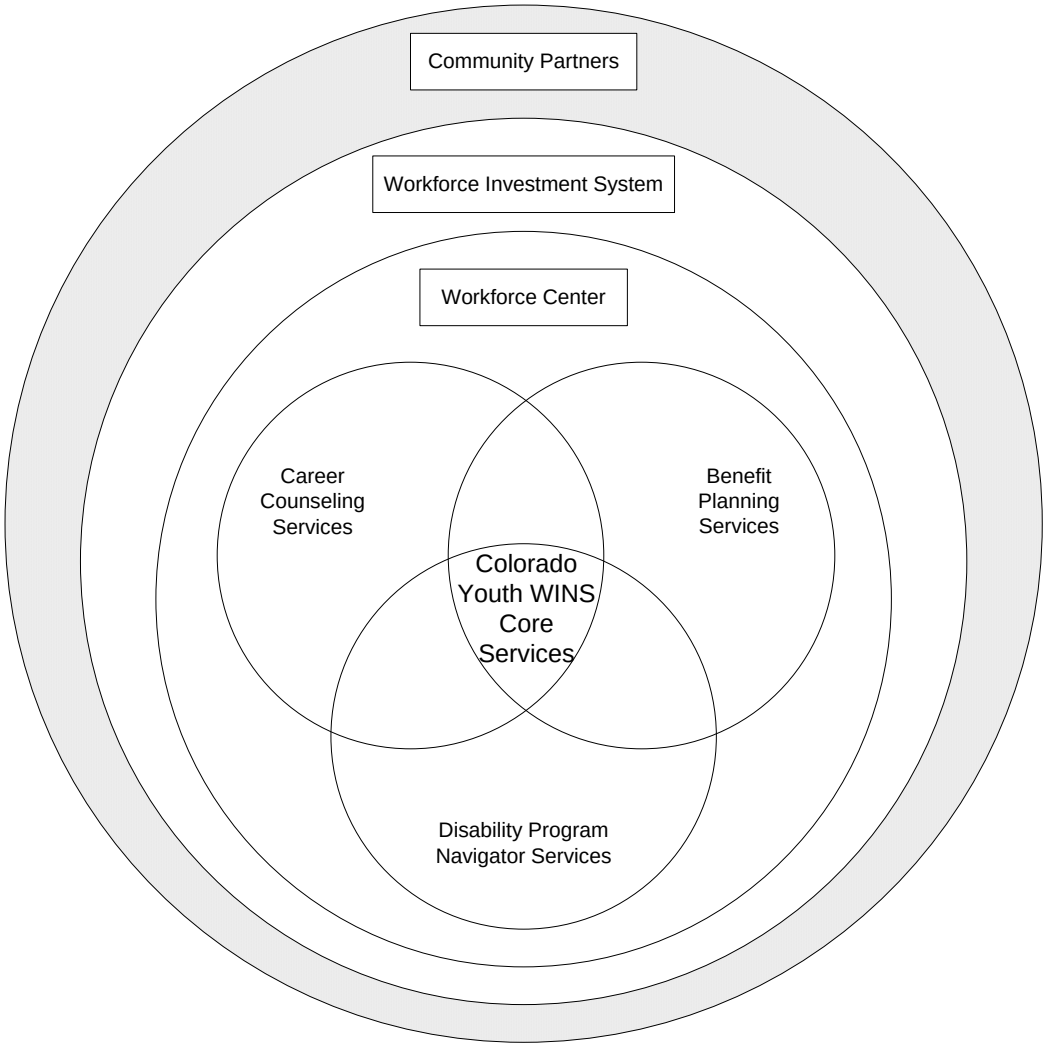
- increasing their ability to understand and make informed choices to control their SSA benefits,
- increasing access to community supports, and
- increasing education and/or employment opportunities through individualized career planning assistance.

The CYW model addresses these barriers with a three person team, employed by Colorado Workforce Centers, who provide benefits planning services, coordinate and facilitate access to community resources, and provide job development and career counseling services for youth. The services provided are listed in the *Types of Service Provided* section.

The three person team is called an Independence Team (I-TEAM). The I-TEAM consists of a benefits planner, a career counselor and a program navigator. To best serve the youth, the I-TEAMs work closely with local community partners and regional offices of state and federal agencies (or subcontractors of state and federal agencies in their region). Key local partners with whom the I-TEAMs frequently collaborate include local SSA offices, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) offices, mental health centers, schools, School to Work Alliance Programs (SWAP), community centered boards, developmental disabilities agencies, governmental social service agencies, community based organizations, faith based organizations, independent living centers, and businesses. In addition, participants working with this three person team have access to Social Security Administration (SSA) waivers. The CYW Intervention Model is depicted in Figure 1.

[2] Cook, J. A.. (2006). Employment barriers for persons with psychiatric disabilities: update of a report for the president's commission. *Psychiatric Services*, 57(10), 1391–1405. doi: 10.1176/appi.ps.57.10.1391

Figure 1: CYW Intervention Model



Types of Services Provided

The types of services provided are reflected in each of the I-TEAM roles. The types of services provided in the CYW model are as follows:

Benefits Planning Services

- Explain benefits
- Provide information about benefits and SSA
- Assist with problem-solving
- Provide advocacy
- Benefits analysis and assessment
- Provide benefit plan summaries
- Benefits management
- SSA waiver explanations

Program Navigator Services

- Access workforce networks
- Assist with connecting youth to community supports
- Advocacy for or on behalf of youth

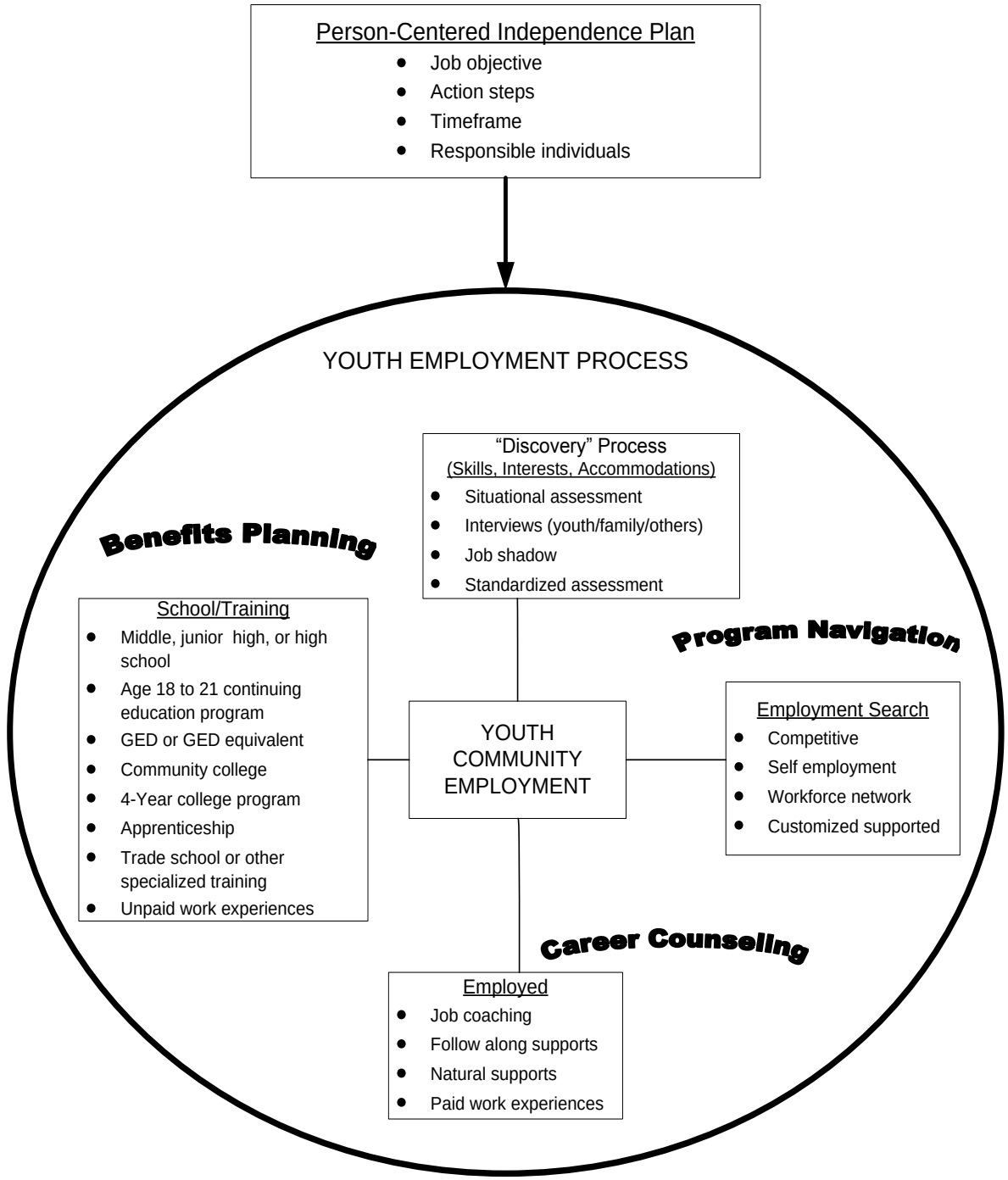
Career Counseling Services

- Access to direct employment supports
- Coordinate vocational services
- Job development and placement
- Ongoing career exploration support
- Career and vocational assessment
- Identifying and accessing accommodations or supports
- Customized employment
- Employer recruitment

Participant Assessments Completed

Two types of assessments were conducted by CYW, the Person-Centered Independence Plan Assessment and a Benefits Plan Assessment. The primary assessment is the Person-Centered Independence Plan (PCIP), which was designed for the I-TEAMs to work with participants to identify interests and goals for increasing independence and/or employment. The PCIP has sections for recording the participant's goals and the related action steps for pursuing educational activities, employment, and community supports. The PCIP was designed to be used as a starting point for the CYW Youth Employment Model (shown in Figure 2). Upon discussion of the youth's goals, education, and work experiences, the I-TEAM worked with the youth to create goals and action steps. The CYW Youth Employment Model is then reflected in the PCIP through the action steps identified.

