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EVALUATION OF THE 2014 COMMUNITY VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM'S YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

ICJIA

CVPP
Community Violence Prevention Program

Evaluation of the 2014 Community Violence Prevention Program's Youth Employment Program

2015

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Key findings

Youth living in urban and disadvantaged neighborhoods are often limited to jobs with low wages, benefits, and career growth (Demos and Young Invincibles 2011). In addition, they may lack positive adult role models and more likely be involved in the criminal justice system (Damm & Dustmann, 2014; Gruber, 2010; McClanahan, Sope, & Smith, 2004).Employers find many youth unprepared for the workplace in the areas of communication, professionalism, critical thinking, and problem-solving (Casner-Lotto, Barrington, & Wright, 2006). Summer employment program can offer skills and fill unstructured time, while not interrupting homework or extracurricular programs (Carter, Trainor, Ditchman, & Owens, 2011). Effective youth employment programs feature mentors who provide youth with time, attention, and a commitment to their success (Partee, 2003). Youth employment has been shown to increase school performance and future earnings, as well as decrease teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency, and arrest rates (Aos, Miller, & Drake, 2006; Bernburg & Krohn,2003; Heller, 2014; Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program, 2006; Mulvey, et al., 2004; Sisson, 2012).

Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority researchers conducted an evaluation of the Community Violence Prevention Program's Youth Employment Program. The program, which ended in August 2014, sought to increase job readiness skills, build relationships with a caring adult, improve attitudes toward employment and violence, increase self-esteem and conflict resolution skills, and offer community service and engagement. The program provided job readiness training, mentoring, and summer employment to about 1,800 young people ages 16 to 24 years in 23 Chicago-area communities.

Authority researchers analyzed program participant, staff, and employer surveys, as well as administrative data for information on training and general program operations.

Change in youth attitudes, police contact

Authority researchers measured improvement in youth attitudes before and after the program in five areas—1) *attitudes toward employment*, 2) *attitudes towards violence*, 3) *conflict resolution*, 4) *self-esteem* and 5) *contact with police*.

Authority researchers administered pre- and post-tests to youth participants to measure changes on average scores on a scale of one to five. The analysis of pre- and post-test scores of 606 participants showed on average youth participants scored high (or positively) across all measures both before and after the program. While scoring high, the post-tests showed small increases in *attitudes toward employment* and *contact with police*. One measure showed no change—*self-esteem*, and two measures showed small decreases—*attitudes toward violence* and *conflict resolution*.

Youth participants

Program data showed 3,322 youth applied to the program and 1,663 were accepted. Of those accepted, 203 did not complete the program. Participants were mostly between the ages of 17 and 19 years old and a majority had previous employment experience and no prior arrest history. Most participants expected to enter high school or college in fall 2014. According to a survey at the end of the program, most youth participants rated aspects of the program as good or excellent including job readiness training, job tasks, job supervision, mentoring, and the program overall.

The employment component

Many employers rated aspects of the program as high or very high including the success of the program, communication with staff, matching of youth to jobs, and satisfaction with youths' preparation. A majority of employers said they would hire the youth they worked with if they had a job opening.

The most common job assignments were teaching or supervising children, janitorial work, and community outreach. Most youth participants reported their job was a good match for their skills and interests. Sixty-two percent of youth participants indicated they would use what they learned in the program to obtain another job.

Staff feedback

Staff, coordinators and managers, thought they were prepared for their role as job readiness trainers and their role as mentors to youth. Eighty-three percent of staff said youth were prepared for their jobs. Almost all of staff (managers and coordinators) indicated that the program could be improved with additional resources, with almost half suggesting increasing the duration of the program.

The mentoring component

Administrative data from 20 communities showed 1,451 youth were assigned a mentor and mentors spent a total of 6,488 hours with the youth.

Almost all youth participants regarded their mentors positively, agreeing or strongly agreeing that their mentors challenged them to succeed. Ninety-one percent of youth said their mentors helped them see a different way to solve problems.

Almost all mentors were satisfied with their experiences as a mentor. A majority of mentors responded that they made a difference in their mentees' lives.

Training feedback

Most youth participants agreed or strongly agreed that the job readiness training was well designed, the trainers were knowledgeable, and that they gained a better sense of what it takes to

get and keep a job. Program staff, managers, and coordinators agreed that their training as mentors and job readiness trainers was well designed and that their trainers were knowledgeable.

Implications for policy and practice

Program goals included improved youth participant attitudes toward employment and violence and increased self-esteem and conflict resolution skills, but by serving less at-risk youth who already had strong skills and attitudes, there was little improvement to be made. Youth employment programs should consider expanding their services to more young people who are at-risk for delinquency, poor school performance, and unemployment. At-risk youth living in low-income communities may have greater need for such programs due to educational deficiencies and lack of employment opportunities, as well as increased possibility of exposure to violence. Government resources for these programs are limited and by targeting those at greater risk for unemployment and need for skill-building opportunities, they can make the biggest impact.

Employment components should offer more interactive trainings, including role playing, as well as job matching to career interests to the extent possible.

Mentoring components should also focus on conflict resolution skills, encouraging positive attitudes towards employment, and developing youths' self-esteem.

Introduction

In state fiscal year 2014, the Youth Employment Program (YEP) provided approximately 1,800 young people in 23 Chicago area communities with job readiness training, mentoring, and part-time employment. Researchers with the Research and Analysis Unit of the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) used administrative data and developed seven surveys to evaluate the YEP program and answer the research questions. These included three training evaluation surveys, one pre- and post-assessment, and four exit surveys. The following research questions guided the evaluation of YEP.

Research questions on **program operations and client participation:**

- How did youth learn about the program?
- To what extent was there improvement in youths' attitudes and beliefs toward violence?
- To what extent was there improvement in youths' attitudes towards employment?
- To what extent did youth learn conflict resolution skills?
- Was there an increase in self-esteem (youth feeling more valuable to their families, communities, themselves)?
- To what extent were youth prepared for employment?
- To what extent did the program place youth in jobs?
- To what extent did youth participate in community service?

Research questions on **trainings**:

- To what extent did the trainings meet their goals and objectives?
- How satisfied were participants with aspects of the training and the training overall?
- To what extent did the job readiness training prepare youth for their jobs?
- What did the youth learn from the job readiness training?
- Did youth obtain materials (like resumes) to seek future employment at the job readiness training?
- To what extent did youth put into practice the skills learned at the job readiness training?

Research questions on the **mentoring component**:

- To what extent did the mentoring component prepare youth for their jobs?
- How did mentors prepare youth for jobs?
- What was the quality of the mentor-youth relationship?

Research questions on the **employment component**:

- How many youth obtained jobs?
- What kinds of job positions were obtained?
- How did youth assess the quality of the employment experience?
- How many employers would hire youth after the program?
- How many planned to seek another job after the program?
- What did the youth learn on the job?
- What marketable job experience did the youth obtain on the job?

- What employability skills and traits did the youth learn on the job (e.g., timeliness, respect, etc.)?
- To what extent were youth prepared for their job?

Literature review

About 6.5 million youth aged 16 to 24 are out of work in the United States due to the limited available employment opportunities (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2012). In Illinois, the youth employment rate fell to 27 percent in 2011, which is a 10-percent drop from 2005 (Chicago Alternative Schools Network, 2014). The deficit of employment prevents young people from gaining work experience, learning job readiness skills and practical knowledge, and developing their social skills. Furthermore, studies have found employment can contribute to reducing youth violence (Dodge, 2001; Fields & McNamara, 2003). Youth unemployment is associated with higher rates of teen pregnancy (Sisson, 2012). In general, youth who work part-time during high school are not significantly more likely to drop out than youth who do not work (Montmarquette, Viennot-Briot, & Dagenais, 2007).

Urban and disadvantaged neighborhoods offer few jobs, and the jobs available are largely service industry jobs with low wages, few job benefits, and limited career growth (Demos and Young Invincibles, 2011). In addition, youth in disadvantaged areas may lack positive adult role models and information about careers (McClanahan, Sope, & Smith, 2004). Youth raised in high crime areas are more likely to participate in delinquent behavior and be convicted of a crime later in life (Gruber, 2010; Damm & Dustmann, 2014). In urban areas, incarceration rates are often higher for young people (Demos and Young Invincibles, 2011).

Need for youth employment programs

One goal of youth job readiness programs is to teach employment skills that will help youth to obtain and maintain employment in the future. In one study, only fourteen percent of high school graduates were confident that they are able to do what is expected of them in the workforce (Hercik & Techico, 2009). In another study, employers indicated that over half of employees with a high school education were unprepared for the workplace, particularly in oral and written communication, professionalism, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills (Casner-Lotto, Barrington, & Wright, 2006). Conversely, seventy-five percent of employers indicated that college graduates were well-prepared for the workforce (Hart, 2005). For youth to compete with more educated peers for employment opportunities, they need supplementary skills training to increase their confidence and prepare them for the labor market.

During periods of high unemployment, there is increased competition for available jobs and those with more education are significantly more likely to be hired, including filling the low wage jobs previously held by youth (Schmitt & Jones, 2012). Therefore, teens and non-college graduates mostly work in retail and food services where they are unable to learn skills, such as taking responsibility and problem-solving, they would need for increased employability (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2012).

Benefits of youth employment

Employment decreases teen pregnancy rates, juvenile delinquency and arrest rates, and increases future employability and earnings. There is a correlation between participation in work-based

learning programs and dropout rates. Participation in work programs causes youth to connect school, work, and their career goals (Sum, Khatiwada, McLaughlin, & Palma, 2008). Studies have shown that youth summer employment can reduce youth crime (Heller, 2014) and reduce recidivism (Aos, Miller, & Drake, 2006; Bernburg & Krohn,2003; Mulvey, et al., 2004; Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program, 2006).

Employment, even short-term employment, generates positive labor market outcomes for youth. Studies have found that working early in life can lead to smoother transitions into the labor market, higher beginning wages, and higher future earnings. Youth employment can have long term benefits including career awareness and skill development, extra income, and improved developmental and post-school outcomes (Carter, Ditchman, & Owens, 2011). Youth financial responsibility has been linked to improved self-confidence, which has been connected to increased salaries in the future (Burr, 2003).

Summer employment is particularly beneficial to youth. It allows them to gain work experience and training without conflicts from homework and extracurricular programs. It also fills otherwise unstructured time (Carter et al., 2011). Without jobs, youth may not be engaging in other productive tasks during the summer (Bellotti, Rosenberg, Sattar, Esposito, & Ziegler, 2010). Literature suggests that there are both positive benefits and negative implications to youth employment programs because community engagement can have positive effects but frequently engaging with delinquent peers encourages negative effects (Naccarato, Brophy, & LaClair, 2013). A meta-analysis of mentoring programs shows that community-based programs are more effective than school-based ones (DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002).

The Summer Employment Initiative offered paid work in five high-crime Boston neighborhoods. It increased participants' social skills, attitudes, and behaviors that are linked by research to be predictors of youth violence. The program also found a decrease in deviant behaviors associated with criminal pathways and a decrease in risky behaviors associated with future criminality (Sum, 2013).

One Summer Plus (OSP) was a similar program was operating in Chicago during the same time period as YEP offering part-time summer employment and mentors to at-risk youth. An evaluation of OSP using random assignment to the program found a decrease in violence by 43 percent over 16 months or 3.95 fewer violent-crime arrests per 100 youth (Heller, 2014). Therefore, summer job programs have the potential to change violent youth behaviors.

Effective youth employment programs

Eight principles of effective youth employment programs (Partee, 2003):

1. Implementation quality.
2. Caring, knowledgeable adults.
3. High standards and expectations.
4. Importance of community.
5. A holistic approach.

6. Youth as resources/community service and service-learning.
7. Work-based learning.
8. Long-term services/support and follow up.

Implementation quality includes planning time; clear communication of goals; sufficient and sustained resources; strong leadership; professional staff development; and use of data to improve program performance. Knowledgeable and caring adults can include community members, mentors, or other trained individuals who care about youth, can provide significant time and attention, and can demonstrate that they are committed to the youth's success for the long haul (Partee, 2003). Programs' adult participants should receive training in working with youth and in age appropriate activities. Effective programs have high standards of youth performance and offer supports so that the youth participants can meet these standards. Community members (parents, guardians, employers) can be resources to plan, advocate, and serve as another caring adult for youth participants (Partee, 2003). One study found the most effective programs presented material frequently to youth participants and had higher quality teachers or mentors (Reyes, Brackett, Rivers, Elbertson, & Salovey, 2012).

