

Research and Evaluation Notes

March 2021



Welcome to the second issue of the quarterly *Research and Evaluation Notes*! To support the public workforce system's research and evaluation efforts, these notes share:

- A selection of research and evaluation initiatives, reports, and resources relevant to the nation's workforce development system, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs, and target populations; and
- Technical assistance efforts to support positive customer and program outcomes through research, evaluation, and evidence-based program design.

This issue—

- Spotlights recent Evaluation and Research Hub resources, highlights a new implementation study for the WIOA programs, summarizes evidence for remote employment delivery strategies, and presents findings from the Youth CareerConnect evaluation.

Past editions of the [Research and Evaluation Notes](#) are available on the [Evaluation and Research Hub](#) Community of Practice.

SELECT READING

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Implementation Study Title I and Title III Core Programs

Enacted in 2014, WIOA legislation mandated significant changes designed to strengthen and improve our nation's public workforce system. The new [WIOA Implementation Study reports](#) describe how the reforms were implemented for the adult, youth, dislocated worker, adult education and literacy, Wagner-Peyser, and vocational rehabilitation programs; the extent to which states and local areas developed partnerships to achieve an integrated system; and states' technical assistance needs related to program administration and oversight.

Evaluators found that despite initial implementation challenges, youth programs were on track to meet the out-of-school youth expenditure requirement, but participant numbers, participation levels, and time spent in the program decreased. The new emphasis on career pathways in WIOA spurred the adult and dislocated worker programs to increase collaboration with education partners. The WIOA governance requirements resulted in more strategic planning and administrative tasks for workforce boards while also strengthening ties with education partners. Survey respondents noted the new requirements for the American Job Center system, rules for eligible training providers, and increased emphasis on evaluation were challenging. According to the reports, new resources, partner cultivation, and staff capacity building may be needed to overcome these difficulties.

Read the [reports](#) to gain insights about implementation of integrated services, state and local partnerships, and technical assistance needs.

EVIDENCE IN ACTION

Remote Employment Service Delivery Strategies

This [Rapid Evidence Review Remote Service Delivery](#) report synthesizes evidence from existing research on remote service delivery across a variety of sectors from 45 publications to help American Job Centers and workforce development agencies while many closures remain during the pandemic. Conducted by the [Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluation and Research](#) (CLEAR), this rapid review describes how some AJCs and other workforce agencies have provided employment services remotely since the start of the pandemic and draws on the research findings from employment and training and other comparable fields with service delivery to summarize the evidence on two types of remote service delivery. The two types of remote service delivery include (1) one-on-one interactions via telephone or videoconference calls and (2) self-service and group-based resources. As part of the synthesis review, a summary presents evidence on equity considerations and concludes with gaps in the evidence.

The CLEAR rapid evidence review notes that 10 of the 45 publications were classified as causal studies, 17 were identified as descriptive, and 18 were classified as literature reviews, opinions from subject matter experts, websites and other memoranda. The report also notes that literature on distance learning is examined in a forthcoming rapid evidence review on career and technical education provided as remote services.

Visit the [Trending Research](#) page on the [CLEAR](#) for more evidence on remote service delivery.

SPOTLIGHT

New resources in the Evaluation and Research Hub community:

- A [Building upon Performance Data and Reporting to Conduct Evaluations](#) webinar for researchers.
- Updated! An [Evaluation Toolkit: Key Elements for State Workforce Agencies](#) to support and build capacity for research and evaluation.