Figure 2: CYW Youth Employment Model



The Benefits Plan Assessment was used by the benefits planners to educate participants and families about the impact of employment earnings on their SSA benefits, public assistance, availability of work incentives, and SSA waivers. This process allowed participants to make informed decisions and manage their benefits to suit their economic needs. This benefits assessment was used to review data on Social Security disability benefits and work incentives, healthcare benefits, food stamps, public housing, TANF, Veteran's benefits, worker's compensation, other types of public assistance programs, and SSA waiver usage. This information was obtained from participants and/or their family, local provider and government agencies, and the SSA BPQY (Benefits Query). Upon obtaining this data, it was entered into the Efforts to Outcomes database for tracking and updates. This Benefits Plan Assessment was sometimes completed in one meeting or over a period of multiple meetings in order to get complete information.

Staff Position Descriptions

The services provided through CYW are mirrored in the three positions on the I-TEAMs which were designed to provide wrap-around services. These wrap-around services complimented existing services received by a participant, were delivered by the I-TEAM when unavailable in the community, and avoided duplication of services. The three positions, benefits planner, program navigator and career counselor are distinct, yet overlapping, with the objective of providing services to youth using a person-centered approach. The person-centered approach meant that not all youth received the same type of service at the same interval. Rather, the person-centered approach means that the youth received a service based on the youth's needs, interests, and desires. This approach recognized and viewed the youth as the driver of services.

The benefits planner provided youth and their families with work incentives planning, SSA waiver education, and assistance that allowed the beneficiary control of their benefits. The benefits planner reviewed the public and private benefits each youth received to determine how employment earnings impacted the youth's benefits. This position also provided intensive benefits related services including: benefits information and referral; benefits problems solving and advocacy; benefits analysis and advisement; and, benefits management. Through these efforts, the benefits planners created awareness of the work incentive programs, including SSA waivers, available to maintain appropriate and necessary benefits upon beginning and maintaining employment.

The program navigator assisted youth and their families to access and use the workforce system services and supports needed to obtain and maintain employment, education, and/or training. They also became experts in knowing how to access supports and services across the workforce network and throughout the community. This position provided trouble-shooting services and supported youth and families through advocacy and modeling advocacy. The program navigator conducted outreach, networking and relationship building with community partners including food stamps, housing assistance, community centered boards, mental health agencies, financial assistance programs, faith based organizations, nonprofit agencies, transportation and local, state and federal government organizations to assist youth in meeting

his/her goals. Making these connections to community resources assisted the youth in minimizing barriers outside of work. The program navigator also provided information about rules, regulations, policies, and practices of local, state and federal resources.

The career counselor provided youth and their families with individualized, person-centered career planning services. This position created access to direct employment supports. The career counselor coordinated vocational services with government and community agencies and provided direct services when a gap existed. The career-planning services included: customized employment; job development and placement activities; ongoing on-the-job supports; career exploration activities; and, career/vocational assessment. The career counselor also worked with youth and examined the type of assistive technology and accommodations that might be helpful for the participant to be successful in achieving employment and education goals.

The I-TEAMs were located in four Colorado Workforce Centers in Boulder County, Larimer County, El Paso County and Pueblo County. The I-TEAMs were recruited and hired directly through each respective Workforce Center. Each position required a four-year degree from an accredited college or university. Relevant experience in the field working with individuals with disabilities could be substituted for educational requirements. The Colorado WIN Partners/University of Colorado Denver, grant administrator, had minimal input on who was hired on the I-TEAMs. Some I-TEAM members hired did not have as many skills and abilities in their respective roles as other I-TEAM members. The range of qualifications for hired I-TEAM members varied from those who had no experience providing services to youth with disabilities to those who worked in the field for a number of years.

The Workforce Centers, part of the Workforce Investment System, had strong interactive relationships with their community partners. At the core of the CYW Youth Employment model were the services provided for or on behalf of CYW participants. The I-TEAMs coordinated their services with the services and supports available in the community to avoid duplication and to facilitate youth increasing independence, obtaining employment and advancing in their careers.

Since some participants engaged with more than one service provider prior to or during the demonstration participation, a key element of service delivery was the coordinated effort the I-TEAMs established with the workforce system network of partners. In many cases, multiple systems were involved in a young adult's life. In order to ensure that a young adult's needs and interests were addressed, the local I-TEAMS communicated and coordinated with all of these systems to deliver a comprehensive and coordinated intervention for the youth and their families. The I-TEAMs often worked with case managers from a variety of agencies (mental health, developmental disabilities, etc.), therapists from a variety of disciplines, educators, medical professionals, workforce personnel, employers, community corrections staff, Social Security Administration staff, rehabilitation professionals and Medicaid personnel. Since staff turnover was common in all these agencies, it was critical for I-TEAMs to constantly communicate with all partners to coordinate services for these young adults. One example involved a participant who worked with seven different staff within one organization that served individuals with developmental disabilities. These staff did not include representatives employed by SSA and Medicaid. Therefore, when the I-TEAM developed goals and supports

with this individual, it was important to make sure all the partners understood how services were being coordinated and provided. Communication was vital for coordinated services and I-TEAMs utilized multiple methods such as phone, email, face-to-face meetings, and the person-centered plan.

Flow of Service Delivery

The first step toward providing services was recruiting youth to participate in the study. Colorado WIN Partners received names of youth randomly assigned to CYW from Mathematica (MPR) after they agreed to be part of the national study. Colorado WIN Partners at the University of Colorado Denver served as the grant administrator for CYW. As the grant administrator, Colorado WIN Partners provided ongoing training, technical assistance, and grant management for the demonstration project. In this report, Colorado WIN Partners is referred to the CYW administrative team.

The CYW administrative team forwarded the case numbers for each youth to the appropriate I-TEAM to initiate the recruitment process. The recruitment process began with contact from the I-TEAM to the youth (and guardian if appropriate). At this time, the I-TEAM provided information so that the youth could make an informed decision about whether to participate in the study and sign the CYW consent forms. The informed consent process and the description of the study included descriptions of the SSA waivers and the person-centered approach. Once a participant completed the consent process, the I-TEAM did an assessment of the youth's current SSA benefits situation and worked with the youth to identify goals and create action steps. At this point in the process, the CYW Youth Employment Model (shown in Figure 2) provides a depiction of the flow of service delivery for participants in CYW once the consent process was completed.

Essentially, the CYW Youth Employment Model started with the I-TEAM working with the youth to generate a Person-Centered Independence Plan. The PCIP was designed to be used to discuss the youth's goals, education, and work experiences.

The CYW Youth Employment Model has categories of activities related to education (School/Training), employment exploration ("Discovery" Process), employment search (Employment Search) and employment maintenance or advancement (Employed). A youth could be in any one of these components of the CYW Youth Employment Model. If the youth was in the "Discovery" Process this meant he or she was still defining his or her interests, skills, and abilities and might use a number of strategies to identify these. The Employment Search component was used when the youth was looking for a job. The I-TEAMs and youth used several strategies for finding a job, including competitive searches, self-employment, the workforce network of community partners, customized employment and/or supported employment. When a youth was working, the I-TEAM explored with the individual if any employment supports would help maintain or improve the work experience. Some youth were engaged in educational activities. In this situation, the I-TEAM explored with the youth if any supports might be necessary to succeed in the educational activity.

Even though the CYW Youth Employment Model is described in components, it is important to note that a youth could fall into multiple categories at once. There were youth who were

attending school, looking for summer youth employment and still defining their interests. The CYW Youth Employment Model (presented in Figure 2) shows all three I-TEAM members work together to assist youth with their employment goals. A person-centered approach was used to create goals and actions steps leading to employment opportunities for the youth. The program navigator worked with the youth to access supports needed to successfully achieve their goals and remove barriers. The benefits planner worked with the youth to help them understand their SSA benefits, work incentives, and SSA waivers so the individual could make an informed decision regarding his or her benefits when going to work. The career counselor worked with the youth to obtain work experiences, jobs, and career advancements. The I-TEAM did not duplicate services available in the community; they worked with the existing network of partners in the community. If services needed by a participant were not available from existing programs, they were provided by the I-TEAMs.

Implementation of Services

Recruitment

The recruitment process was a fundamental part of the demonstration. The I-TEAMs indicated that the recruitment process was critical for establishing rapport with participants, getting to know them and ensuring that they fully understood the implications of participating in the study. The recruitment process was time consuming for the I-TEAMs and took 21 months to complete.

There were 488 youth assigned to the treatment group by Mathematica. CYW enrolled 418 youth, an 86% enrollment rate that exceeded the target enrollment rate. Our analysis is restricted to youth who were randomly assigned to the treatment group and omits 17 siblings, spouses, and others who were deliberately assigned to treatment as non-research subjects. Table 1 shows the number and percentage of youth enrolled in each program who are considered to be research participants. One youth was enrolled in January 2009, nine months after the recruitment period ended.