Effective youth employment programs offer multiple strategies to help youth such as individualized attention; hands-on instruction; enrichment activities; culturally-sensitive activities; child care and transportation; life skills training; recognition/rewards; and peer support (Partee, 2003). Young people can contribute positively to their communities and develop and apply critical skills that are important in the workplace and life. Work-based learning increases the likelihood that the skills lead to future employment (Partee, 2003).

Mentoring in youth employment programs

Effective youth employment programs feature caring and knowledgeable adults or mentors who provide youth with time, attention, and show a commitment to their success (Partee, 2003). Mentoring youth in their communities is critical because it prepares the youth to enter the work force and to achieve academic and life goals. Mentors can encourage the youth to thrive and promote engagement within the community, and they can be confidants for youth. Most importantly, mentors can impact youth violence prevention (Gellert, 2010; Katz, Heisterkamp, & Fleming, 2011). A meta-analysis of mentoring indicates mentoring programs produce at least modest benefits for participating youth (DuBois et al., 2002).

Research of effective mentoring programs shows the importance of the frequency of meetings between youth and mentors and the length of these sessions. Increased frequency of contact increases efficacy (Nation et al., 2003; Reyes et al.,2012). Age also plays an integral role as youth are transitioning to adulthood, experiencing changing relationships with family and friends, being given more freedom, and entering the workplace for the first time (Nation et al., 2003). Research also shows that youth of various demographics and backgrounds experience favorable results when paired with mentors of the same background (DuBois et al., 2002). Successful programs offer long-term support and follow up of six months to several years, providing opportunities for young people to continue relationships with caring, knowledgeable adults and receive guidance during the start of employment (Partee, 2003).

About the Youth Employment Program

The Youth Employment Program (YEP), one of three program components of the Community Violence Prevention Program (CVPP), provided approximately 1,800 young people between the ages of 16-24 in 23 Chicago area communities with job readiness training, mentoring, and part-time employment. Employment was offered through partnering local businesses and organizations for nine weeks in summer 2014. All wages were subsidized by the CVPP state grant program without cost to employers. YEP was designed to reduce risk factors and promote protective factors associated with violence and strengthen social skills.

The other two components of CVPP were the Parent Program and the Reentry Program. CVPP components work to empower and assist youth, as well as strengthen parent leadership within communities. The 2014 Parent Program provided funding to 20 communities for about 1,000 parents to receive training on parenting and program orientation and then to act as parent leaders for various community projects that promote protective factors for children. The 2014 Reentry program funded case managers who linked youth and young adults on parole in 23 communities to services that would help them successfully reenter their communities and while reducing recidivism.

The Illinois General Assembly approved a budget of up to $15 million in grants for CVPP in SFY14.

ICJIA disbursed violence prevention grant funds to the following organizations in SFY14 to operate CVPP.

- A Safe Haven Foundation
- Albany Park Community Center
- Alliance of Local Service Organizations
- Black United Fund of Illinois, Inc.
- Chicago Area Project
- Chicago Commons
- Children's Home and Aid Society of Illinois
- Community Assistance Programs
- Corazon Community Services
- Fellowship Connection
- Good City
- Greater Auburn Gresham Development Corporation
- Healthcare Consortium of Illinois
- Proviso-Leyden Council for Community Action
- Pilsen-Little Village Community Mental Health
- Sinai Community Institute
- Southland Healthcare Forum
- Uhlich Children's Advantage Network (UCAN)
- Woodlawn Children's Promise

CVPP was implemented in 23 Chicago area communities—19 in Chicago and four in suburban communities—selected based on poverty and violent crime rates. Youth living in low income communities have a greater need for economic and social opportunities owing to lower-quality schools, insufficient education, lack of employment opportunities, and exposure to violence which cause physical and psychological harm and skill deficiencies (Koball et. al, 2011). Five communities were, in actuality, combinations of smaller nearby communities, such as Chicago

Lawn and Gage Park. These communities were also encouraged to expand to neighborhoods adjacent to their community which included West Town, Near West Side, New City, Chatham, South Chicago, and West Pullman.

CVPP communities included:

- Albany Park
- Auburn Gresham
- Austin
- Brighton Park
- Cicero*
- East Garfield Park
- Englewood
- Grand Boulevard
- Greater Grand Crossing
- Hermosa/Belmont-Cragin
- Humboldt Park
- Logan Square
- Maywood*
- North Lawndale
- Pilsen/Little Village
- Rich/Boom Township**
- Rogers Park
- Roseland
- South Shore
- Thornton/Bremen Township**
- West Chicago (Gage Park, Chicago Lawn)
- West Garfield Park
- Woodlawn

*West suburban community
**South suburban communities

ICJIA staff analyzed data from the City of Chicago's data portal at https://data.cityofchicago.org/Public-Safety/Crimes-2001-to-present/ijzp-q8t2. Rates were derived by calculating the sum of all violent offenses (homicide, criminal sexual assault, robbery, battery, ritualism, and assault) then dividing by neighborhood populations calculated using census tract data from the 2010 census. Offense rates were not available for townships. The FBI Uniform Crime Reports for 2011 were used for the cities of Cicero and Maywood, but they may not label the same offenses as "violent" as the Chicago data. *Table 1* indicates rates of violent offenses per 100,000 population reported to police in the CVPP communities for 2013.

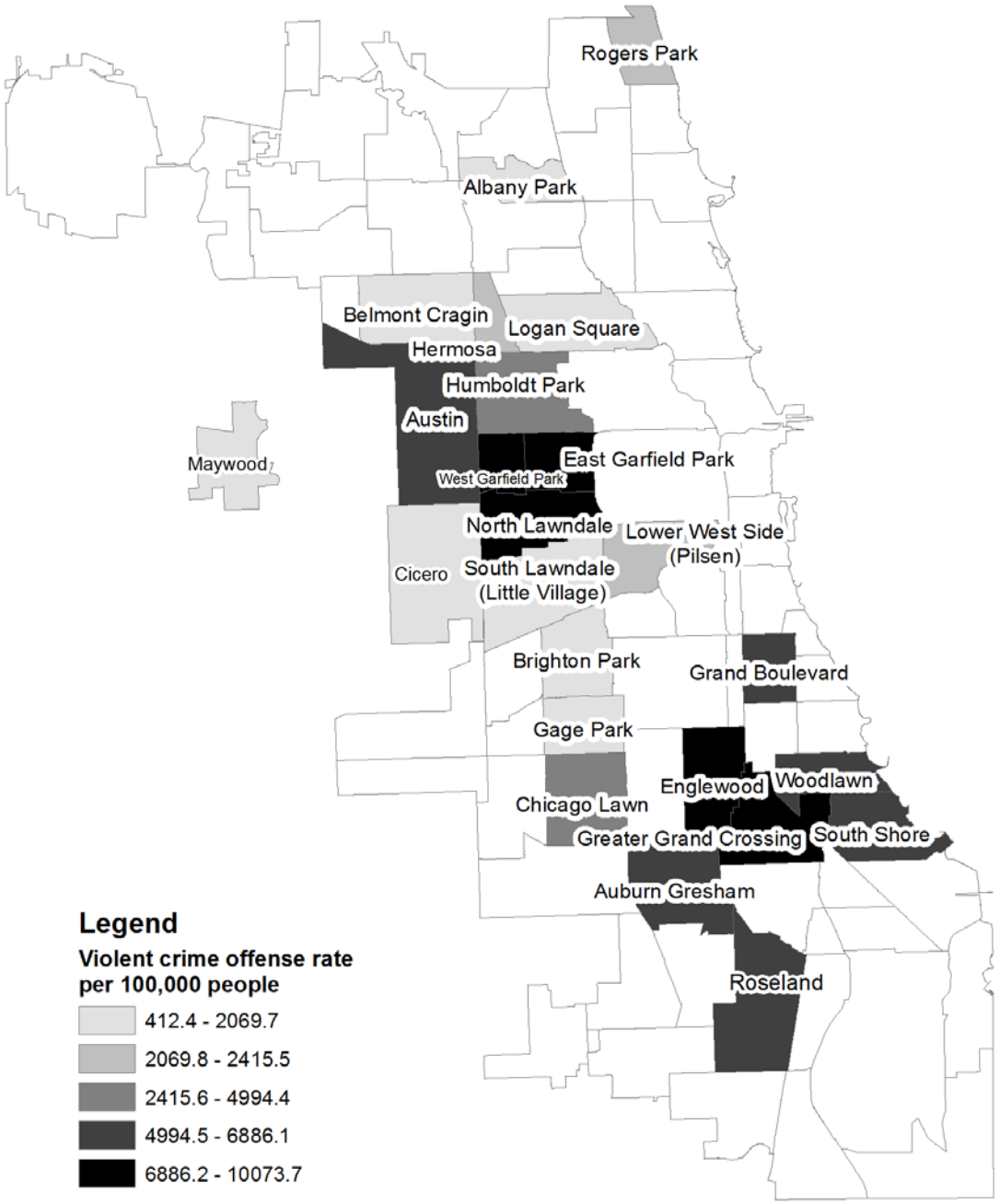
Table 1
Violent offense rate in CVPP communities per 100,000 population, 2013

Community Name	Violent offense rate
Albany Park	1,507.5
Auburn Gresham	6,060.4
Austin	6,066.1
Belmont Cragin	1,946.8
Brighton Park	1,723.7
Chicago Lawn	4,188.5
Cicero	412.4
East Garfield Park	9,072.8
Englewood	10,073.7
Gage Park	1,922.6
Grand Boulevard	6,169.9
Greater Grand Crossing	8,327.7
Hermosa	2,311.1
Humboldt Park	4,994.4
Logan Square	1,886.0
Maywood	859.3
North Lawndale	8,264.6
Rogers Park	2,413.1
Roseland	5,988.5
South Lawndale	2,069.7
South Shore	6,886.1
West Garfield Park	9,338.4
Woodlawn	6,073.2
City of Chicago	**3,168.5**

Source: ICJIA analysis of Chicago Police Department and U.S. Census Bureau data.
Note: Offense rates were not available for townships.

Map 1 indicates rates of violent offenses per 100,000 population reported to police in the CVPP communities for 2013.

Map 1
Violent offense rate in CVPP communities per 100,000 population, 2013



Violent crimes for Chicago community areas consist of person offenses from the City of Chicago Data Portal crimes database available at https://data.cityofchicago.org/Public-Safety/Crimes-2001-to-present/ijzp-q8t2.
Violent crimes for Maywood and Cicero are 2013 UCR person index offenses.

Program logic model

Figure 1 depicts a logic model of the CVPP 2014 Youth Employment Program that describes logical linkages among program resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes of the program.