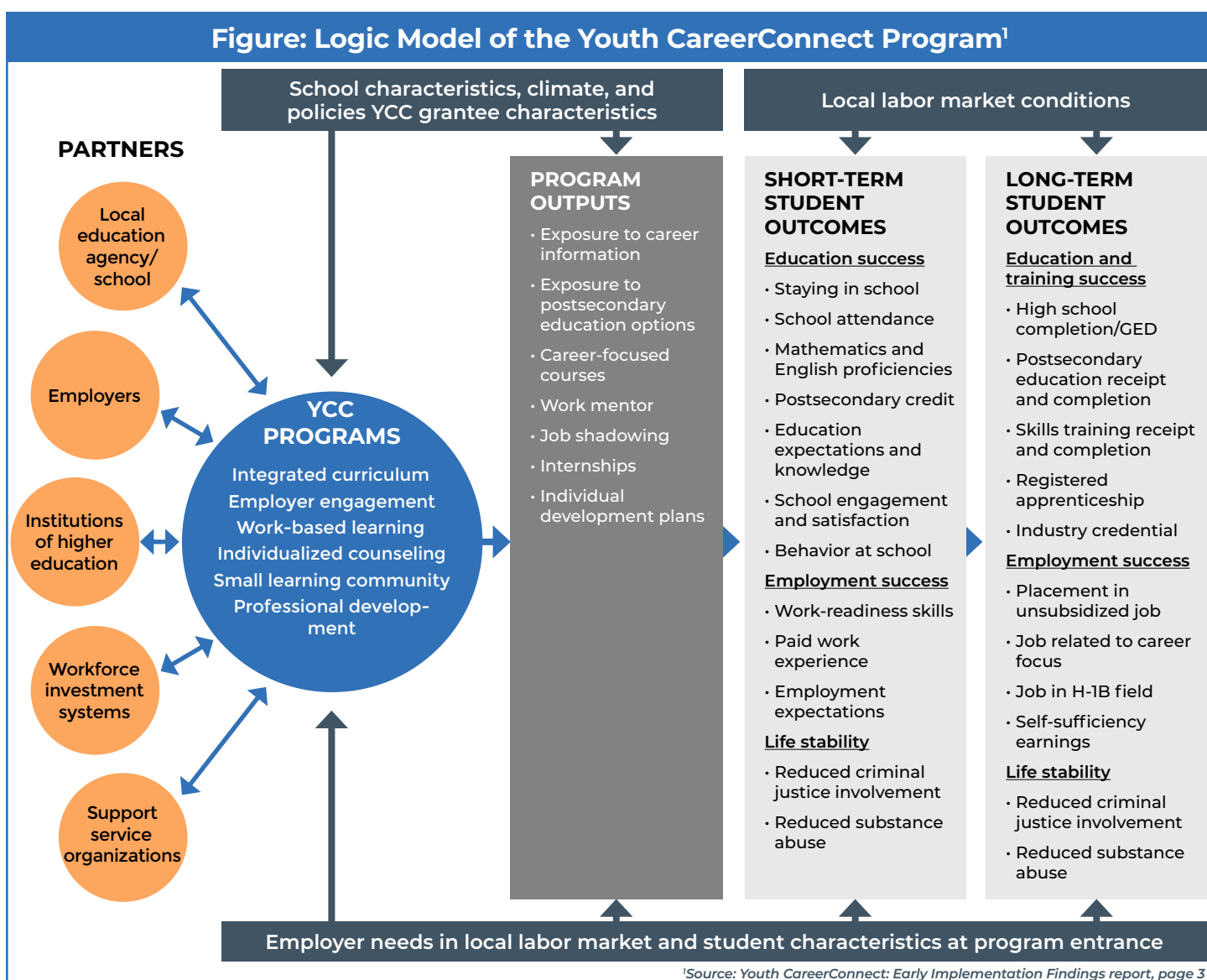
Youth CareerConnect: College and Career Pathways for High School Students

Youth CareerConnect (YCC), initiated in 2014 by the Department of Labor, provided a combination of academic and career-focused learning, rigorous college and career curricula, employer partnerships, work-based learning, and intensive counseling to high school students. A series of interim and final [YCC implementation and impact reports](#) are now available on the Division of Research & Evaluation (DRE) [publication database](#). The evaluation examined the implementation, evolution, and sustainability of YCC program activities; relationships formed through partner engagement; and impact of the programs operating in 16 school districts. Findings from a quasi-experimental design analysis and a randomized controlled impact study indicate small positive impacts on student outcomes including attendance, credit accumulation, and proficiency in English language arts. Students who participated in an internship, were mentored, or completed an individual development plan experienced more substantial positive program impacts.

RESEARCH IN LIVING COLOR

Youth CareerConnect: Early Implementation Findings

The following figure from the [Youth CareerConnect: Early Implementation Findings](#) report presents a logic model of the YCC program and displays the key elements of the program. The left side of the figure illustrates partners that provide critical support to the program. The context, as displayed at the top and bottom of the figure, affects program operations and outcomes. The outputs, as displayed in the center, reflect program implementation and lead to the short- and long-term outcomes for participants, displayed on the right.



Share research and evaluation questions, suggestions, and resource needs with the Employment and Training Administration's Office of Policy Development and Research at workforcepractices@dol.gov.