Table 1: Number and Proportion of Participants Enrolled in CYW

Program	Number of Youth Originally Enrolled	% of Youth
Boulder	84	21%
El Paso	170	42%
Larimer	71	18%
Pueblo	76	19%
Total	401	100%

It is important to note that the El Paso I-TEAM had three career counselors, for a total of five team members. Two additional career counselors were added to the I-TEAM because the county's caseload was almost twice the size of the other programs and because the primary emphasis of the program was on employment and career advancement. By adding the career counselors, the I-TEAM had greater capacity to implement customized employment strategies, job development, career exploration activities, and on-the-job supports

Specific Aspects of Services which Lead to Meeting the Needs of the Participants

There are seven service categories captured in the database designed for this study: benefits planning, pre-employment, participant specific staff efforts, IEP/Transition, education, employment, and employment assessments. Definitions of each of the service categories are provided in Appendix 1. The person-centered approach was a fundamental aspect of the CYW model. This means that not all youth received the same type of service at the same interval. Rather, the person-centered approach means that the youth would receive a service based on

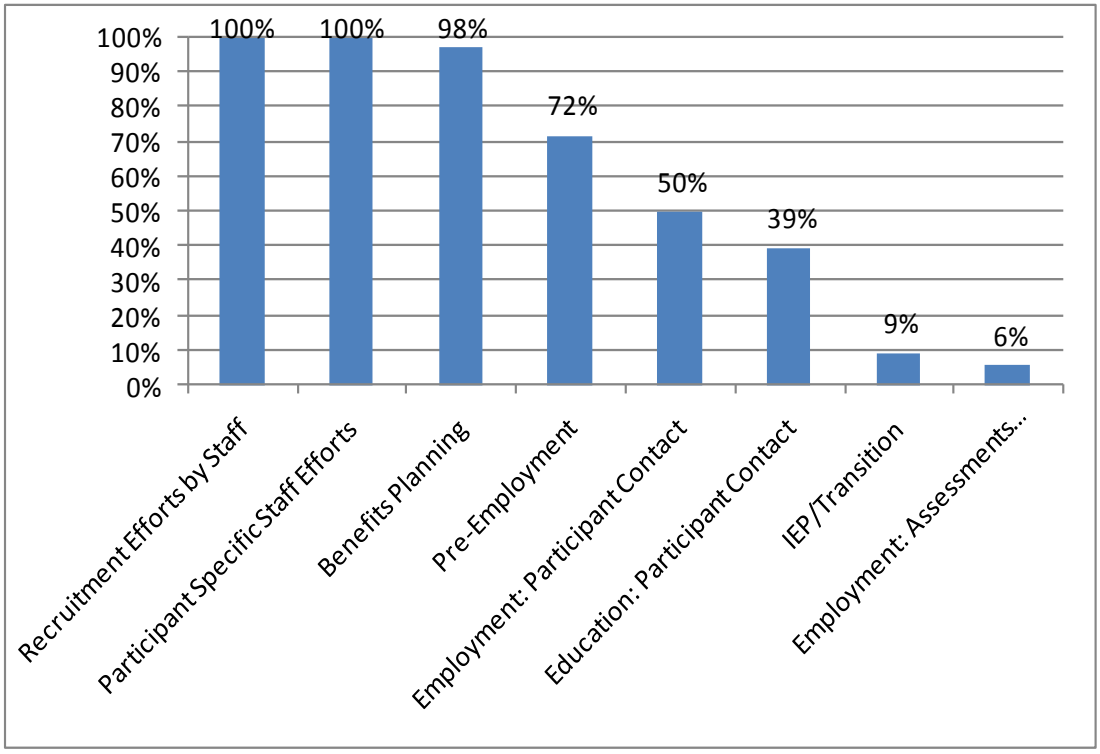
the youth's needs, interests, and desires. Therefore, we did not expect to see a uniform approach to service delivery or the same type of service delivered for each youth in the study.

Services Provided

The following data includes services provided between August 28, 2006 and September 29, 2009. The total number of participants included in this analysis is 401.

The services provided to CYW participants as labeled in ETO are shown in Figure 3, in order of those services provided most frequently to those provided least frequently. Staff indicated that all participants (100%, n=401) received recruitment efforts and participant specific staff efforts. Benefits planning services were provided to 98% of the participants (n=391); pre-employment services were provided to 72% (n=288); employment services were provided to 50% (n=200), education services were provided to 39% (n=158), IEP/transition services were provided to 9% (n=38), and 6% (n=23) received employment assessments.

Figure 3: CYW Services Provided



The I-TEAMs provided services to participants throughout the study using the person-centered approach. In implementing this approach to suit the individual's needs and interest, I-TEAMs provided face-to-face services throughout the local communities such as homes, businesses, Workforce Centers, restaurants and places of employment. I-TEAMs provided services via phone and in other cases utilized mail, email, and texting.

CYW implemented a two step recruitment process. First, participants were contacted by the national evaluator to get consent to be in the national study. Second, the I-TEAMs met with the

youth and obtained consent for them to participate in the Colorado specific part of the study. This explains why a 100% of participants received this service. Next, the I-TEAM was instructed to engage participants every 30 days to establish and maintain rapport with each youth. This effort was documented as *Participant Specific Staff Efforts* and consequently shown to be provided to each participant in the demonstration.

Benefits planning services were designed to reduce the fear that working may place the youth's federal benefits and health insurance in jeopardy and test the use of the SSA waivers offered through CYW. By arming youth and families with accurate information to directly manage their federal benefits and insurance, the I-TEAMs encouraged participants to increase their involvement in training and employment activities without fear of losing their benefits. These benefits planning services included a benefits assessment identifying the current federal public assistance the youth received.

At the same time, I-TEAMs provided services to prepare youth for entry into the workforce called pre-employment services. These services included: interest inventories, job exploration, resume writing, interview preparation, one-on-one counseling, job shadowing, informational interviewing, and job search assistance. Employment services were delivered to create employment and job retention. These activities were job placement, work experience placement, customized employment, job coaching, and job retention supports. The career counselors primarily provided these services and they are described in more detail in the *Practices for Achieving Employment Outcomes* section. Career counselors used a strength based approach to identify a participant's skills, abilities, and interests in order to assist in creating a good job fit for an individual. These staff used a number of techniques in working with employers to fill job vacancies. They used the Workforce Center job matching system, established job placements through contacts developed by the Workforce Center's Business Services Unit, networked with community providers who shared business contacts, and at times developed placements through the youth's networks and contacts. When appropriate, the career counselors also provided employment assessments to observe how a youth responds in different employment environments to examine ways for enhancing his/her performance on a task.

The remaining services such as Education and IEP/Transition were provided to assist youth in completing secondary education and participate in post secondary education and training. The I-TEAM attended Individualized Education Planning meetings and supported youth in getting the services and supports necessary to successfully complete classes and schooling. They also assisted youth applying for and touring schools. More detailed information about these services can be reviewed under the *Practices for Achieving Education Outcomes* section.

Another service documented in ETO was referrals. I-TEAMs recorded the number and types of referrals they made for participants in the study. I-TEAMs made a total of 481 referrals for 189 youth. Of the 189 youth who received referrals, 16% (n=65) of all youth were referred to other programs or services within the Workforce Center, 11% (n=44) of youth were referred to Housing/Independent Living Center Services, 10% (n=40) of all youth were referred to Disability Services, and 10% (n=40) were referred to DVR. Less than 10% of youth were referred to the

other service providers. In some cases, a participant received more than one referral. More information on referrals can be found in Appendix 2.

Project Challenges and Resolutions

At times during CYW implementation, the demonstration project faced challenges that could affect service implementation and delivery. This section identifies those circumstances and reviews the strategies adopted to resolve those concerns.

Participant Recruitment

On August 28, 2006, the first round of names was uploaded into ETO for recruitment, and the I-TEAMs finished their final recruitment and enrollment push on April 30, 2008.

In the spring of 2007, new strategies were created to intensify the recruitment efforts to ensure CYW would enroll enough participants to meet the target numbers. In April 2007, during a conference call with Mathematica, it was decided that the CYW administrative team would provide staff to go into the field in the two northern counties (Boulder and Larimer) to help Mathematica collect consent forms from those who expressed interest in participating in the study. In addition, Mathematica extended their recruitment efforts through March 2008 and CYW extended recruitment through April 2008. To enhance these extended efforts, the CYW administrative team provided support to all four of the I-TEAMs by making phone calls during the evenings and weekends to help contact potential participants. The I-TEAMs frequently faced challenges for conducting recruitment activities in the evenings and on weekends due to agency regulations that required employees to conduct business between 8 am and 5 pm Monday through Friday. The additional support from the CYW administrative team increased the number of potential participants contacted during the recruitment process.

During this recruitment period, additional strategies were utilized to obtain the targeted enrollment goals. These strategies included: weekly technical assistance calls between local sites and CYW administrative team to problem solve and coordinate efforts on hard to reach cases and monthly calls with Mathematica, CYW administrative team and local site representatives identifying progress toward target enrollment goals. These strategies combined with the efforts described above all affected our ability to exceed the enrollment target.

The I-TEAMs enrolled 417 youth (85.63% of the total youth randomly assigned). One additional participant previously recruited but not enrolled contacted the El Paso County I-TEAM in January 2009, wanting services and to be enrolled in the study, and that individual's enrollment increased the enrollment rate to 85.83%. As shown in Appendix 3, the number of participants enrolled in services jumped dramatically between January and March 2008. During this quarter, 119 participants enrolled, compared to 52 in the previous quarter.

Staff Retention

Staff vacancies occurred periodically throughout the study and varied by location. The Larimer I-TEAM had no staff turnover once the study began. In Boulder, the career counselor position

became vacant in November 2007 and was filled between December and February 2008 when it became vacant again. The position was filled in April 2008, and remained filled through the remainder of the study. During the months when the career counselor position was vacant, the other I-TEAM members provided career counseling services for participants. The Boulder benefits planner position became vacant in December 2007. At this time, the program navigator switched positions to become the benefits planner and covered both positions until a new program navigator was hired in January 2008. The El Paso I-TEAM had one person stay on the team throughout the course of the study; she was both a benefits planner and a program navigator. The career counselor positions turned over quite a bit in El Paso but there was always at least one career counselor on the team throughout the study. The El Paso team became fully staffed in the fall of 2008 and there was no more staff turnover after that. In Pueblo, the career counselor position was vacant between November 2007 and April 2008. During this time, both the program navigator and benefits planner stepped in to fill the career counselor role. Since both staff were cross trained in this position, they were able to cover this role on a temporary basis. When the program navigator position became vacant in January 2009, Pueblo quickly filled that staff vacancy in February with a staff member who had previous program navigator experience.