Figure 1
Youth Employment Program logic model

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes -- Impact	
	Activities	*Outputs*	***Intermediate***	***Long-term***
ICJIA funding ILAACP technical assistance ICJIA program support ICJIA grant support ICJIA evaluation support 23 community agencies Community members, groups, businesses, religious institutions, and agencies	Train mentors Train youth on job readiness Train coordinators and managers Employ youth Mentor youth Complete community service projects Provide part-time jobs to adults and youth	18 hours of training for 96 coordinators and managers 40 hours of training for 1,800 youth 14 hours of training for 341 mentors 218 hours of employment for each of 1,800 youth $3.4 million in salaries to youth 43 hours of mentoring for 1,800 youth 30 community service projects completed 420 employers with free labor	Increase job readiness skills Build relationships with youth and a caring adult Improve attitudes toward employment Improve attitudes toward violence Increase self esteem Increase conflict resolution skills Increase youth productive time Increase community engagement Improve the community through community service Increase capacity of community agencies	Violence prevention-reduce risk of interpersonal violence of participants Increase future employment of participants Improve school attendance and performance of participants

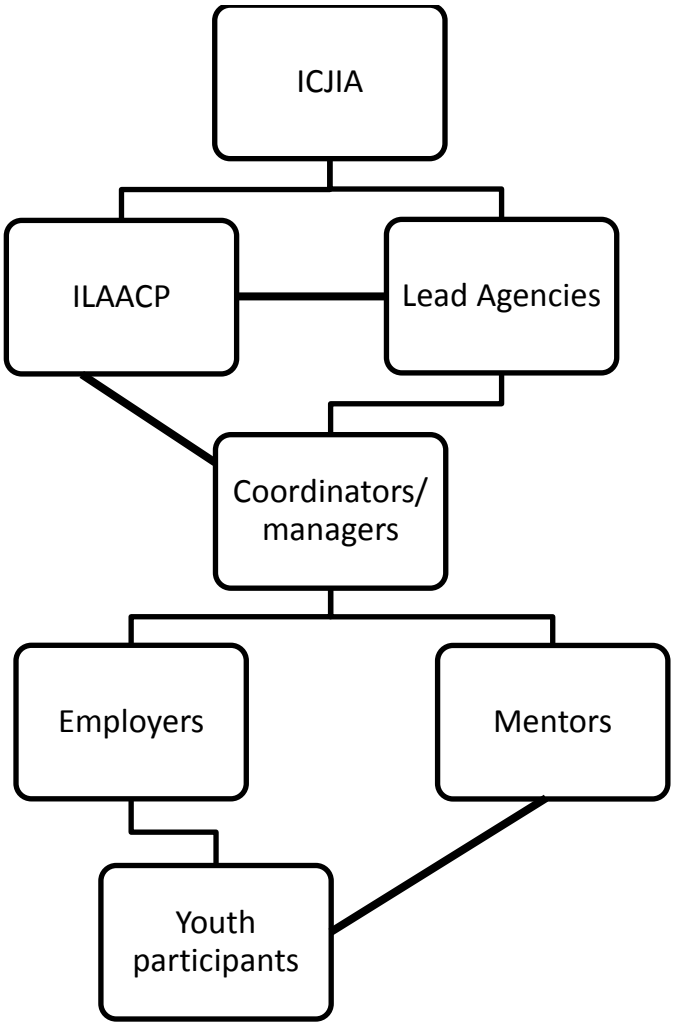
Evaluation study | ***External influences: institutional, community, and local policies, related programming***

Staff structure

The Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority administered and monitored the grant funds. ICJIA provided both external and internal websites to enhance program administration within the communities. The Illinois African American Coalition for Prevention (ILAACP) coordinated training and provided technical assistance and logistical support to ICJIA and lead agencies and built connected, informed, and engaged communities, enhancing capacity to deliver services. ILAACP is a statewide membership-based charitable organization that strengthens prevention systems, policies and programs in communities through research, training, and advocacy.

Figure 2 provides the program's structure.

Figure 2
YEP structure



In each YEP community, the following positions were hired:

- 1 manager
- 3 coordinators

- 16 mentors or instructor-mentors (8 in south suburbs)
- 80 youth participants (40 in south suburbs)

YEP managers supervised the YEP coordinators, kept employee files, assisted with payroll, and prepared quarterly fiscal and program narrative reports as required. YEP coordinators recruited, trained, and supported the mentors in their programs and reported to YEP managers. YEP coordinators were paid for 20 hours per week for 25 weeks, and managers were paid for 40 hours per week for 30 weeks.

Lead agencies were responsible for managing YEP in their communities and subcontracting with community organizations to implement the various program components. Lead agency roles in the YEP program included:

- Recruit employers to provide subsidized summer jobs for youth.
- Place 80 youth (40 in suburbs) in subsidized summer employment.
- Ensure successful employment by providing youth with 40 hours of job readiness training.
- Provide individual and group mentoring for 80 youth (40 in suburbs) to promote social and emotional youth development and help facilitate successful summer employment.

CVPP lead agencies, contractors and subcontractors were responsible for recruiting and hiring youth. Youth were paid for participating in 40 hours of job readiness training and 160 hours of employment between June and August 2014. They were also paid for 18 hours of community service and wrap-up activities in September. Youth were not paid to participate in group and one-on-one mentoring.

Youth were required to purchase their uniforms consisting of a navy polo shirt with the CVPP logo (about $11). Lead agencies purchased one additional shirt for each youth, as well as 10 additional shirts to account for attrition and turnover. The uniforms ensured appropriate attire. Youth were asked to pay for the uniform to instill responsibility and pride of ownership.

Employment component

Job readiness training

City of Chicago Colleges prepared YEP Instructor-Mentors to deliver 40 hours of job readiness training to youth. In their jobs, they served as both instructors of job readiness training and as mentors to youth, hence the title Instructor-Mentor. To optimize learning, job readiness training was limited to 20 youth per instructor. Youth job readiness training was delivered over a period of five weeks. Most communities held two, four-hour training sessions per week for the duration.

Employers

Each CVPP community was responsible for recruiting employers. ICJIA and ILAACP assisted with marketing and recruitment. An online application/database was created to gather information about employers interested in participating in YEP.

Mentoring component

Each CVPP community recruited mentors. An online application/database was created to gather information about mentors interested in participating in YEP. Each community was responsible for reviewing the applications, interviewing, and selecting the mentors for their community. Each mentor was required to pass a background check.

Training for mentors was provided by Michigan-based Winning Futures. Winning Futures was selected for their experience in youth mentoring and implementing life skills curricula in schools and mentoring programs. Winning Futures conducted "train the trainer" sessions; they trained YEP coordinators, who, in turn, trained and supported the mentors in their programs.

Trained mentors provided mentoring to youth hired through YEP. Mentors were instructed to sustain relationships with youth for the duration of the program. Mentors were responsible for supervising, mentoring, and monitoring youth assigned to them, providing support to youth during their period of employment, and supervising and monitoring youth during community service activities. They were also required to follow all instructions given by the YEP coordinator.

Mentors were paid to do the following:

- Attend the 40 hours of youth job readiness training.
- Plan and coordinate group mentoring activities.
- Provide mentoring to youth as determined by program manager and coordinator.
- Serve as a point of contact for mentee/employer relationship.
- Monitor youth employment timesheets.
- Participate in community outreach events with youth.
- Assist with youth orientations and trainings, as needed.

Community service projects component

Youth participants were required to complete a community service project for which they were not paid. Effective youth employment programs stress the importance of community service (Partee, 2003). Proposed YEP community service projects fell into the four categories below.

- *Fairs/Community resources/discussions*: Events that help community members with resources such as groceries and also events that gather members for celebrations, such as block parties, often with a theme. (n=16)
- *Community clean-up*: Events that gather the people of the community to engage in neighborhood beautification by cleaning streets and parks. (n=6)
- *Anti-violence*: Staying positive and informed on many issues such as gun violence and gangs. (n=11)
- *Health and wellness*: Activities to promote healthy lifestyles. (n=3)

Methodology

This evaluation measured process and outcomes. The surveys of staff and participants provided information on the process, or how the program operated. The YEP evaluation included four validated psychosocial measures of indicators of intermediate outcomes for participants of a violence prevention program targeting youth.

ICJIA researchers developed eight surveys to evaluate the 2014 YEP program. These surveys included three training evaluation surveys, one pre- and post-assessment, and four exit surveys. In addition, the programs provided community service approval forms and sign-in sheets, as well as administrative data about their participants. Data was collected between May and November of 2014.

There was an increase in sample size by 25 percent from 3,706 in 2013 to 4,637 in 2014. *Table 2* shows the sample sizes for the surveys conducted in 2013 and 2014 and collected from 23 communities.

Table 2
YEP evaluation sample sizes by survey 2013 and 2014

	2013	2014
Survey	**n**	**n**
Coordinator and manager training survey	N/A	42
Mentor training survey	137	206
Pre-assessment	1,446	1,222
Post-assessment	622	872
Youth job readiness training evaluation survey	347	1,211
Youth participant exit survey	864	867
Coordinators and managers exit survey (online)	73	29
Mentor exit survey (online)	120	99
Employer exit survey (online)	97	72
TOTAL SAMPLE	**3,706**	**4,620**

Administrative data

Each community was instructed to submit administrative data at the program's end that offered information about the youth participants in the program. The communities completed and submitted a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet which included the number of youth enrolled, trained, employed, mentored, and terminated from the program. Out of 23 communities, 22 returned completed forms (Auburn Gresham did not return the form.) All data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel.

Training evaluation surveys

Job readiness training evaluation

A paper survey was given to all participants who completed job readiness training to obtain feedback on the training, including quality, satisfaction, and what was learned. The one-page form contained eight questions and took about five minutes to complete. Federal regulations required that human subjects of some research must give informed consent to participate in the study and verbal consent was obtained through a script reading, and the anonymous forms were collected in a single envelope. After collection, the forms were sent to ICJIA researchers by mail. Out of 1,800 youth participants, 1,244 youth from 19 communities returned completed surveys (69 percent). Surveys were not received from the YEP programs in East Garfield Park, Grand Boulevard, Roseland, and Woodlawn. All data was entered into an Access database and analyzed in Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

Mentor training of trainer evaluation

A survey was provided to YEP coordinators and managers who completed training on training Parent Leaders. The survey was to obtain feedback on the training, including quality, satisfaction, and what was learned. Coordinator and manager surveys were submitted through May 2014. The form was one-page and contained 11 questions. The survey could be taken online or via paper form that was then mailed to ICJIA. In total, 42 completed surveys were submitted (46 percent). Of then, 37 were submitted online and five were mailed. A total of 25 coordinators and 17 managers from 20 communities returned surveys. All data was analyzed in Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS.

Mentor training evaluation

Program coordinators administered the survey to all mentors upon their completion of mentor training to obtain feedback on the training, including quality, satisfaction, and what was learned. Mentor surveys were submitted between through July 2014. The one-page form contained 11 questions. The survey could be taken online or via paper form that was then mailed to ICJIA. In total, 206 completed surveys were submitted (60 percent). Of them, 157 were submitted online and 47 were mailed. Two surveys sent in duplicate were removed and the final sample size was 204. All data was analyzed in Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS.

Pre- and post-assessment

A paper survey form was given to youth in the program as a pre-assessment (before programming began) and a post-assessment (after programming ended). The purpose was to measure change before and after the program on views of employment, attitudes toward violence, attitudes toward conflict, and self-esteem. These four items were selected to be measured as YEP program objectives. The pre- and post-assessment asked youth to respond to 39 statements and took approximately 10 minutes to complete. All data was entered into an Access database and then analyzed in IBM SPSS.

During regular online meetings, the principal investigator of the evaluation instructed and reminded YEP managers to distribute pre- and post-assessments. A script was provided to program staff administering the assessment in order to obtain verbal consent. Completed forms were collected in a single manila envelope and mailed to ICJIA. All data was entered into an Access database and analyzed in and IBM SPSS.

A unique identification code was used to maintain anonymity of respondents while allowing researchers to match an individual's pre-assessment with their post-assessment. The instructions asked youth to create a unique ID number using the first letter of their first name and the first letter of their last name followed by their month and day of birth. For example, John Smith born January 1, 1995 would be ID# JS 01-01. Problems with the returned assessments included no ID code, illegible ID code, too many or two few numbers in ID code, social security numbers provided rather than ID code, name written on form rather than ID code, and completion of only one page of the two page assessment. Any assessment forms with ID code problems or significant amounts of missing data were removed from the sample.

Of the 1,800 youth participants, 1,222 submitted completed pre-assessments (68 percent) and 872 submitted completed post-assessments (48 percent). Researchers matched the pre- and post-assessments via unique participant identification codes and communities. A total of 606 were matched. Pre-assessments were filled out between May 4, 2014, and July 22, 2014. Post-assessments were filled out between July 25, 2014, and August 29, 2014.

The pre- and post-assessments incorporated four existing tools to measure attitudes toward employment, conflict resolution, attitudes toward violence, and self-esteem (described in detail below). All were free and in the public domain (See *Appendix A*).

Attitudes Toward Employment—Work Opinion Questionnaire

The *Attitudes Toward Employment—Work Opinion Questionnaire* is designed to measure self-confidence and motivation for work (Dahlberg, Toal, Swahn, & Behrens, 2005; Johnson, Messe, & Crano, 1984). The questionnaire has an internal consistency rating of 0.54 (Harter, 1988). Respondents indicated how much they agree or disagree with eight statements. Each response was given a score and a neutral or "neither" option was added, so the responses were Strongly agree = 1, Agree = 2, Neither=3, Disagree = 4, and Strongly disagree = 5. Three items were reverse coded or worded in the opposite direction. Point values are summed for each respondent and divided by the number of items and higher scores indicate a more positive attitude toward employment.

Attitude Toward Violence Questionnaire

The *Attitude Toward Violence Questionnaire* measures attitudes toward violence and its acceptability, particularly in relation to fighting (Bosworth & Espelage, 1995; Dahlberg, Toal, Swahn, & Behrens, 2005; Houston Community Demonstration Project, 1993). The tool has an internal consistency of .67. Respondents are asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with a series of statements. Each response is given a score of Strongly agree = 1, Agree = 2, Neither = 3, Disagree = 4, and Strongly disagree = 5. Two items were reverse coded –

Questions 2 and 5. Higher scores indicate a more positive attitude toward non-violent strategies and use of nonviolent strategies.

Conflict Resolution—Individual Protective Factors Index

The *Conflict Resolution – Individual Protective Factors Index* measures conflict resolution skills, self-control items, and cooperation items (Dahlberg, Toal, Swahn, & Behrens, 2005; Phillips & Springer, 1992). The index was found to have an internal consistency of .65 (Gabriel, 1994). Respondents indicated how much they agree or disagree with 12 items. These responses were altered from a four point scale ranging from a strong yes (YES!) to a strong no (NO!) to a five point scale of Strongly agree = 1, Agree = 2; Neither = 3, Disagree = 4, and Strongly disagree = 5. Six of the 12 items were reverse coded and scored.

Modified Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Inventory

The *Modified Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Inventory* examines self-esteem by measuring perception of self-worth, ability, self-satisfaction, and self-respect (Dahlberg, Toal, Swahn, & Behrens, 2005; Rosenberg, 1965; Schmitt & Allik, 2005). Respondents indicated how much they agree or disagree with ten statements. Each response was given a score of Strongly agree = 1, Agree = 2; Neither = 3, Disagree = 4, and Strongly disagree = 5. Five items were reverse coded and scored.

Exit surveys

Youth exit survey

The youth exit survey asked participants to assess the program and reflect on their experiences with employment, mentoring, and community service. The paper-and-pencil survey was given to all youth at the end of the program in September 2014. The survey was five pages and 28 questions long. Program staff collected and returned the forms by mail to ICJIA researchers. A total of 866 youth completed the exit survey, or 48 percent. The principal investigator instructed and reminded the YEP managers to distribute the survey through regularly scheduled online meetings. Completed forms were placed in a single manila envelope and mailed to ICJIA. All data was entered into an Access database and analyzed in Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS.

Mentor exit survey

At the end of the program in September 2014, researchers e-mailed an online survey to program mentors. Completed surveys were submitted between September 23, 2014, and October 24, 2014. Researchers had 321 email addresses for mentors; however 27 of those were undeliverable. In total, 294 surveys were sent. The survey asked the mentors to assess the program, their mentoring relationship, and their mentoring experience. A total of 99 completed online surveys were received (34 percent of all sent). All data was imported from Survey Gizmo to Excel and analyzed in Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS.

Employer exit survey

On September 2, 2014, an online survey was e-mailed to employers. The 14-question survey was designed to gather feedback on the program participants placed in their agency and on the program in general. Lead agencies provided correct contact information for 325 employers. Efforts were made to identify an e-mail address for all employers. Many of the e-mail addresses initially sent were undeliverable (42). Some employers had no e-mail addresses. Many employers hired multiple youth.

In response, 281 exit surveys were e-mailed to ICJIA. A total of 72 completed surveys were usable (26 percent). Completed surveys were submitted between August 27, 2014, and September 30, 2014. All data was imported from Survey Gizmo analyzed in Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS.

Coordinators and manager exit survey

At the end of the program, an online survey was sent to the YEP lead agencies to distribute to coordinators and managers. The survey asked six questions rating the program and requested suggestions for program improvement. Coordinators and managers submitted their surveys between September 19, 2014, and October 14, 2014. Twenty-eight completed surveys were received from the 17 coordinators and 11 managers. Two reminder emails were sent following the initial email. All data was imported from Survey Gizmo to Excel and analyzed in Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS.

Community service

At the beginning of the program, lead agencies were asked to submit proposals for community service projects; 14 communities submitted plans for 36 community service projects. Ten communities submitted the sign-in sheets for their 78 community service projects. A total of 1,592 individuals signed-in at the various service projects from June 5, 2014 to September 13, 2014. All data was entered into, and analyzed with, Microsoft Excel.

Limitations

Missing data was one limitation to this program. Only 29 percent of youth pre- and post-assessments could be matched. However, all the surveys were voluntary due to the guidelines set forth by the Institutional Review Board which protects human subjects of research. In future evaluations, the researchers should establish more of a presence with the community sites, offering reminders and instruction to the sites on survey administration. A second limitation was that this study did not have client-level data of all youth in the program, such as demographics, and relied on aggregate administrative program data from the community sites. The study relied on heavily on self-reported data of those involved in the program. This is a limitation as subjects may be biased or untruthful, and forget or omit information.

Findings: Administrative program data

Lead agencies in 22 of the 23 YEP communities submitted administrative data at the end of the program on the number of youth recruited, accepted, terminated, trained, employed, and assigned a mentor. Auburn Gresham did not submit administrate data.

Participation in YEP

The 22 communities recruited or received program applications from 3,322 youth, an average of 151 and a range of 42 to 494 per community site. Twenty-one communities reported accepting a total of 1,663 youth into the program, an average of 79 youth and a range of 42 to 110 per site (South Shore did not provide data). The South Suburban communities were required to enroll 40 youth; the other communities 80 youth.

A total of 203 youth did not complete the program for various reasons. *Table 3* shows the reported reasons the youth did not complete the program. The most common reason was due to youth finding other opportunities (28 percent, n=56). With adequate time remaining, programs were instructed to replace youth who were accepted but left the program.

Table 3
Reason youth did not complete the program

Reason terminated	Number of youth	Percent
Found another opportunity	56	27.6%
Other/no reason given	52	25.6%
Return to school	23	11.3%
Family/medical issue	20	9.9%
No show	19	9.4%
Moved/transportation issue	16	7.9%
Resigned/dropped	12	5.9%
Criminal activity	5	2.5%
TOTAL	**203**	**100%**

Employment component

In 21 communities, respondents reported enrolling 1,631 youth participants in job readiness training, an average of 78 and a range of 37 to 101 youth per community site.

Across 22 communities reporting, 1,564 youth completed job readiness training, with an average of 71 youth, and a range of 42 to 88 youth per site. A total of 139 youth did not complete the job readiness training—an average of seven youth and a range of zero to 19 youth per site.

In 21 communities, youth created 1,557 resumes, with an average of 74 resumes per site. Youth practiced filling out 1,605 job applications, with an average of 76 applications per site.

According to the 20 responding lead agencies, 1,236 program participants completed their employment, with an average of 62 youth and a range of 23 to 80 youth per community site (Auburn Gresham, East Garfield Park, and Thorton/Bremen did not provide data on employment completion).

Mentoring component

Twenty-two CVPP communities hired 324 mentors, with an average of 15 and a range of six to 20 mentors per site.

Administrative data from 20 communities showed 1,490 youth participants were assigned a mentor, with an average of 75 and a range of 30 to 91 youth per community site (Auburn Gresham, East Garfield Park, and Roseland did not provide this data).

In 20 communities, mentors spent 6,488 hours with their mentees. They averaged 324 hours per community, with a range of 32 to 2,175 hours per community site (Auburn Gresham, East Garfield Park, and Hermosa/Belmont Cragin did not provide this data).

Findings: Pre- and post-assessments

In the pre- and post-assessments four tools were utilized to measure attitudes toward employment, violence, conflict resolution, and self-esteem. The employment questions measured self-confidence and motivation for work and higher average scores indicated a more positive attitude toward employment. The violence questions measured attitudes toward violence and its acceptability and higher average scores indicated a more positive attitude toward non-violent strategies. The conflict resolution questions measured conflict resolution skills, self-control, and cooperation and higher scores indicated a higher level of conflict resolution skills. The self-esteem questions measured perception of self-worth, ability, self-satisfaction, and self-respect and higher scores indicated a higher level of self-esteem.

The assessment was administered to program participants twice during the program period—at the start of program participation, prior to training and after the program ended or at program disenrollment. The agreement was on a scale of strongly agree =1 and strongly disagree =5. The higher the mean score, the more positive the program participants' responses were toward the four measures.

Respondents

A total of 2,094 surveys were received, including 1,222 pre-assessments and 872 post-assessments. Twenty communities returned surveys—19 returned pre-assessments and 17 returned post-assessments (Grand Boulevard, Pilsen/Little Village, and Woodlawn did not return any surveys). There may be fewer post-assessments due to the participants leaving the program at different times and participants not being gathered together for the survey at the end. There were 606 matched surveys with a pre- and post-assessment (*Table 4*).

Table 4
Survey respondents by community

	All surveys		Pre-program		Post-program		Matched	
	n	**Percent**	**n**	**Percent**	**n**	**Percent**	**n**	**Percent**
Albany Park	153	7.3%	81	6.6%	72	8.3%	56	9.2%
Auburn Gresham	75	3.6%	44	3.6%	31	3.6%	23	3.8%
Austin	3	0.1%	3	0.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Brighton Park	140	6.7%	73	6.0%	67	7.7%	49	8.1%
Cicero	137	6.5%	69	5.6%	68	7.8%	51	8.4%
East Garfield Park	117	5.6%	72	5.9%	45	5.2%	30	5.0%
Englewood	158	7.5%	75	6.1%	83	9.5%	63	10.4%
Greater Grand Crossing	136	6.5%	70	5.7%	66	7.6%	48	7.8%
Hermosa/Belmont-Cragin	65	3.1%	65	5.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Humboldt Park	39	1.9%	0	0.0%	39	4.5%	0	0.0%
Logan Square	64	3.1%	64	5.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Maywood	110	5.3%	80	6.5%	30	3.4%	24	4.0%
North Lawndale	142	6.8%	70	5.7%	72	8.3%	58	9.6%
Rich/Bloom Township	63	3.0%	37	3.0%	26	3.0%	23	3.8%
Rogers Park	118	5.6%	70	5.7%	48	5.5%	30	5.0%
Roseland	128	6.1%	80	6.5%	48	5.5%	44	7.3%
South Shore	109	5.2%	60	4.9%	49	5.6%	29	4.8%
Thornton/Bremen Township	115	5.5%	72	5.9%	43	4.9%	29	4.8%
West Chicago (Gage Park, Chicago Lawn)	97	4.6%	72	5.9%	25	2.9%	13	2.1%
West Garfield Park	125	6.0%	65	5.2%	60	6.9%	36	5.9%
TOTAL	**2,094**	**100%**	**1,222**	**100%**	**872**	**100%**	**606**	**100%**

Matched pre- and post-assessments

Researchers matched the pre- and post-assessments to youth via unique identification codes, communities, and agencies; the total number of matched cases was 606. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with a series of statements. Each response is given a score of Strongly agree = 1, Agree = 2, Neither = 3, Disagree = 4, and Strongly disagree = 5.

In the following discussions, a positive change indicates a beneficial change in attitude or beliefs, and a negative change refers to an unbeneficial change. Some changes are not statistically significant, which indicates a finding that may be the result of chance variation rather than being attributable to participation in the program.

Overall, a slight decrease in mean scores was seen from the pre-assessment and post-assessment for the attitudes toward violence and conflict resolution. There was slight improvement in the attitudes toward employment, self-esteem, and contact with police metrics.