When considering causes for staff turnover, there was no common denominator. Staff reasons for leaving included moving out of county, death of a spouse, transitioning to a job with more long term funding and career advancement. In working with the I-TEAM supervisors, the CYW administrative team reviewed strategies for staff retention. One strategy implemented between the CYW administrative team and the I-TEAM supervisors was to establish documentation of job performance that led to salary increases and reclassifying the I-TEAM position within the Workforce Center. Of particular importance during the last year of the project, I-TEAM supervisors were able to have I-TEAM members split time between positions at the Workforce Center and the demonstration project. This strategy led to maintaining I-TEAM staff until the end of the demonstration project. This even allowed some staff to transition into other employment positions at the Workforce Center.

The challenges associated with staff turnover include the time it took for staff to receive SSA prescreening approval and become oriented to their new job. To address these challenges, the CYW administrative team worked with the local I-TEAM supervisors to have staff complete their SSA prescreening applications prior to their actual start date to reduce the time lag in obtaining clearance. At the same time, CYW administrative team developed an outline for orientation and training that occurred during the first four weeks of a new hire. Some of this training required face-to-face contact but the administrative team also used teleconferencing and online training when appropriate.

Another area that the project addressed during the demonstration project was hiring qualified staff. Some I-TEAM members when hired did not have as many skills and abilities in their respective roles as others. In some instances, I-TEAM members did not have a background in working with youth with disabilities. I-TEAM staff that came to the position with experience working with this population showed a shorter orientation period and greater capacity to learn and acquire the skills and philosophy to serve the participants. These more experienced staff

also served as mentors to others on the team. Two strategies targeted to build the capacity of I-TEAM members included: monthly teleconferences focused on the specific I-TEAM role with the CYW administrative team and national technical assistance members and face-to-face onsite training.

Systems Engagement and Awareness

I-TEAMS and the CYW administrative team provided regular updates to the workforce system partners regarding the progress and status of the Colorado Youth WINS project. This communication was important so these systems could support the successful implementation of the project and not act as gatekeepers or barriers to the project goals. This was especially important as it pertained to recruitment into the study. CYW learned that if system partners were not familiar with the study then they would not encourage young adults to participate in the project. As a result, Colorado Youth WINS staff consistently met with local organizations individually and hosted regional and local meetings to keep partner agencies updated and informed. The CYW administrative team hosted community forums twice at each site during 2007 to engage all partners, youth, families and businesses. The administrative team also coordinated Medicaid training for local and state Medicaid staff, local and state developmental disabilities service providers, SSA local and regional staff, existing statewide benefits planners and the I-TEAMs. This training format served as another way to keep everyone informed of the project and answer questions or concerns individuals might have regarding benefits and employment.

Just as the I-TEAMs and the CYW administrative team educated the communities and partners regarding the efforts of the project, it was equally important to be aware of changes happening with workforce system partners. This was evident when the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) enacted an "order of selection" in October, 2008. At that time, DVR accepted referrals for services but had to place applicants on a waitlist. The I-TEAMs continued to refer participants to DVR but explained to participants how the waitlist functioned. The I-TEAMs explained how applicants were taken off the waitlist based on the date assigned and severity of disability. Additionally, in some cases, I-TEAMs further explained that participants may be able to access funds from Medicaid to pay for vocational services based on the waitlist letter received from DVR. In the meantime, those participants that were already open to DVR were able to access services and the I-TEAMs continued to collaborate on those cases. However, when DVR went through additional budget cuts, this meant DVR reduced the number of job developers and job coaches available to open cases. Thus, the I-TEAMs stepped in to increase services in those areas. The CYW administrative team and I-TEAMs stayed informed about these type of system issues by participating on their local Workforce Center youth councils and interagency teams, maintaining individual relationships with supervisors and staff at the local community based organizations and government agencies, and monthly teleconferences with the CYW administrative team.

Data Management

The Efforts to Outcomes database presented challenges for the CYW administrative team and the I-TEAMs throughout the study. Creating the CYW build-out of ETO was the first challenge.

The purpose of the build-out was to design where the national data and Colorado data for the demonstration project would be entered into the database. The challenges included identifying the correct method in ETO for storing different types of data so that it could be accessed and analyzed efficiently and accurately. There were four options for storing data in ETO that did not allow for cross-referencing data from one section to another. This meant that I-TEAMs had to enter data about a single event/activity in multiple places in ETO. It required extensive training among the I-TEAMs because the data entry was complicated and took considerable time. The I-TEAMs did not find ETO user friendly. It often took as much if not more time to enter the data than it took to provide a service.

Beginning the fourth quarter of 2006, the administrative team encountered challenges in retrieving data from ETO. The administrative team could not identify which data ETO used to generate standard reports, did not know the terminology that ETO used to describe data, and did not know how to create the customized reports. A number of steps were taken to resolve these issues. One step was to hire an ETO site administrator. This ETO site administrator attended an eight hour ETO training on March 5, 2007. Even with the initial training and technical assistance received, it was still a long and time consuming process to learn ETO. To overcome this, the ETO site administrator participated in Social Solutions' trainings to learn how to use ETO. Social Solutions is the company who developed ETO and offers technical assistance on using the ETO database. These training events supported the ETO administrator in understanding how to generate ETO data reports for use with CYW quarterly reports.

To reduce the complexity of data entry as well as to increase consistency across Colorado programs and the other national sites, the administrative team began submitting a monthly ETO maintenance report to MDRC in the last quarter of 2006. The monthly ETO reports documented the issues raised by individual I-TEAM members in using ETO. The national evaluator responded to these reports with answers related to updating the data dictionary, modifying elements of ETO, and answering definitions. In some cases, the national evaluator requested that the administrative team continue to monitor certain occurrences because there was no ready answer. This process continued regularly throughout 2007 and as needed in 2008 with the last report submitted in August 2008.

Since the second quarter of 2007, the administrative team struggled with data validity. Data validity checks often indicated that the I-TEAM staff did not consistently enter data. Thus, the ETO site administrator provided numerous trainings to improve data accuracy. This training covered entering and updating assessments, employment, education, and referral activities. An overview of ETO structure was provided as a framework for improving data entry. In addition, clarification was provided on recording contact with participants, recording issues discussed with youth, and time spent on the activity. Along with this training, each I-TEAM received updated and revised ETO manuals that included: the ETO User Manual, ETO Data Dictionary, ETO cheat sheets specific for I-TEAM services, and a cross reference of the ETO Data Dictionary and User Manual. The administrative team also used online training for teaching ETO practices. One-on-one technical assistance was provided to all new I-TEAM hires as well as to those I-TEAM members that found ETO challenging. These technical assistance methods included weekly phone calls and monitoring to ensure understanding of the database for some staff.

Monthly and quarterly reports were sent to I-TEAMs to help them review the accuracy of their data entry and the ETO site administrator worked with each I-TEAM to ensure data corrections were made in a timely manner.

Even with ongoing and extensive technical assistance and training by the CYW administrative team, there continued to be misunderstandings among some I-TEAM staff as to the proper way to enter data. The CYW ETO site administrators made a concerted effort in 2008 and 2009 to address these issues, particularly with regard to educational and employment outcomes. Despite the challenges of ETO, the services and outcomes identified in this report are the result of a strong data collection effort. The combination of training, technical assistance and CYW administrative reviews of the data increased the timeliness and accuracy of data entry.

Project Outcomes and Key Accomplishments

A. Self-Sufficiency Outcomes

In CYW, two youth stopped receiving benefits as a result of employment. One of the youth was an El Paso County participant and the other was enrolled in Boulder County. In addition, two El Paso County participants stopped receiving benefits per their own request. El Paso County also had six youth in 1619b status. In Larimer County, several participants reduced their SSI payments by increasing their wages and participants began earning Title II work credits. The Boulder County participant who stopped receiving SSDI cash benefits during the project was working at the time of enrollment but was under SGA (Substantial Gainful Activity). He then started working for a different company after enrollment and was paid over SGA.

In El Paso County, three research participants have an IDA (Individual Development Account) in place. One of these youth selected home purchase as the goal for his IDA. In this case, the youth completed contributing to the IDA and he is currently searching for a home to buy. He still needs to complete his home ownership classes that are focused on teaching responsibilities related to purchasing and owning a home. The other two youth are using the IDA towards an education goal. Both are enrolled in college, working, and the contributions are partially complete. All the IDAs these youth are using allow for participant contributions up to $1000.00 with a match at 4:1.

In Pueblo County, many participants used the $3 for $4 waiver, the Student Earned Income Exclusion waiver, and the Age 18 Redetermination waiver to maximize the amount of money they could earn while minimizing the impact on their SSI cash benefits. The use of the SSA waivers is shown in Table 11. A small number of youth also used federal financial aid to attend community college and four year universities.

The most effective practice implemented by all I-TEAMs was a consistent focus on person-centered services. Person-centered services meant that the "driver" of the services was the participant who was making the request for services. It assumed that the participant was the foremost expert and authority in the type of service and support that the person may want or need in order to achieve his/her life goals. This also implied that the services and supports that the person requested and received were uniquely designed to be responsive to the individual[3]. This focus enabled the I-TEAM to understand each participant's needs, existing supports, motivations, and goals. Additionally, it increased participant investment in the project and made program services more effective. Another practice was ongoing benefits planning services. These services guided and taught participants and families how to manage their public benefits, especially while working, to meet their financial needs. Along with this practice, it was important that I-TEAMs made appropriate referrals to community resources that could support their path to self sufficiency. For example, the I-TEAM assisted one

[3] Cornell University's Employment and Disability Institute. (2010). *Person-centered planning education site: course 6: organizational change and person-centered planning.* Retrieved from http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/edi/PCP/course06.html

participant in securing a grant through a local community organization to obtain eye glasses. Finally, throughout the project, I-TEAMs provided advocacy and modeling for young adults and families. The I-TEAMs found that it was important to demonstrate advocacy for many participants for them to learn how to obtain the services and supports needed to become self sufficient.