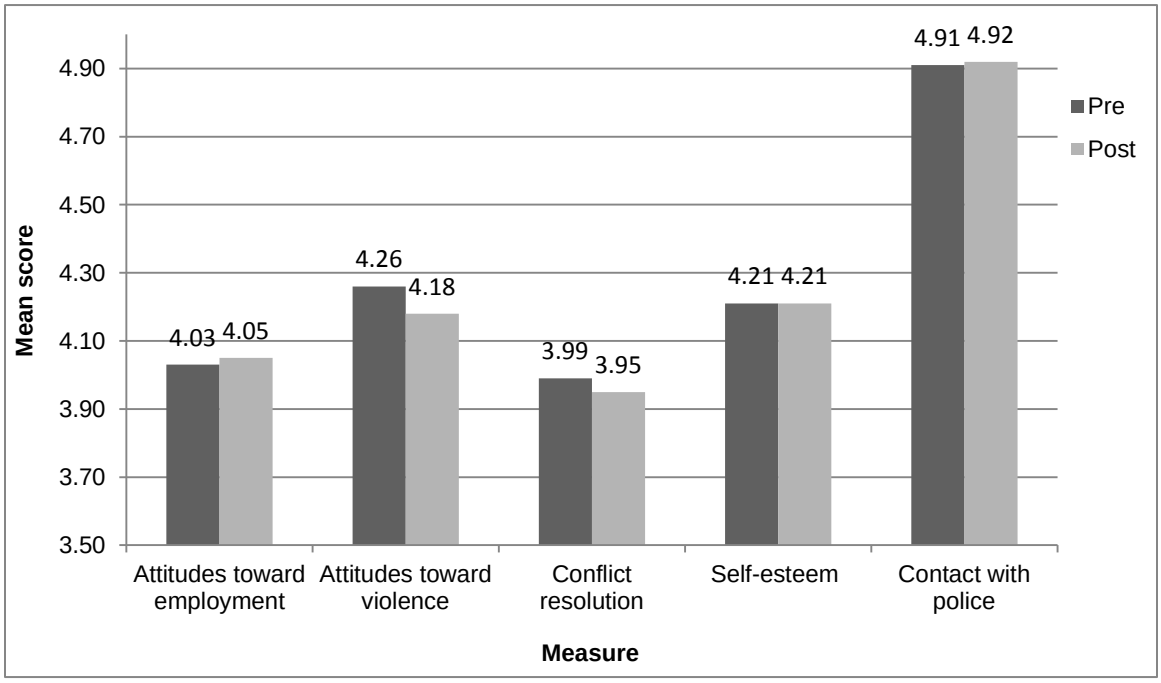
Table 5 and *Figure 3* show results of the matched pre- and post-assessments by measure.

Table 5
Matched pre- and post-assessments mean scores by measure

	n	Mean 1 (pre)	Standard deviation 1	Mean 2 (post)	Standard deviation 2	Change in means	t	Sig	Effect size
Attitudes toward employment	606	4.03	0.44	4.05	.50	.02	-.61	.544	-0.03
Attitudes toward violence	606	4.26	0.44	4.18	0.50	-.08	4.10	.000*	0.08
Conflict resolution	606	3.99	0.53	3.95	.58	-.04	2.00	.046*	0.16
Self-esteem	606	4.21	0.55	4.21	0.60	.00	-0.21	.831	-0.01
Contact with police	604	4.91	0.32	4.92	0.35	.01	0.35	.730	0.02
Combined measures	592	4.29	0.30	4.27	0.36	-.02	1.90	.058	0.07

*Statistically significant

Figure 3
Change in pre- and post-test average scores by measure (n=606)



High-score group

Most respondents started and finished the program with a high score. A majority of respondents had a score of 4 or 5 on the pre-assessment (Time 1) and the post-assessment (Time 2). At both Time 1 and Time 2, a majority of respondents had a score of 4 or 5 on attitudes toward employment, at 60 percent and 64 percent, respectively. Seventy-six percent had a score of 4 or 5 on attitudes toward violence at Time 1 and 69 percent had the same at Time 2. Fifty-nine percent had a score of 4 or 5 on conflict resolution at Time 1 and 52 percent had the same at Time 2. A total of 69 percent had a 4 or 5 score on self-esteem at both Time 1 and Time 2. A majority had a 4 or 5 for contact with the police at Time 1 and Time 2, at 98 percent and 97 percent, respectively. *Table 6* shows mean scores of 4 or 5 at Time 1 and Time 2, by the measures.

Table 6
Mean scores of 4 or 5 at pre- and post-assessments by measure

	Mean of 4 (pre)		Mean of 5 (pre)		Mean of 4 (post)		Mean of 5 (post)	
	n	***Percent***	***n***	***Percent***	***n***	***Percent***	***n***	***Percent***
Attitudes toward employment	351	57.9%	10	1.7%	370	61.1%	19	3.1%
Attitudes toward violence	423	69.8%	38	6.3%	390	64.4%	30	5.0%
Conflict resolution	337	55.6%	21	3.5%	281	46.4%	34	5.6%
Self-esteem	361	59.6%	58	9.6%	352	58.1%	68	11.2%
Contact with police	63	10.6%	529	87.3%	39	6.4%	551	90.9%
Combined measures	496	83.8%	2	0.3%	456	77.0%	3	0.5%

Low-score group

Lower scoring respondents' surveys were examined to see if they had greater changes between the pre- and post-assessment than the higher scoring respondents. The lower scoring group (those with a mean score of less than four) had an improvement in mean scores of attitudes toward employment, attitudes towards violence, attitudes towards conflict resolution, and self-esteem while the higher scoring group did not. *Table 7* depicts the change in mean scores of the four measures of the low and high scoring groups.

Table 7
Change in mean scores of low and high scoring groups

	n	Change in means	Standard deviation
Attitudes toward employment			
Low	245	.19	.47
High	361	-.11	.46
Attitudes toward violence			
Low	246	.21	.52
High	360	-.22	.53
Conflict resolution			
Low	145	.15	.46
High	461	-.15	.44
Self-esteem			
Low	187	.24	.58
High	419	-.10	.49
Contact with police			
Low	12	1.31	1.24
High	592	-.02	.36

Attitudes toward employment

A paired sample t-test (n=606) conducted to investigate differences in the pre- to post-assessment of attitudes toward employment showed a slight decrease from Time 1 (pre-assessment) (M = 4.03, SD = 0.44) to Time 2 (post-assessment) (M = 4.05, SD = 0.50, t = -0.61, p = 0.54). The change in means was .02. The difference between the average pre- and post-assessment scores was not statistically significant.

Cohen's *d* evaluates the degree (measured in standard deviation units) that the mean of the difference scores is different from zero. If the calculated *d* equals 0, the mean of the difference scores is equal to zero. However, as *d* deviates from 0, the effect size becomes larger. Effect size provides a measure of the magnitude of the difference expressed in standard deviation units from the first assessment. Therefore, the effect size can indicate how big an effect we can expect from the program. An estimate of the effect size (d = -.03) suggests a small effect.

There were positive increases in five questions on attitudes toward employment and a decrease in three questions. There was a slight increase in disagreement with the statement *I am not quite ready to handle a part-time job.* Time 1 had a mean of 4.35 (SD=1.04) and Time 2 had a mean of

4.37 (*SD* = 1.08). There was a decrease in agreement with *I have enough skills to do a job well*. Time 1 had mean of 4.44 (*SD* = 0.73), while Time 2 had a mean of 4.37 (*SD* = 1.08). There was a slight increase in agreement with the statement *I know I can succeed at work.* Time 1 had a mean of 4.66 (*SD* = 0.62), and Time 2 had a mean of 4.67 (*SD* = 0.68). There was an increase in disagreement with *I would take almost any kind of job to get money*. Time 1 had mean of 2.90 (*SD* = 1.20), while Time 2 had a mean of 3.06 (*SD* = 1.20). There was also an increase in disagreement with the negative statement *I admire people who get by without working*. *Table 8* shows differences in questions at Time 1 and Time 2.

Table 8
Attitudes toward employment questions of matched pre- and post-assessments

	n	Mean 1 (pre)	Standard deviation 1	Mean 2 (post)	Standard deviation 2	Change in means
I am not quite ready to handle a part-time job.	601	4.35	1.04	4.37	1.08	.02
I have enough skills to do a job well.*	603	4.44	0.73	4.54	0.71	.10
I know I can succeed at work.*	602	4.66	0.62	4.67	0.68	.01
I would take almost any kind of job to get money.	601	2.90	1.20	3.06	1.20	.17
I admire people who get by without working.	596	3.82	1.06	3.84	1.11	.02
The only good job is one that pays a lot of money.	599	3.69	1.00	3.66	1.06	-.03
Working hard at a job will pay off in the end.*	600	4.64	0.65	4.60	0.74	-.04
Most jobs are dull and boring.	602	3.77	0.87	3.63	.97	-.14

*Researchers reverse-coded these items, so all score increases are positive, all score decreases are negative.

Attitudes toward conflict resolution

A paired sample t-test (n=606) conducted to investigate differences in the pre- to post-assessment of attitudes toward conflict resolution showed a slight decrease from Time 1 (*M* = 3.99; *SD* = 0.53) to Time 2 (*M* = 3.95; *SD* = 0.58). The change in means was .04 and was statistically significant (*t* = 2.00, *p* = .05). An estimate of the effect size (*d* = 0.08) suggests a small effect.

There were positive increases in two questions on attitudes toward conflict resolution. There was a slight increase in disagreement with the negative statement *It's okay to hit someone who hits you first.* Time 1 was mean of 3.22 (*SD* = 1.17), and Time 2 was a mean of 3.23 (*SD* = 1.22). There was a slight increase in disagreement with the negative statement *If I refuse to fight, my friends will think I'm afraid*. Time 1 had a mean of 4.02 (*SD* = 1.01), and Time 2 was a mean of 4.06 (*SD* = .98). *Table 9* depicts the differences in the conflict resolution questions from Time 1 and Time 2.

Table 9
Attitudes toward conflict resolution questions of matched pre- and post-assessment

	n	Mean 1 (pre)	Standard deviation 1	Mean 2 (post)	Standard deviation 2	Change in means
If I walk away from a fight, I'd be a coward ("chicken").	605	4.29	.82	4.28	.85	-.01
I don't need to fight because there are other ways to deal with being mad.*	604	4.38	.86	4.22	1.02	-.16
It's okay to hit someone who hits you first.	601	3.22	1.17	3.23	1.22	.01
If a kid teases me, I usually cannot get him/her to stop unless I hit him/her.	598	4.32	.71	4.20	.84	-.12
If I really want to, I can usually talk someone out of trying to fight with me.*	600	3.73	.95	3.70	1.07	-.03
If I refuse to fight, my friends will think I'm afraid.	605	4.02	1.01	4.06	.98	.04

*Researchers reverse-coded these items, so all score increases are positive, all score decreases are negative.

Attitudes toward violence

The paired sample t-test (n=606) conducted to investigate differences in the pre- to post-assessment of attitudes towards violence showed a slight decrease from Time 1 (M = 4.26; SD = 0.44) to Time 2 (M = 4.18, SD = 0.50, t = 4.08, p <.001). The difference was statistically significant. The change in means was .08. An estimate of the effect size (d = 0.16) suggests a small effect.

There were positive increases in two questions on attitudes toward violence. There was a slight increase in agreement with the statement *Helping others makes me feel good.* Time 1 was a mean of 4.50 (SD = .73), and Time 2 was a mean of 4.51 (SD =.67). There was also an increase in agreement with the statement *Helping others is very satisfying*. Time 1 was a mean of 4.42 (SD = .77), and Time 2 was a mean of 4.44 (SD = .74). *Table 10* depicts the differences in the questions from Time 1 and Time 2.

Table 10
Attitudes toward violence questions of matched pre- and post-assessments

	n	Mean 1 (pre)	Standard deviation 1	Mean 2 (post)	Standard deviation 2	Change in means
Sometimes you have to physically fight to get what you want.	603	4.16	.85	4.02	1.01	-.14
Being a part of a team is fun.*	604	4.39	.71	4.39	.70	.00
Helping others makes me feel good.*	598	4.50	.73	4.51	.67	.01
I get mad easily.	599	3.78	1.03	3.70	1.12	-.08
I do whatever I feel like doing.	601	3.66	.97	3.57	1.00	-.09
When I am mad, I yell at people.	601	4.04	.92	3.89	.98	-.15
I always like to do my part.*	601	4.41	.61	4.37	.72	-.04
It is important to do your part in helping at home.*	601	4.52	.66	4.47	.71	-.05
Sometimes I break things on purpose.	603	4.46	.68	4.27	.91	-.19
If I feel like it, I hit people.	598	4.57	.65	4.40	.84	-.17
Helping others is very satisfying.*	601	4.42	.77	4.44	.74	.20
I like to help around the house.*	603	4.23	.77	4.22	.87	-.01

*Researchers reverse-coded these items, so all score increases are positive, all score decreases are negative.