In El Paso County, the I-TEAM utilized various methods to support their participants in achieving self-sufficiency. The I-TEAM frequently engaged the youth and their families with telephone or face-to-face communication in order to provide updated information regarding benefits, resources, and employment. They also provided guidance during meetings with community agencies and schools and they often coordinated with SSA to ensure accurate application of SSA waivers. Finally, the I-TEAM participated in extensive networking and collaboration with community agencies to provide participants with appropriate referrals to assist in self-sufficiency. In conjunction with this collaboration, they always followed-up with youth, families, or service providers to ensure successful outcomes.

The Boulder County I-TEAM utilized similar methods. They assisted their participants in applying for Section 8 housing assistance and helped them improve their money management skills. They also introduced participants to various community resources and taught self-advocacy through example by accompanying participants to meetings and modeling how to advocate for services.

B. Employment Outcomes

Paid Employment

Over the course of the study, 52% of all youth (n=207 of 401) worked at 300 paid jobs. According to ETO data, 31% (n= 93 of 300) of paid jobs were subsidized. Paid jobs were obtained after enrollment into the study by 42% of all youth (n=168 of 401). Paid jobs were held by 16% (n=63 of 401) of all participants when they enrolled in the study. There is some overlap between these numbers because there are some youth who were working in paid jobs when they enrolled in the study but then obtained a different paid position after enrollment into the study. These youth are counted in both totals.

Average Wage and Hours Worked

The average wage (the last wage recorded for each job), for CYW participants who obtained a job after enrolling in the study, was $9.17 per hour. The average number of hours worked per week for participants who obtained a job after enrollment was 21.4 hours per week. Table 2 shows the average starting wage and ending wage and the average hours worked when the participant started the job and the last record of number of hours worked. The ending wage and hours per week end are the last recorded data for each job, whether it was the end date of the job or most recent data. The decline in hours per week could be attributed to changes in the economy and a lack of end date data entry. The average wage does not include jobs that are paid by the piece or project.

Table 2: Average Wage and Hours Worked

	Average Starting Wage	Average Ending Wage	Average Hours per Week Start	Average Hours per Week End
Paid Jobs Obtained After Enrollment	$8.09	$9.17	21.6	21.4
All Paid jobs	$7.90	$8.01	21.2	21.1

Types of Paid Jobs Held by Youth

Most of the paid positions (55%), obtained after enrollment in the study, were competitive jobs in an integrated setting, (23% + 32%). Of those paid jobs, 32% were in competitive settings with no supports and 23% were paid, competitive positions with supports. A competitive job meant that the participant secured employment in a job open to the public. If an individual had a competitive job with supports, it meant that the individual received services through CYW on or off the job that aided in job retention. There were 27% of the jobs categorized as work experiences or internships, 6% of the jobs were working consistently in regular, community based employment, 3% were self employment, and 10% were categorized as other. Table 3 shows the number and proportion of each category of job for jobs obtained after enrollment and all jobs (jobs obtained before and after enrollment). The definitions for each job category are provided in Appendix 4. The number and proportion of jobs is listed because it was not unusual for participants to hold more than one job while participating in the study.

Table 3: Types of Paid Jobs Held by Youth

Placement Type	Jobs Obtained After Enrollment	All Jobs
	75	101
Competitive job, no supports, integrated setting	32%	34%
	53	73
Competitive job with supports, integrated setting	23%	24%
	63	67
Work experience or internship	27%	22%
	24	35
Other	10%	12%
	14	17
Regularly and consistently works, community based	6%	6%
	7	7
Self employment	3%	2%
	236	300
Total	100%	100%

Most of the jobs held by participants were part-time: 78% for those jobs obtained after enrollment and 81% of all jobs. 15% of the jobs obtained after enrollment were full-time and 6% were seasonal jobs. The number and proportion of full-time, part-time and seasonal paid jobs are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Employment Status of Paid Jobs

Employment Status	Jobs Obtained After Enrollment	All Jobs
Part-Time	185 78%	242 81%
Full-Time	36 15%	42 14%
Seasonal	15 6%	16 5%
Total	236 100%	300 100%

Unpaid Employment

42 CYW participants held 49 unpaid jobs prior to enrollment and after enrollment.

The average number of hours worked per week when participants started unpaid jobs was 11.1 and when they ended the job, the average hours were 11.4 hours per week. The hours at the end of the job are either the number of hours the participant was working when the job ended or the most recent data entered into ETO.

The categories for unpaid jobs are the same as for paid jobs. The highest proportion of jobs were classified as other (37%) with 27% of unpaid jobs classified as regularly and consistently works, community based and 20% classified as work experience or internship. Only 16% were considered to be competitive jobs. Competitive unpaid jobs, were unpaid job opportunities open to the public and required being accepted for the position. Table 5 shows the placement type for all unpaid jobs. All of the unpaid jobs were part-time or seasonal jobs, 94% were part-time and 6% were seasonal jobs.

Table 5: Placement Type for All Unpaid Jobs

Placement type	Unpaid Jobs	Percentage
Other	18	37%
Regularly and consistently works, community based	13	27%
Work experience or internship	10	20%
Competitive job with supports, integrated setting	6	12%
Competitive job, no supports, integrated setting	2	4%
Total	49	100%

Practices for Achieving Employment Outcomes

The I-TEAMs used a number of practices when assisting participants with achieving employment outcomes. For all participants, the I-TEAMs implemented the person-centered approach. This meant that for participants interested in employment, the I-TEAMs developed a relationship with the participant to understand their skills, abilities and interests to determine the type of employment appropriate for the participant. As a result, I-TEAMs conducted pre-employment services such as assessments with youth to determine skills and interests. These assessments ranged on a continuum from computer generated questionnaires and web searches to observational activities in the community to work based experiences. Then, based on the individual's interests and level of need, the I-TEAM provided referrals to workshops focused on the job search strategies and independent job searching, referrals to agencies for job development, or directly performed job development and customized employment.

The I-TEAMs benefited from being at the Workforce Center when they provided direct job development or customized employment. The I-TEAMs used existing relationships with employers developed by the Workforce Center to generate jobs for participants, and at Workforce Center job fairs and business expositions they networked to develop relationships with businesses that led to employment placements. While the career counselors were primarily responsible for the job development and placement on the I-TEAMs, the benefits planner played a key role in helping participants and families utilize existing work incentives and SSA waivers to maximize gross income and allay concerns regarding losing benefits.

In addition, the I-TEAMs assisted participants with job retention by providing job coaching and identifying accommodations. On many occasions, the career counselor kept ongoing contact and communication with business supervisors to support job retention. In these cases, the discussion may have led to additional job coaching on the job, schedule adjustments, or accommodation implementation. Below are the pre-employment and employment services documented in ETO.

Pre-Employment Services

Pre-Employment Services fall into the "Discovery" Process of the CYW Youth Employment Model as seen in Figure 2. The types of Pre-Employment services delivered are presented in Table 6. The Pre-Employment service addressed most frequently is Job Search (45%), and is defined as any assistance provided in helping a participant search for a job. Discussion of Career Goals was provided to 36% of the participants. Career counselors indicated that they helped 34% of participants with career exploration which is defined as activities that allow participants to explore career options in various career fields, and identify the education or training activities they needed to pursue their career goals. Soft skills training refers to any training that prepares the participant to effectively function in an employment setting. This service was provided to 20% of participants. The career counselors discussed education or training goals for the individual to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to perform the essential functions of a type of job or class of jobs found in the local economy with 19% of participants (Discuss Employment-Related Education or Training Goals). Pre-Employment Training refers to classroom or community-based training that focuses on career awareness, labor market knowledge, occupational information, career planning and decision making, and job search techniques (resumes, interviews, applications, and follow-up letters). It also includes survival or daily living skills, and the development of positive work habits, attitudes and behaviors involved in maintaining a job. Pre-Employment Training was provided to 17% of participants. Resume preparation was provided to 15%. Occupationally Specific Skills Training consists of an organized program of study that provides specific vocational skills that lead to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate, or advanced levels. Such training often leads to attainment of a certificate or credential. This service was provided to 3% of participants.

Table 6: Distribution of Pre-Employment Services Provided to CYW

Type of Pre-Employment Service	Number of Youth Who Received Service	% of Total (n=401)	% of Youth Who Received Service (n=288)
Job Search	179	45%	62%
Discuss Career Goals	145	36%	50%
Career Exploration	136	34%	47%
Soft Skills	79	20%	27%
Discuss Employment-Related Education or Training Goals	75	19%	26%
Pre-Employment Training	68	17%	24%
Prepare Resume	60	15%	21%
Occupationally Specific Skills Training	13	3%	5%
Total	288	72%	100%

Employment Services

Employment Services fall into the Employment Search and Employed areas of the CYW Youth Employment Model, as seen in Figure 2. The distribution of employment services to CYW youth are shown in Table 7. The most frequently offered employment service is Development of Experience; it was offered to 35% of the participants. Development of Experience refers to services to identify, develop, and negotiate job tryout openings through direct employer contacts for participants seeking employment who need assistance in their job search. Placement refers to services such as assisting the participant to negotiate a work schedule, obtain transportation services, procure uniform/equipment, etcetera; it was provided to 17%. Post-Placement Follow-up is when the I-TEAM checks in with a youth or employment supervisor to see how things are going at work and if they need any support. Post-Placement Follow-up was provided to 32% of participants. Job Coaching was provided to 7% of participants.