Self-esteem

Summer employment programs and mentoring can increase self-esteem (Schwartz, Lowe, & Rhodes, 2012; Hardesty & Hirsh, 1992), and low self-esteem in adolescence has been shown to lead to poor health, criminal behavior, and limited economic prospects in adulthood (Trzesniewski et al., 2006).

A paired sample t-test (n=606) conducted to investigate differences in the pre- to post-assessment of self-esteem showed no change from Time 1 (M = 4.21; SD = 0.55) to Time 2 (M = 4.21; SD = 0.60, t= -0.21, p = .83). None of the slight differences were statistically significant. An estimate of the effect size (d = -.01) suggests a small effect.

There were positive increases in five questions on attitudes toward self-esteem and a decrease in four questions. There was an increase in agreement with the statement *I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal par with others*. Time 1 had a mean of 4.25 (SD = 0.72) to Time 2 had a mean of 4.31 (SD = 0.82). There was also an increase in agreement with the statement *I feel that I have a number of good qualities*; the statement, *I take a positive attitude toward myself*; and the statement *On the whole, I am satisfied with myself*. Time 1 had a mean of 4.33 (SD = 0.82) to Time 2 had a mean of 4.39 (SD = 0.81). There was an increase in disagreement

with the negative statement *I wish I could have more respect for myself*. Time 1 had a mean of 3.63 (*SD* = 1.16) to Time 2 had a mean of 3.68 (*SD* = 1.19). *Table 11* shows differences in questions at Time 1 and Time 2.

Table 11
Self-esteem questions of matched pre- and post-assessments

	n	Mean 1 (pre)	Standard deviation 1	Mean 2 (post)	Standard deviation 2	Change in means
I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal par with others.*	593	4.25	.72	4.31	.82	.06
I feel that I have a number of good qualities.*	603	4.50	.60	4.54	.64	.04
All in all I am inclined to feel that I'm a failure.	592	4.16	.85	4.10	1.01	-.06
I am able to do things as well as most other people.*	602	4.36	.66	4.34	.74	-.02
I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	600	4.25	.93	4.20	1.03	-.05
I take a positive attitude toward myself.*	601	4.45	.69	4.48	.74	.03
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.*	598	4.33	.82	4.39	.81	.06
I wish I could have more respect for myself.	598	3.63	1.16	3.68	1.19	.05
I certainly feel useless at times.	597	3.97	1.02	3.97	1.06	.00
At times I think that I am no good at all.	604	4.16	1.00	4.12	1.06	-.04

*Researchers reverse-coded these items, so all score increases are positive, all score decreases are negative.

Contact with police

A paired sample t-test (n=606) conducted to investigate differences in the pre- to post-program contact with the police showed a slight increase from Time 1 (*M* = 4.91; *SD* = 0.32) to Time 2 (*M* = 4.92; *SD* = 0.35, *t*= -0.35, *p* = .73), which was not statistically significant. An estimate of the effect size (*d* = .02) suggests a small effect.

Participants were asked how frequently they had contact with the police in the past three months on a scale from none to 3 or more times. There were slight positive increases all three questions. *Table 12* shows differences in questions at Time 1 and Time 2.

Table 12
Contact with police questions of matched pre- and post-assessments

	n	Mean 1 (pre)	Standard deviation 1	Mean 2 (post)	Standard deviation 2	Change in means
How often have the police brought you home?*	604	4.91	.40	4.92	.38	.01
How often have you gotten a ticket or citation for curfew, loitering, drinking?*	604	4.92	.36	4.93	.38	.01
How often have you been arrested for a crime, like theft, drugs, assault, disorderly conduct?*	602	4.90	.45	4.91	.51	.01

*Researchers reverse-coded these items, so all score increases are positive, all score decreases are negative

Combined measures

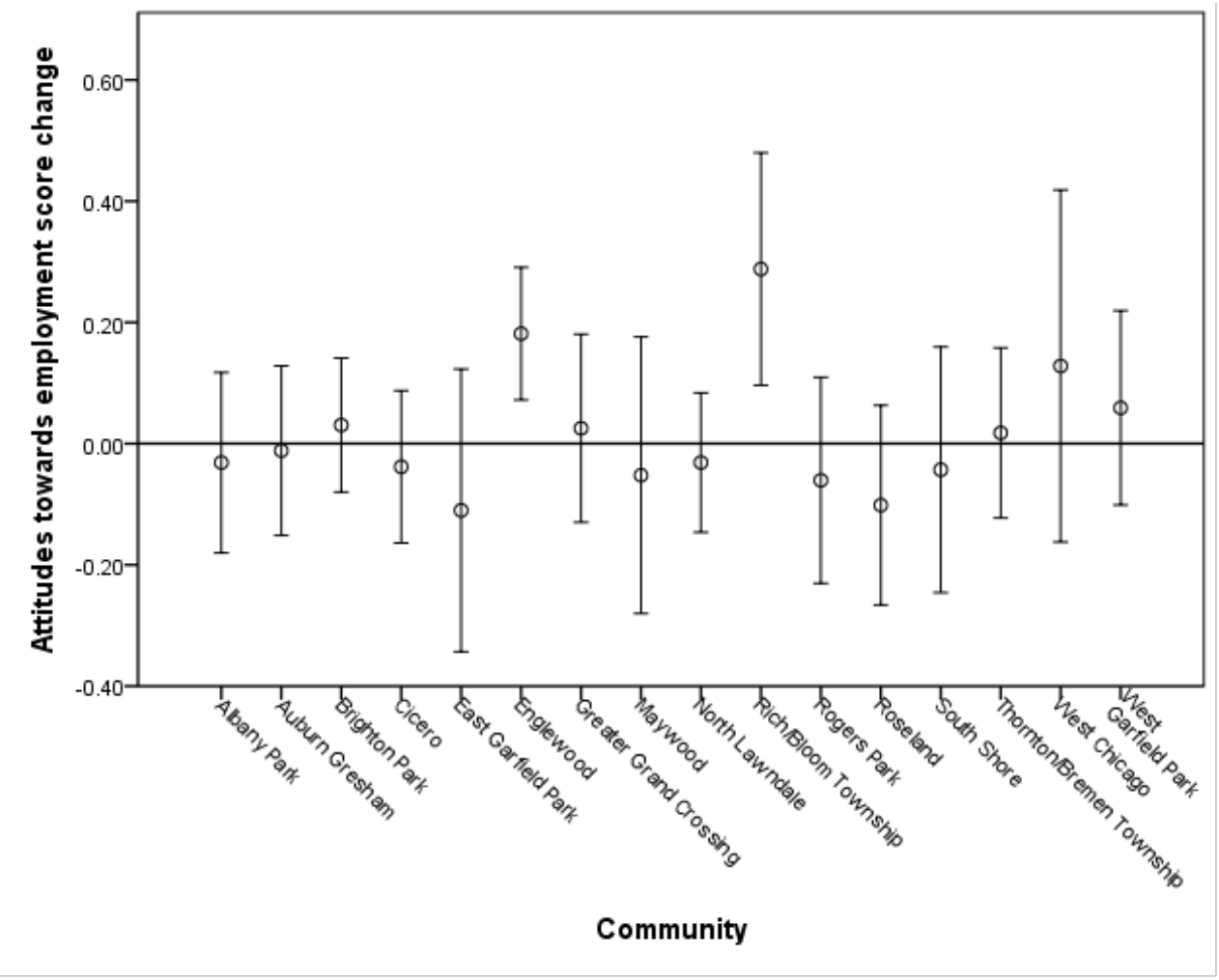
All five measures—attitudes toward employment, attitudes toward violence, conflict resolution, self-esteem, and contact with the police—were combined and averaged into one measure. A paired sample t-test (n=592) conducted to investigate differences in the pre- to post-assessment showed a slight decrease from Time 1 (M = 4.29; SD = 0.30) to Time 2 (M = 4.27; SD = 0.36, t = 1.80, p = .058). The change in means was -.02; the difference was not statistically significant. An estimate of the effect size (d = 0.07) suggests a small effect.

Mean scores by community

While collectively the community surveys showed only had little or no improvement in attitudes towards employment, self-esteem, and contact with police and slight decreases in attitudes towards violence and conflict resolution, some communities showed greater improvement. The differences in mean scores by community were examined.

There were positive increases in mean attitudes toward employment scores in Brighton Park, Englewood, Rich/Boom Township, Thornton/Bremen Township, West Chicago (neighborhood), and West Garfield Park. There were no changes or decreases in 10 communities. *Figure 4* depicts the change of mean attitudes toward employment scores and a 95 percent confidence interval by community.

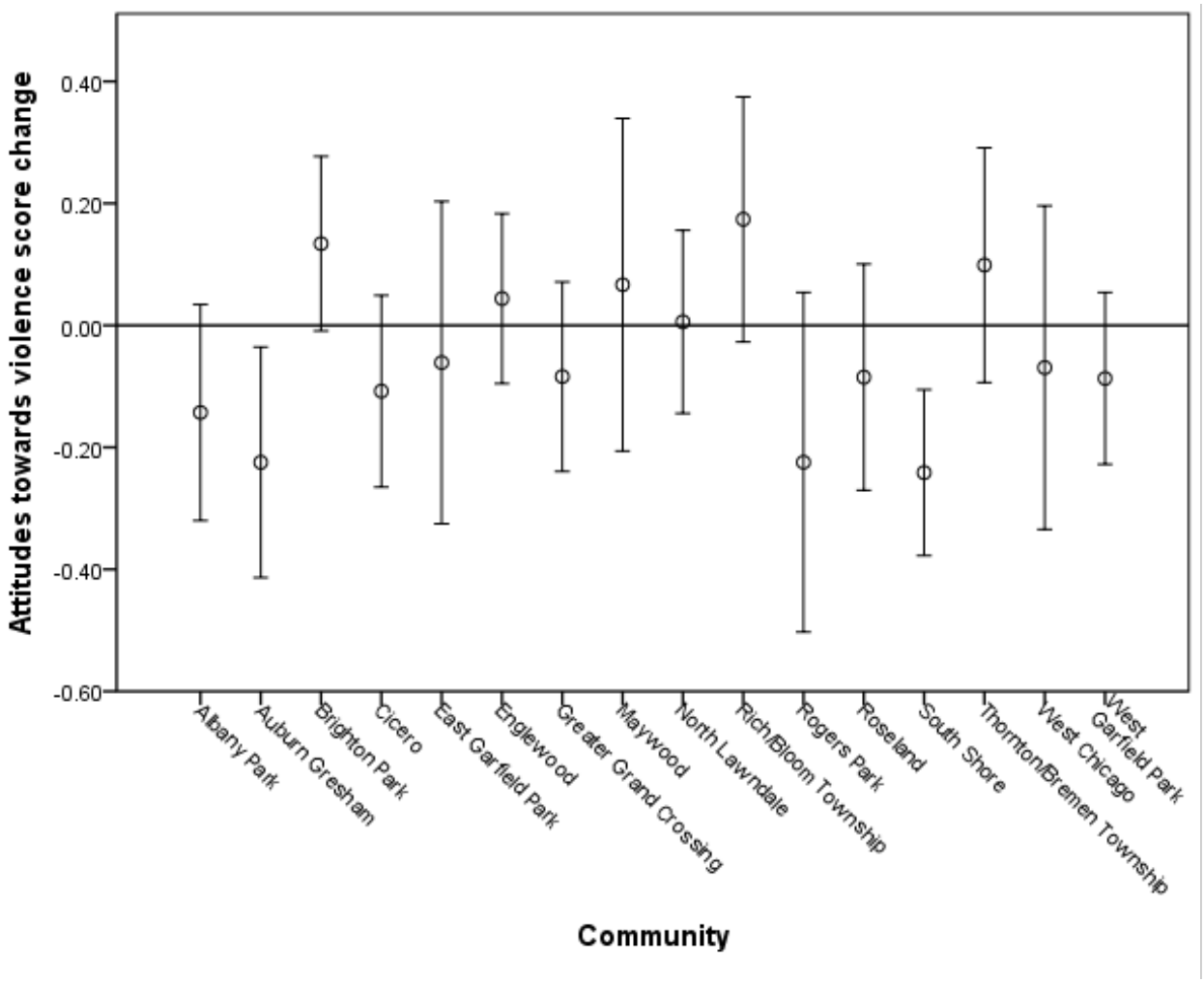
Figure 4
Change of mean attitudes toward employment scores by community



Note: Englewood and Rich/Bloom Township are statistically significant at $p<.005$.