Table 7: Distribution of Employment Services Provided to CYW Youth

Type of Employment Service	Number of Youth Receiving Service	% of Total (401)	% of Youth Receiving Service (200)
Development of Experience	139	35%	70%
Post-Placement Follow-up	130	32%	65%
Placement	69	17%	35%
Job Coaching	29	7%	15%
Total Employment services	200	50%	100%

C. Education Outcomes

93 youth (23.2% of 401) completed 97 educational experiences while participating in CYW. The reasons for completion and the number and percentage when the education was completed are listed in Table 8. 5% ended with a certificate of completion from middle school, 56% were completed with a High School Diploma or GED, 25% ended with a certificate of completion from an Age 18-21 Program, 4% were completed with a certificate of completion from a community college, 6% ended with another type of certificate of completion, 3% ended with an Associates or Bachelors Degree and 1% were completed with a career school certificate.

Table 8: Number and Type of Educational Experiences Completed

Type of Certificate or Degree	Number and Percentage when Education Completed
Certificate of Completion from Middle School	5 5%
High school Diploma or GED	54 56%
Certificate of Completion from Age 18-21 Program	24 25%
Certificate from Community College	4 4%
Career School Certificate	1 1%
Associates or Bachelors Degree	3 3%
Other	6 6%
Total	97 100%

Practices for Achieving Education Outcomes

I-TEAMs worked with participants to help them achieve their education goals using the person-centered approach. There were a number of common strategies all four I-TEAMs used to support education outcomes. All I-TEAMs developed relationships with local school districts, transition programs, nonprofit advocacy organizations, School to Work Alliance Programs (SWAP), DVR, and GED providers. I-TEAMs directly attended IEP (Individualized Education Plan) meetings to provide support and advocacy for students who were striving to complete secondary education. They also worked cooperatively with SWAP, DVR, and local services that could assist the participant in securing the right accommodations needed to successfully complete secondary education.

I-TEAMs also developed relationships with post secondary education institutions and their disability services units. These relationships were very helpful for participants registering for community colleges and universities and securing the appropriate classroom accommodations needed for successfully passing classes. I-TEAMs assisted in filling out registration forms,

financial aid forms and even touring campuses with participants who were deciding which college to attend. The El Paso I-TEAM connected individuals to a community action program that worked with three participants (1 pilot study participant) in establishing IDA programs specifically to achieve and save for post secondary education goals. Below is the information recorded in ETO showing the types of educational services provided by the I-TEAMs.

Education Services

Education activities, such as assisting the youth in accessing financial aid or talking about assistance with education accommodation needs, are entered into the Education: Participant Contact page in ETO. As shown in Table 9, Accessing Financial Aid was discussed with 7% of the participants. Arranging educational supports was provided to 11% of participants. Assistance with education accommodation needs so the participant could take part in the educational activity was provided to 7% of participants. Assistance with registration was provided to 7% of the participants. The educational service most frequently provided (32%) was categorized as Other.

Table 9: Distribution of Education Services Provided to CYW Youth

Type of Education Service	Number of Youth Receiving Service	Percent of Total (401)	Percent of Youth Receiving Services (158)
Arranging educational supports	43	11%	27%
Assistance with education accommodation needs	27	7%	17%
Assistance with registration	27	7%	17%
Accessing financial aid	26	7%	16%
Other	129	32%	82%
Total	158	39%	100%

D. Benefits Advisement and Waiver Use

Based on data from ETO and interviews with benefits planners, the majority of participant's benefits advisement occurred at enrollment and at any time throughout the project when there was a change in SSA cash benefits, exploring employment, or the youth had questions about their benefits. At the Pueblo County site, most of the benefits advisement was done in the first six or twelve months of participants' enrollment. Participants were assisted in understanding the benefits they received, their responsibilities as beneficiaries, how to communicate with SSA, and how to comprehend SSA correspondence. Other common benefits services were interpretation of redetermination paperwork, explanation of work incentives and SSA waivers, researching Medicaid issues, and developing income-reporting plans. In one site, the most

common questions asked were about the monthly benefits statements sent by SSA outlining the previous month's earnings and projected payment amount. These questions were usually answered when the benefits planner explained the process for calculating payments or when the benefits planner requested additional information from the local SSA office. The majority of participants who required benefits advisement also had questions about termination from Medicaid, decreases/loss of cash payment, or overpayments.

Based on interviews with benefits planners, they indicated that benefits planning services encouraged several participants to pursue employment because they understood how work earnings would affect their benefits and how the SSA work incentives and SSA waivers could benefit them. Additionally, benefits planners reported that participants felt more confident working because they knew the benefits planner would monitor their benefits and answer their questions. The $3 for $4 waiver was viewed by families as an incentive to support their youth's desire to work and retain their SSA benefits. However, in some cases it was difficult to encourage participants to save money because of the $2000 resource limit. This limit was often discussed but families felt like the limit was too low for them to accomplish "true" savings.

The benefits planner also helped train community partners and representative payees to understand more about SSA cash benefits, such as the differences among SSI, SSDI and CDB. This was an ongoing process to ensure these partners understood SSA benefits. Below is information about the benefits services delivered and the use of SSA waivers for participants.

The categories to enter data in ETO about benefits planning services provided to participants, were changed on September 16, 2008. The benefits planners received training to use the new categories; but it is possible that they mistakenly used the original category after it was discontinued due to a "bug" in ETO as described by the ETO administrator's technical assistance provider. The benefits planners reported that they quickly adjusted to using the new categories correctly.

Table 10 shows the results for both the original benefits services categories and the current categories. Benefits services provided to participants as categorized in the current categories are: benefits analysis and advisement services (provided to 91%), general overview (provided to 45%), and other (provided to 39%).

Benefits services in the original categories are: benefits information and referral services (provided to 47%), benefits problem-solving services (provided to 26%) and benefits management services (provided to 39%]).

Table 10: Distribution of Benefits Planning Services Provided to CYW Youth

Type of Benefits Planning Service	Number of Youth Who Received Service	% of Total (n=401)	% of Youth Who Received Service (391)
Current Benefits Planning Services			
Benefits Analysis and Advisement	366	91%	94%
General Overview	181	45%	46%
Other	157	39%	40%
Original Benefits Planning Services			
Benefits Information and Referral	188	47%	48%
Benefits Management	158	39%	40%
Benefits Problem-Solving and Advocacy	103	26%	26%
Total	391	98%	100%

Table 11 shows waiver usage type by participants through September 29, 2009 as recorded in ETO. A description of the SSA waivers can be found in Appendix 5. The data shows how many participants used the SSA waivers and provides the percentage of waiver use (n=401). The last column on the right describes what the percentage of working participants who used that type of waiver.

Table 11: SSA Waiver Usage Type by Participants

Waiver	Number of Youth Using Waiver (at any time)	Percent of all Youth (401)	% of Youth who ever worked a paid job (207)
$3$4	109	27.2%	52.7%
SEIE	20	5.0%	9.7%
CDR age 18	5	1.2%	

E. Partnerships – Community and Interagency Collaboration

During project start-up, the I-TEAMs spent a significant amount of time in their respective communities developing relationships with community based organizations, local government, nonprofit agencies, and faith based organizations. The I-TEAMs focused on learning about the services provided by each organization and gained knowledge about eligibility criteria where applicable. Each Workforce Center had active youth councils that provided an interagency

forum allowing I-TEAMs to develop relationships and provide information about the project. I-TEAMs used the relationships from these meetings to learn how to navigate the services partners provided and problem-solve issues related to participant needs.

The youth councils were established by Workforce Centers as subcommittees of their Workforce Investment Boards set up to provide guidance and input on youth program development at the Workforce Center. Members on the committee include businesses, community based organizations, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, school districts, Workforce Center youth programs, state and local government agencies, and youth. Members of the youth council applied or were appointed by the local Workforce Investment Board. The Workforce Centers have a strong working relationship with their partner agencies in the community. The I-TEAMs felt that being housed in the Workforce Center gave them immediate credibility in the community.

Based on individual interviews with I-TEAM members during the summer of 2008 and I-TEAM final reports submitted to the CYW administrative team, the I-TEAMs reported the value of serving participants based out of a Workforce Center. I-TEAMs stated that participants benefited from the close proximity to employment related services and funding sources in the Workforce Center. They reported it was beneficial to collaborate with the Workforce Center regarding participant's employment goals. The career counselors were able to form relationships with different Workforce Center programs and committees internally that worked with local employers. In the Workforce Center, Youth had access to all of the employment programs, trainings and resources offered. For example, the Pueblo I-TEAM collaborated with the Summer Youth Program (housed at Pueblo Workforce Center) to fund work experiences with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds for CYW participants. This partnership may not have been possible if CYW were not housed at the Workforce Center. In fact, all the I-TEAMs were able to enroll participants in work experiences using ARRA funds as a result of being part of the Workforce Center. The I-TEAMs felt that if not for their placement in the Workforce Center these individuals may not have had the opportunity to take advantage of ARRA funding. The I-TEAMs also collaborated with Workforce Center staff on tasks such as job development and outreach.

In Larimer County, the I-TEAM was able to support the Workforce Center by participating on committees and helping different programs as needed. The I-TEAM helped the Workforce Center direct service providers by providing disability awareness training and resources about working with people with disabilities.

The I-TEAMs frequently met with community partners to provide information about the I-TEAM and CYW. These meetings included in-person meetings to share the details of the Colorado Youth WINS project, and to collaborate in order to provide the best services possible for participants. The I-TEAMs also attended meetings hosted by partners, both for individual participants as well as for general information. These relationships were maintained by establishing contact leads for each partnering agency and re-visiting each agency when there were changes in a staff position.

The Larimer County I-TEAM encountered early challenges working with the local Community Centered Board (CCB). The CCB is the county's agency that provides services to individuals with

a developmental disability funded by Medicaid. At first, the CCB was reluctant to collaborate with the local I-TEAM and did not recommend that their clients participate in the study. The Larimer County I-TEAM, supported by the CYW administrative team, engaged with the CCB to establish a trusting, collaborative relationship. Specifically, the I-TEAM sent participant names to the case manager coordinator, once they were enrolled with CYW and had the appropriate permission. This way the coordinator could inform specific case managers about the Colorado Youth WINS project, and who to contact if they had any questions. This type of strategy was also helpful and used by I-TEAMs to build relationships with organizations such as DVR and local school districts.

In Boulder County, many collaborative partnerships were developed with agencies including the CCB, local Division of Vocational Rehabilitation office, The Center for People with Disabilities, RTD Denver (public transportation), and the Association for Community Living, the Sister Carmen Center, and many others.

All I-TEAMs reported on the significant role the Workforce Center played in establishing relations with businesses. Each career counselor worked directly with their respective business services unit to identify existing contacts with local employers when placing participants into work experiences and jobs. Another key advantage that career counselors reported was the ability to form new relationships with businesses as a result of job fairs sponsored by Workforce Centers. These job fairs were a great opportunity to network with employers and based on these contacts the career counselors could follow up with employers to conduct informational interviews, establish paid work experiences and make job placements.

In Pueblo County, the I-TEAM conducted outreach and relationship building with employers by coordinating with the Workforce Center's Business Services Unit. They provided disability awareness education and created job opportunities to meet the needs of employers and participants. The Pueblo County I-TEAM worked closely with the Pueblo County Animal Services, American Family Furniture, U-Haul, The American Cancer Society, Pueblo City and County Library District, Gaia Wellness Center, Center for Disabilities, and other businesses. They also developed relationships with multiple employers by attending the Pueblo Chieftains Business Exposition and the Pueblo Volunteer Exposition. At both of these events, I-TEAM members were able to meet with multiple businesses and non-profit agencies. This provided an opportunity for community partners to learn more about the CYW project and voice their needs for employees and volunteers.

In addition to developing community relationships at the local level, the CYW administrative team developed relationships at the state level. The CYW administrative team was able to engage state partners when necessary to build relationships in the local communities. On a couple of occasions, the state partnerships with DVR and the Colorado Department of Education provided insight and support for building relationships at the local level.

F. Sustainability of Practices

The CYW administrative team has taken a number of steps to identify and sustain practices demonstrated through this project. The CYW administrative team prepared and delivered a presentation to the Workforce Center Directors in Colorado about project outcomes and

findings to date based on quarterly reports, ETO data and the process evaluation report. This presentation included information regarding employment outcomes, education outcomes, and the value of the intervention being located in the local Workforce Centers. The intent of this presentation was to share how the I-TEAMs removed barriers to employment and demonstrate how the intervention effectively served this population from within the Workforce Center. Workforce Center Directors who participated in the study publicly expressed support for the project and the outcomes achieved. The presentation was well received by the directors and laid the ground work for sustaining some of the I-TEAM practices within the Workforce Centers.

The Workforce Centers found the services provided by career counselors to be valuable. I-TEAM supervisors stated that maintaining these positions are important to the workforce and contribute to their missions. Both relationship development with employers and the person-centered approach were the practices that the supervisors valued. At least one career counselor from each site is being sustained by each Workforce Center. These career counselors are continuing to be sustained at the Workforce Center for their expertise in job placement and relationship building with employers. As these staff members are sustained, they are serving a much broader population that includes unemployment insurance beneficiaries, individuals at risk for qualifying for TANF and other at risk adult populations. Additionally, one staff member in the El Paso site continues to be funded to serve as the Workforce Center's Disability Program Navigator.

There are some key written documents produced through the Colorado Youth WINS project that will continue to be available for future use. These documents include: The Final Process Evaluation Report, The Final Local Impact Evaluation Report, and The I-TEAM Training Manual. The first two reports highlight what we learned from the project about working with this young adult population using the I-TEAM intervention. The latter document is essentially the manual that provides instruction and orientation for training I-TEAMs and the role of each position included on the I-TEAM.

Another documentation of this program is through video. There are two videos that highlight the successful transition of two youth to competitive employment. These videos can be found on the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment web site under the Business and Education Talent Readiness page. In both these videos, the employer and youth perspectives are discussed. The employer speaks about the youth as an employee and describes the talents and skills the individual brings to the job. The youth talks about his/her job responsibilities and the impact of this employment on his/her life. These videos provide a summation of how these youth contribute to the workforce and specifically to the needs of their employer.

In addition, the CYW administrative team was recognized by state and national agencies for their participation in the national demonstration. The Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing collaborated with Colorado WIN Partners for expertise in providing training on removing employment barriers and developing a comprehensive approach to services and supports for individuals with disabilities to maximize employment opportunities. Colorado WIN Partners was invited to participate in a Medicaid Infrastructure Grant to develop employment supports and create comprehensive approaches for removing employment barriers for people with disabilities. Based on experience from the CYW demonstration,

Colorado WIN Partners will be developing and providing training across the state on removing employment barriers for individuals with disabilities through linking Medicaid and non-Medicaid programs. At the same time, the U.S. Department of Labor and Employment requested Colorado WIN Partners to work with them to develop a document that highlights the CYW intervention as part of their effective practices series to promote quality employment of persons with disabilities within the one-stop career center system.

A number of practices used by the I-TEAM are important to note for sustainability. Highlighted throughout the report is the person-centered approach. This style was emphasized by the I-TEAM supervisors as unique to the intervention and desired to be replicated within the Workforce Center. Applying this approach allowed for I-TEAMs to engage youth and families and empowered youth to follow a path of their choosing in education and employment.

Another practice was housing the intervention out of a Workforce Center. Having the I-TEAMs at the Workforce Center provided a number of advantages according to the I-TEAMs:

1. Established an environment that encouraged youth to engage in education and employment.
2. Increased staff credibility in the community when establishing relationships with community partners.
3. Created networking opportunities with local businesses based on an existing relationship that led to job shadowing, work experiences, and employment outcomes.

As mentioned earlier in the report, benefits planning services were important to assist youth in managing their SSA benefits to minimize fear associating with employment. 98% of participants received benefits planning services during the project. These services assisted folks in utilizing work incentives, SSA waivers, and managing their benefits to maximize economic self sufficiency.

One more practice emphasized in this report was service delivery coordination. Most participants in the project were connected to multiple systems either for services or public assistance. When serving each participant, I-TEAMs constantly looked at resources available in the community that could assist individuals in independent living, education and training, or job retention and acquisition. It was the assistance in connecting to services and coordinating these supports that aided in youth succeeding in education and employment. I-TEAMs often modeled for youth and families how to connect and utilize these services and supports available to them in achieving their education and employment goals.

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Summary/Conclusion

What We Learned about What it Takes to Serve This Population

Based on the qualitative and quantitative information acquired over this multi-year project, four items appear to be critical in serving transition-age youth with disabilities. First, a full I-TEAM (with a career counselor, benefit planner, and program navigator) is necessary for this intervention. Second, the person-centered approach was essential for helping this population increase independence or obtain employment. Third, being housed in Workforce Centers increases the likelihood that participants will find employment. Fourth, ongoing technical assistance and training were important in helping the I-TEAMs do their jobs effectively.

All three program staff roles were necessary for this intervention. Qualitative information from I-TEAM staff and Colorado Youth WINS (CYW) administrative staff suggested that all three program staff roles (career counselor, benefit planner and program navigator) are important in helping youth with disabilities to transition into employment or independence. Each role on the I-TEAM had a unique contribution in assisting youth to achieve their goals. As reported here, services delivered to the participants were often delivered by an I-TEAM staff member who was in the role relevant to those services. For example, benefits planners provided almost 86% of benefit planning services and career counselors provided 81% of employment services.

The person-centered approach is essential. The person-centered approach is based on asking participants what they want and helping them attain their goals instead of deciding what a participant might need. I-TEAM staff reported that this approach helped participants stay engaged and interested in working with the I-TEAM to pursue their goals. Some youth expressed interest in working or transitioning out of a sheltered workshop but indicated they did not know how or, in some cases, had been discouraged from doing so. Working with youth in a person-centered manner allowed youth to follow their dreams and goals to achieve employment in the community and pursue educational goals such as completing a GED and starting post secondary education classes.

Being in the Workforce Centers may increase the likelihood of youth attaining employment. While it is difficult to answer this question given the nature of the data available, there is reason to believe that the I-TEAMs being housed in Workforce Centers increased the likelihood of a participant becoming employed. The data shows that I-TEAMs referred participants to the Workforce Center more than any other resource. I-TEAMs also reported that a benefit of meeting with youth at the Workforce Center was having access to the existing employment resources such as interest inventories, job postings, internet access and workshops. I-TEAMs also coordinated with the Workforce Center's business services unit and job fairs to network with businesses and establish work experiences for youth. In addition, participants who came to the Workforce Center to work with I-TEAMs were exposed to the Workforce Center, which increased their familiarity with an organization whose goal is to help individuals obtain employment.

Ongoing training and technical assistance is necessary for I-TEAMs to do their jobs effectively. Given the nature of the I-TEAM roles, the person-centered approach, and the population served

in this study, technical assistance and training were essential in helping I-TEAMs understand their role, the goals of the project, and how to work with youth with disabilities. Because this model was new to most community service providers, it was essential to provide ongoing training and technical assistance to implement the intervention.

In addition to the four critical components described above, three other important lessons from this project may help others design effective interventions for youth with disabilities.

- First, I-TEAM roles appear to reduce barriers to employment for this population.
- Second, qualified staff members were essential for effective implementation of the intervention.
- Third, data was essential for capturing the services provided and outcomes obtained.

The I-TEAM roles reduce barriers to employment for youth with disabilities. Data presented in this report shows that 98% of the youth received benefits planning services, 47% received referrals to other community agencies, and 82% received pre-employment or employment services. Given the barriers to employment identified at the beginning of this report, it is likely that I-TEAMs providing these services to participants along with the SSA waivers helped address these barriers. For youth with disabilities to become employed, they may need assistance in understanding how employment affects their benefits, being connected to community resources, and attaining employment. An I-TEAM that helps youth in each of these areas due to the three specific roles on the I-TEAM, very likely helps a youth attain and maintain employment, 42% of participants did obtain employment after beginning the study and almost 52% of participants worked during the study. This is a substantial percentage of participants and may be evidence that the I-TEAM intervention helps reduce barriers to employment for this population.