There was a slight positive increase in mean attitudes toward violence scores in the communities of Brighton Park, Englewood, Maywood, North Lawndale, Rich/Bloom Township and Thornton/Bremen Township. *Figure 5* depicts the change of mean attitudes toward violence scores and 95% confidence interval by community.

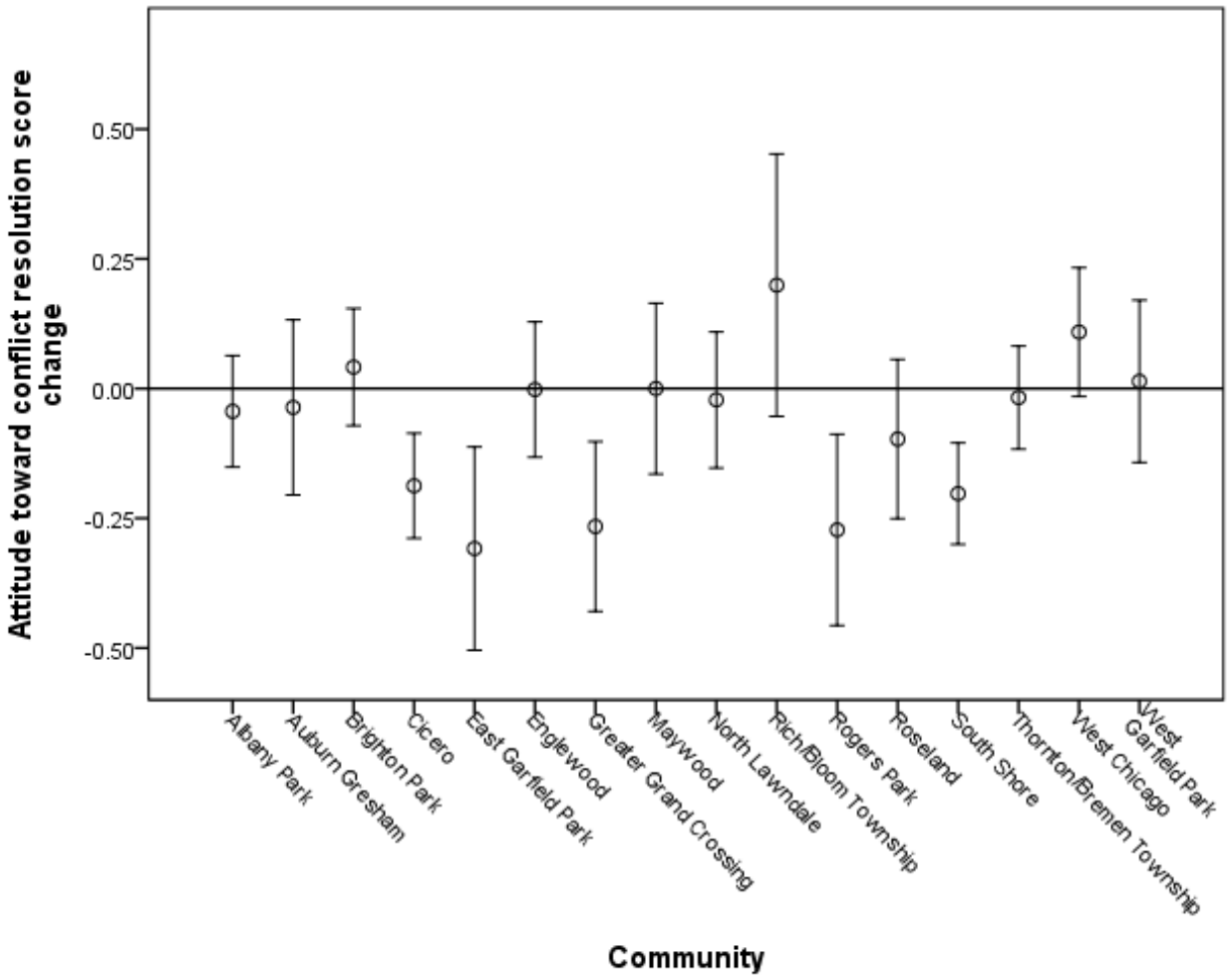
Figure 5
Change of mean attitudes toward violence scores by community



Note: South Shore is statistically significant at $p<.005$.

There were slight positive increases in mean conflict resolution scores in Brighton Park, Rich/Bloom Township, West Chicago, and West Garfield Park. *Figure 6* depicts the change of mean conflict resolution scores and 95% confidence interval by community.

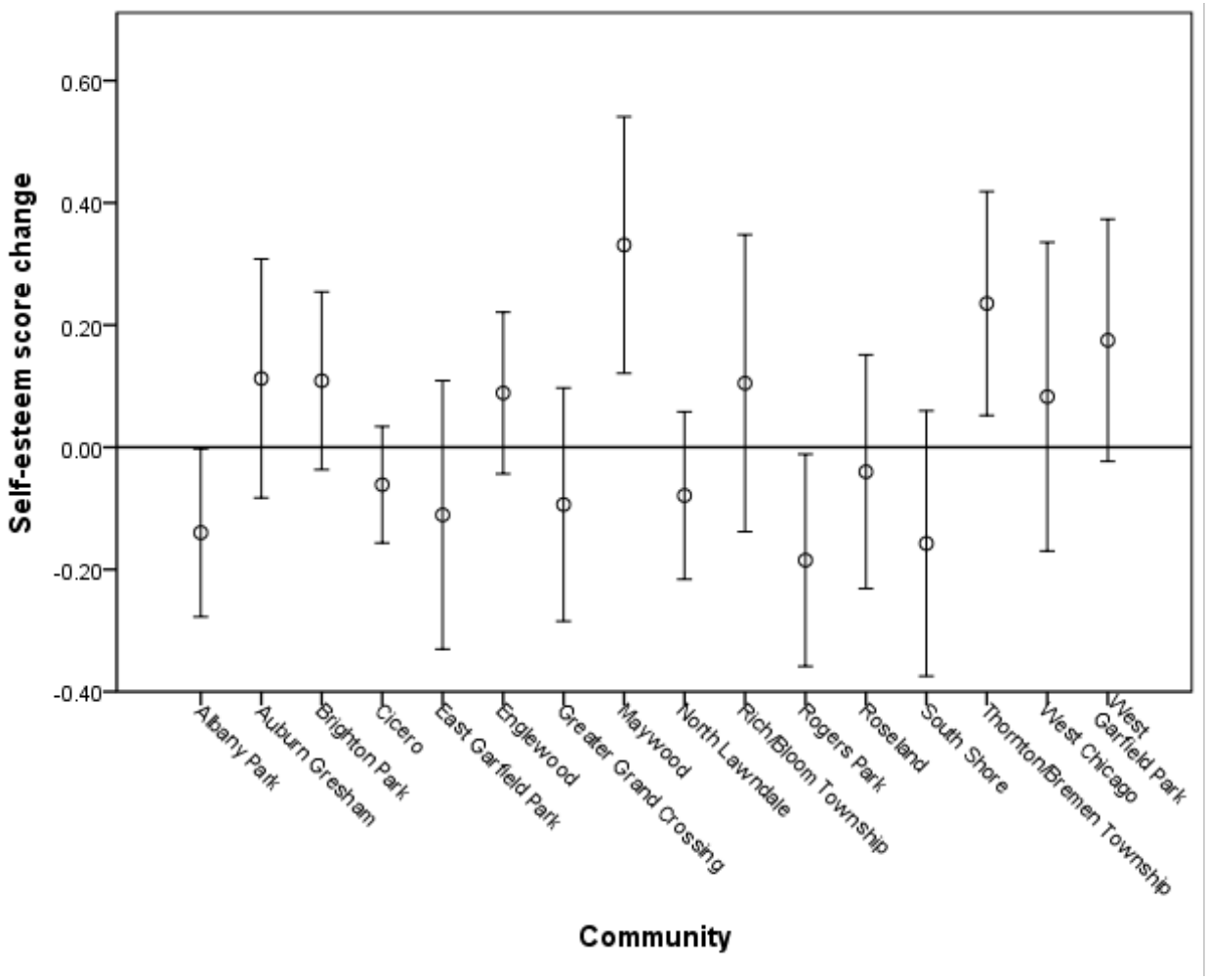
Figure 6
Change of mean conflict resolution scores by community



Note: Cicero, East Garfield Park, Greater Grand Crossing, Rogers Park, and South Shore statistically significant at $p<.005$.

There were positive increases in mean self-esteem scores for Auburn Gresham, Brighton Park, Englewood, Maywood, Rich/Bloom Township, Thornton/Bremen Township, West Chicago (neighborhood), and West Garfield Park. *Figure 7* depicts the change of mean self-esteem resolution scores and 95% confidence interval by community.

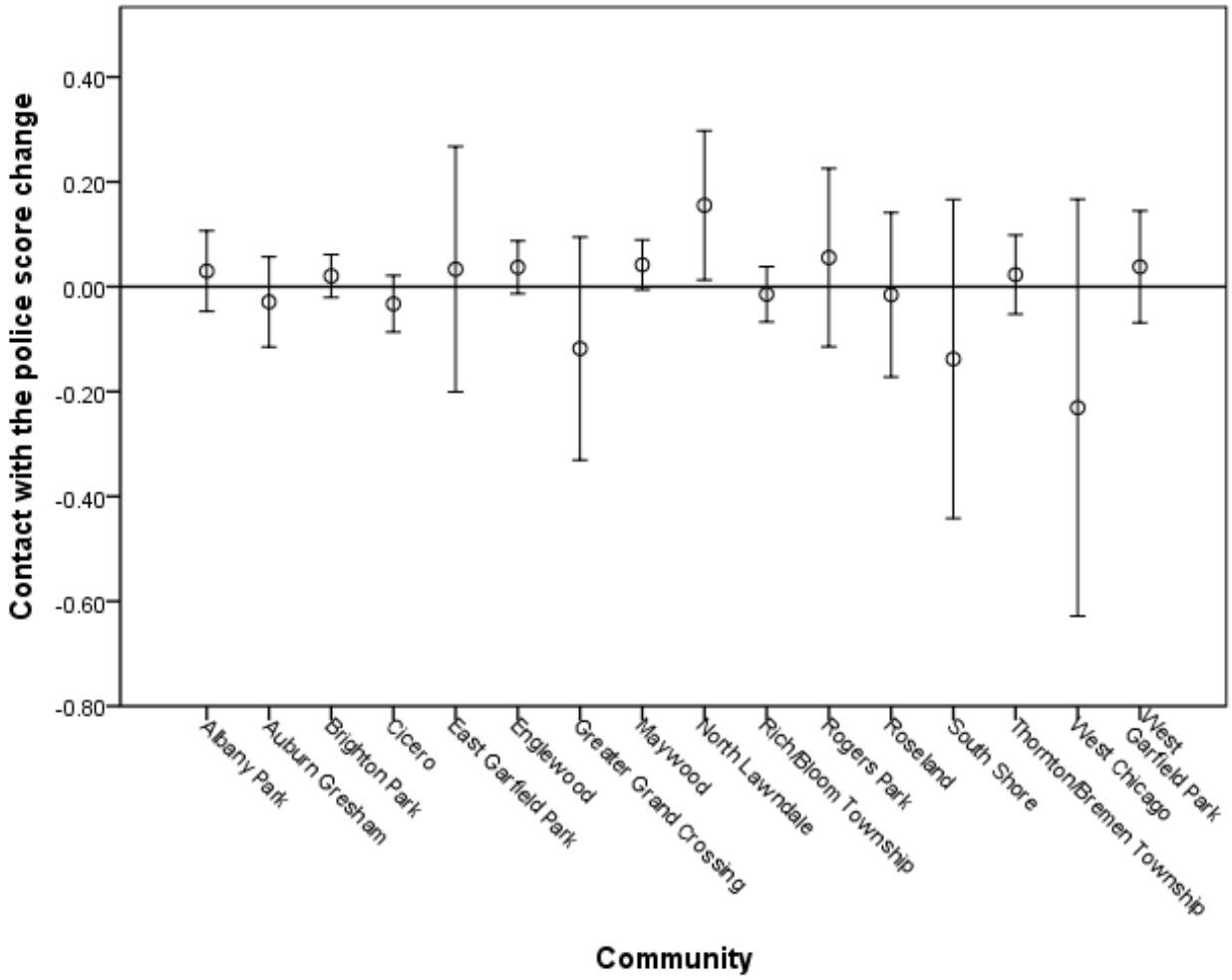
Figure 7
Change of mean self-esteem scores by community



Note: Maywood statistically significant at $p<.005$.