Qualified staff members were essential. Because the I-TEAM staff members were employed through their respective Workforce Centers, CYW administrative staff had minimal input on who was hired on the I-TEAMs. Some I-TEAM members did not have as many skills and abilities in their respective roles as other I-TEAM members, and the amount of training needed to help the less-qualified staff was substantial and often ongoing. In addition, some I-TEAM members did not have a background in working with youth with disabilities. Trained qualified staff in the I-TEAM positions is essential to the success of any similar intervention program. I-TEAM staff that came to the position with experience showed a shorter orientation period and greater capacity to learn and acquire the skills and philosophy in serving youth. These staff also served as mentors to others on the team and assisted in modeling the knowledge and skills to serve the participants.

When conducting a research study or collecting data about the program, a user-friendly data entry program is essential. In this study, an online secure program, ETO, was used for data entry. Throughout the length of the project, I-TEAM members consistently reported that ETO data entry was time-consuming, complicated, and difficult to master. Even with ongoing and extensive technical assistance and training by the CYW administrative team, there continued to be misunderstandings among some I-TEAM staff as to the proper way to enter data. For example, an I-TEAM may spend an hour working with a participant on a variety of goals, yet

that effort might only be entered into ETO under “participant-specific staff efforts.” The CYW site administrators made a concerted effort in 2008 and 2009 to address these issues, particularly with regard to educational and employment outcomes, but there are still some areas where ETO data may not completely reflect the efforts made by I-TEAM staff members. Despite the challenges of ETO, the services and outcomes identified in this report are the result of a strong data collection effort. High quality, accurate data collection is essential for understanding program successes.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Definitions of Service Categories

Recruitment Efforts by Staff include all efforts related to engaging participants in YTD program services. For example, recruitment efforts consisted of scheduling an intake appointment, discussing the program without the youth making a decision, the youth deciding to enroll in services, the youth refusing to enroll in service, or a decision that the youth is no longer eligible for services.

Benefits planning services include reviewing public and private benefits each youth receives to determine how employment earnings will impact the youth's benefits; providing benefits information and referral; providing benefits problem-solving and advocacy; providing benefits analysis and advisement; and, providing benefits management. These efforts create awareness of the work incentive programs, including SSA waivers, which are available to maintain appropriate and necessary benefits upon entering the workforce.

Pre-employment activities are services provided to youth to help them find or prepare for employment, such as assisting with a job search help with writing a resume, or discussing career goals. The activities are described in the youth employment process chart called *School/Training* and *Discovery Process*. *School/Training* services include occupationally specific skills training. *Discovery Process* services include: assessing youths' skills, interests, and accommodations needs; discussing career goals, participating in career exploration activities, assisting in preparing a youth's resume; assisting with a job shadow; and assisting with informational interviews.

Participant-specific staff efforts are activities designed to connect youth with services and work with partner organizations. They also include the time I-TEAMs work to engage youth in Colorado Youth WINS services; for example, asking general questions about a participant's life in general and engaging the youth.

IEP/transition meeting activities are services regarding a youth's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or transition meeting, such as attending or preparing for a youth's IEP or transition meeting. An *IEP Meeting* is a scheduled time when a written plan is developed. The plan is designed to help develop specific educational goals for the youth with disabilities. It identifies the disability; describes the youth's strengths and areas of need; lists goals that the youth should reach in a year's time; includes short term instructional objectives that represent a series of skills to master or goals to accomplish; and identifies programs and services, including regular education that a youth will receive. The IEP is reviewed each year, from age 14 on. The IEP will also address transition needs and service. A *Transition Meeting* is a scheduled time at a youth's school to discuss the passing from one condition, activity, or place to another; the movement from school to adult life and the world of work. The transition is complex and involves decisions about career, living arrangements, and social and financial goals.

Education participant contact are services provided to youth regarding school and training issues that are included in the *Youth Employment Process* chart under School/Training. For example, this type of contact could include assisting the youth in accessing financial aid or talking about assistance with education accommodation needs.

Employment participant contacts are services provided to a youth regarding their current or imminent employment, such as post-placement follow-up or job coaching. These activities are included in the *Youth Employment Process* chart under Employment Search and Employed. Employment Search includes services provided to develop or place the youth in jobs. Employed includes services such as providing supports or helping set up supports for the youth in their workplace; job coaching services for a youth or checking in with the youth and the youth's supervisor to discuss how things are going at work.

Employment assessments are services provided to a youth regarding situational or standardized assessments. These assessments are included in the *Youth Employment Process* chart under *Discovery Process, which* includes situational assessments or standardized assessments. For example, the I-TEAM conducts a situational assessment with a participant in an environment unfamiliar to the youth.

Appendix 2: Referrals

Service Provider Category	Number of Referrals	Percent of Total Referrals	Number of Youth Receiving a Referral	Percent of Total (401)
Workforce Center	85	18%	65	16%
Disability Services	61	13%	40	10%
Housing Services/ILC	51	11%	44	11%
DVR	49	10%	40	10%
Charity Services	43	9%	32	8%
Other	28	6%	25	6%
Education Program or Supports	25	5%	24	6%
Transportation	24	5%	22	5%
Community Centered Board	19	4%	17	4%
WIA (Workforce Center Program)	15	3%	14	3%
Employment Services (besides workforce or DVR)	14	3%	8	2%
Health Services	11	2%	9	2%
Mental Health Services	9	2%	5	1%
Food Bank/Stamps	8	2%	8	2%
Utility Assistance	8	2%	7	2%
Medicaid	6	1%	5	1%
Recreation Services	6	1%	6	1%
Speech/Communication Services	6	1%	3	1%
Legal Services	4	<1%		1%
DHS	3	<1%	3	1%
Financial Services	3	<1%	3	1%
SSA	3	<1%	3	1%
Grand Total	481	100%	189	47%

Appendix 3: Enrollment Rates by Quarter Released

Released		# Enrolled for Quarter									Total	
Quarter	**#**	**Jul to Sep 06**	**Oct to Dec 06**	**Jan to Mar 07**	**April to June 07**	**July to Sept 07**	**Oct to Dec 07**	**Jan to Mar 08**	**Apr to Jun 08**	**Jan to Mar 09**		
July to Sep 06	22	8	7	2	1	1					19	86.36%
Oct to Dec 06	52		24	24	2	0					50	96.15%
Jan to Mar 07	85			44	23	1	2	3	2		75	88.24%
Apr to June 07	44				24	8		2	1	1	36	81.81%
July to Sept 07	89					51	14	10	3		78	88.64%
Oct to Dec 07	101						36	41	8		85	84.16%
Jan to Mar 08	95							63	12		75	78.95%
Total	488	8	31	70	50	61	52	119	26	1	418	85.83%

Appendix 4: Type of Employment--Category Descriptions

Competitive job, with supports, integrated setting: A competitive job is employment that was not just given to any youth (for example, the youth went through some interview process). The term supports refers to use of supported employment services. Some individuals in integrated work settings utilize supported employment services. Supported employment refers to ongoing support services in competitive jobs that occur in integrated settings for individuals with the most severe disabilities. Supported employment is intended for individuals for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred or has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a most severe disability. This employment outcome is obtained by providing intensive services and is sustained through the provision of extended services. The level of employment participation may be full- or part-time based on the interests and abilities of the individual. An integrated work setting is a job site where individuals with disabilities interact with non-disabled individuals other than those individuals providing services; or a work setting in the community in which individuals with disabilities interact with non-disabled individuals, to the same extent that non-disabled persons in comparable positions interact with other persons.

Competitive job, no supports, integrated setting: A competitive job with no supports is employment that was not just given to the youth. The youth does not need ongoing support services as described above. The job must be in an integrated setting. That is a work setting where individuals with disabilities interact with non-disabled individuals other than those individuals providing services; or a work setting in the community in which individuals with disabilities interact with non-disabled individuals, to the same extent that non-disabled persons in comparable positions interact with other persons.

Other: A job that is not in an integrated setting; includes volunteerism.*

Regularly and consistently works, community based: A community based work setting in which individuals with disabilities interact with non-disabled individuals, to the same extent that non-disabled persons in comparable positions interact with other persons. The hours were/are regularly and consistently scheduled.

Self-employment (this is a summary of the IRS definition): Operation of a business or profession as a sole proprietor, partner in a partnership, independent contractor, or consultant.

Work Experience: There are two types of work experiences, paid and unpaid.

Unpaid Work Experience: Unpaid work experience occurs when a participant is placed on an employer's premises and completes assigned duties or tasks, but the emphasis is on learning to perform specific job skills and adjust to the demands of a competitive job setting. It would also include formal internships or job tryouts in both secondary and post-secondary educational programs.

Paid Work Experience: Paid work experience refers to placement on an employer's premises in which a participant carries out a particular task or duty or a range of tasks or duties as would an employee, but with the emphasis on the learning aspects of the experience. The participant may be paid directly by the employer, or the participant's wage/salary may be subsidized by a government agency or the project. It could also include formal apprenticeships or job tryouts.

* Please note that all I-TEAMs were trained that the employment outcome being measure was integrated employment and not sheltered workshops.

Appendix 5: Description of SSA Waivers

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, to increase their earnings, or to continue their education.[1]

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.

General Earned Income Exclusion (GEIE). 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 GEIE 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 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 non-profit 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 post-secondary education, or start a small business. All IDA participants undergo financial literacy training.

Under current rules, Social Security deducts accountholder deposits from countable earned income and disregards matching deposits, IDA account balances, and any interest earned by the account when it determines 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 IDAs that may be used for purposes other than the purchase of a home, postsecondary education, or business start-up. 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.