There were positive increases in mean contact with the police scores for Albany Park, Brighton Park, East Garfield Park, Englewood, Maywood, North Lawndale, Rogers Park, Thornton/Bremen Township, and West Garfield Park. *Figure 8* depicts the change of mean self-esteem resolution scores and 95% confidence interval by community.

Figure 8
Change of mean of contact with police scores by community



Note: None statistically significant at $p<.005$.

All pre- and post-assessments

Researchers examined all pre- and post-assessments, including unmatched samples. The results indicated a small reduction in the average scores in attitudes toward violence, conflict resolution, and self-esteem, as well as a combination of all five measures (*Table 13).* There was slight improvement in attitudes towards employment and in contact with the police.

Table 13
Results of all pre- and post-assessments by measure (including un-matched)

	n	Mean 1 (pre)	Standard deviation 1	n	Mean 2 (post)	Standard deviation 2	Change in means
Attitudes toward employment	1,230	3.96	.47	824	3.97	.47	.01
Attitudes toward violence	1,230	3.96	.56	824	3.90	.58	-.06
Conflict resolution	1,230	4.26	.45	825	4.15	.53	-.11
Self-esteem	1,229	3.72	.42	824	3.70	.43	-.02
Contact with police	1,227	4.89	.34	824	4.90	.41	.10
Combined measures	1230	4.07	.33	825	4.02	.37	-.05

There were many more pre-assessments (n=1,230) than post-assessments (n=825), so the two groups were compared. The mean pre-assessment scores were compared by with both matched and unmatched post-assessments. The means were similar between the two groups as their standard deviations had a difference less than 0.1 (*Table 14*).

Table 14
Comparison of mean pre-assessment scores of those with and without post-assessments

	n	Mean (pre)	Standard deviation	SD difference
Attitudes toward employment				
With post-assessment	605	3.99	.46	
No post-assessment	625	3.92	.48	.02
Attitudes toward violence				
With post-assessment	605	4.26	.44	
No post-assessment	625	4.26	.46	.02
Conflict resolution				
With post-assessment	605	3.99	.53	
No post-assessment	625	3.93	.58	.05
Self-esteem				
With post-assessment	605	3.73	.40	
No post-assessment	624	3.72	.45	.05
Combined measures				
With post-assessment	605	4.08	.32	
No post-assessment	625	4.05	.33	.01

Conclusions from pre- and post-assessments

A majority of respondents to the pre- and post-assessments started with high mean scores and had high mean scores at the end of the program. Although there were decreases in mean scores on two of the five measures, the change in mean scores from Time 1 to Time 2 were very small. All measures had changes in mean scores of less than .10. The largest change in mean scores was a reduction of .08 for attitudes towards violence. There was no change in the mean scores on attitudes towards employment. However, two of the four measures—attitudes toward violence and conflict resolution—had statistically significant reductions in the mean scores.

There were increases in mean scores on 17 questions—five employment questions, two violence questions, two conflict resolution questions, five self-esteem questions, and all three contact with police questions. In addition, there were increases in mean scores in certain communities, but it is uncertain why they had more positive outcomes. This change could be attributed to characteristics of the youth in the program, how the program operated such as staff involved, or some attribute(s) of the communities themselves. More investigation can be done to try to ascertain what specific aspects of these programs contributed to their increases in mean scores.

Brighton Park and Englewood showed improvement on all five scores. Maywood, Rich/Bloom Township, Thornton/Bremen Township, and West Garfield Park showed improvement on four of the five scores.

There may be several reasons for the lack of improvement on some measures before and after the program. The program was not always able to match youth with specific interests to a particular job. For example, a youth with an interest in nursing or childcare may have been paired with a retail job. In a survey of youth participants at the end of the program, many indicated that their job was not a good match for their skills and interests (n=59) or they were unsure if the job was a good match (n=87). Job assignments depended on the employers recruited for the program and the desires of individual youth. While programs may have attempted to match youth with certain jobs based on their expressed interest, opportunities may have been limited

There were no increases in mean scores of attitudes toward violence, conflict resolution, and self-esteem, but mentors were not coached to concentrate on those issues in particular and it is unclear what advice youths were given and whether the results represent a substitution effect. Additionally, positive attitudes towards employment may have been muted by the fact that summer is usually a time off from school for youth, and the students were experiencing year-round work or formal employment for the first time.

YEP did not target youth at-risk for delinquency, school failure, and unemployment in the application process; all youth in targeted communities were invited to apply. Youth who took the initiative to sign up for a summer jobs program may already have been high scorers on measures of attitudes toward employment, attitudes toward violence, conflict resolution, self-esteem, and contact with the police. Lower scoring respondents had an improvement in mean scores of attitudes toward violence, self-esteem, attitudes toward employment, and contact with the police, while the higher scoring group did not. Targeting low-scoring youth would increase the impact of the program.

One limitation in the analysis is that there were many participants who did not have post-assessment scores. Those with negative attitudes in general or toward the program may have been more apt to skip the post-assessment and their numbers may have been underrepresented in the data.

This report's section on implications for policy and practice offers suggestions to strengthen program impact.

Findings: Exit surveys

Exit surveys administered at the end of the program were used to learn how the program operated and to obtain feedback on the program from employers, mentors, youth, and program coordinators and managers. Information from the surveys offers suggestions for programmatic enhancement and helps inform future funding decisions. The surveys included questions on participant experiences, satisfaction with the program in general, and the components of employment, mentoring, and community service.

Employer exit survey

One representative of each agency employing program youth was asked to complete an exit survey at the end of the program to provide feedback. Youth participants completed 40 hours of job readiness training and 160 hours of employment between June and August 2014.

The 72 employers who completed the online survey reported that they employed 320 youth in the program. The employers represented 16 communities, but 16 of the respondents did not indicate their community.

- Albany Park (n=8)
- Austin (n=1)
- Cicero (n=5)
- Englewood (n=2)
- Greater Grand Crossing (n=5)
- Humboldt Park (n=1)
- Logan Square (n=5)
- Maywood (n=1)
- North Lawndale (n=7)
- Pilsen/Little Village (n=4)
- Rogers Park (n=3)
- Roseland (n=2)
- Thornton/Bremen Township (n=4)
- West Chicago (Chicago Lawn, Gage Park) (n=5)
- West Lawndale (n=1)
- Woodlawn (n=2)

Participant employment

Just more than two-thirds of respondents (67 percent) were from non-profit agencies (n=48). Another 19 percent of employers were from businesses (n=14), 3 percent government agencies (n=2), and 3 percent religious agencies (n=2). Five employers (7 percent) described their agencies as “other,” and one respondent did not select an option. The range of youth employed at each placement was one to 27 youth. The average number of youth employed at each agency or business was 4.5 youth, and the most common number of youth employed was one or two youths.

Employers were asked to describe the type of work experience offered to youth participants. They offered the following responses:

- 49 percent of employers described the work as clerical or administrative (n=35);
- 14 percent engaged youth in teaching and supervising children;
- Four focused on community outreach (6 percent);

- Six indicated sales or customer service (8 percent);
- Five respondents stated the youth were employed in janitorial work;
- Two respondents indicated landscaping;
- Ten employers selected "other," describing youths' work as culinary, media-related, research, art projects, and services for the disabled.

Learned skills

Employers were instructed to indicate which skills the youths learned. They were provided nine options, including the option to write in an answer, and were asked to select all options that applied.

Almost all respondents stated that youths learned responsibility. (93 percent; n=67) Three-fourths thought that youth learned punctuality (75 percent, n=54); 72 percent indicated that the youth learned time management (n=52). Slightly more than half answered that participants learned confidence (54 percent; n=39). A majority stated that youths learned organization (63 percent; n=45). Two thirds indicated that participants learned job specific skills (67 percent; n=48). One-third answered that youths learned computer skills (n=24). Nine employers selected the "other" option (13 percent). One each answered "hard work," "sewing," "leadership," "instructing children," "accounting," and "networking." *Table 15* shows the employer responses.

Table 15
Skills learned by youth (n=72)

Employers: What skills do you think YEP youth gained or learned from the job?	n	Percent
Teamwork	53	73.6%
Responsibility	67	93.1%
Punctuality	54	75.0%
Time management/multi-tasking	52	72.2%
Self-confidence	39	54.2%
Organizational skills	45	62.5%
Job-Specific knowledge	48	66.7%
Computer skills	24	33.3%
Other	9	12.5%

Learned about the program

Employers were asked to indicate how they learned about the program. A majority stated that they had learned about the program from a community agency (63 percent, n=45). A few learned from a friend (10 percent; n=7), while six percent learned from a flier (n=4). Three employers learned from a website (4 percent). Three declined to answer. Ten respondents selected "other" citing previously participation with YEP or other CVPP programs, as well as recruitment by a CVPP employee (14 percent).

Program ratings by employers

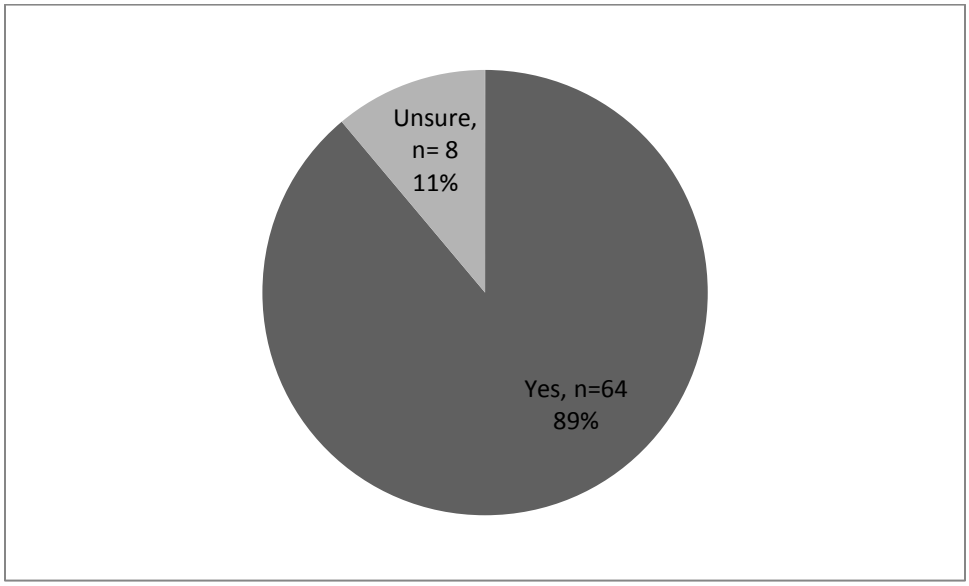
Employers were asked to rate the success of the program on a five-point scale from very unsuccessful=1 to very successful=5. Most (88 percent) responded that YEP was successful or very successful; the average rating was 4.26 out of five. Most employers (88 percent) rated their communication with the YEP staff as good or very good (average rating 4.31). A majority of respondent (82 percent) indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the matching of the YEP youth employees with their agency (average rating of 4.25). When asked about the extent of youths' preparation for the job, 78 percent chose prepared or very prepared (average rating 4.03). Most employers (81 percent) indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their experience as a YEP employer with an average rating of 4.26. *Table 16* shows the employer exit survey responses.

Table 16
Employer ratings

How successful was YEP?	**n**	**Percent**
Very successful	32	44.4%
Successful	31	43.1%
Neutral	6	8.3%
Unsuccessful	2	2.8%
Very unsuccessful	1	1.4%
Communication with YEP staff		
Very good	34	47.2%
Good	29	40.3%
Neutral	6	8.3%
Poor	3	4.2%
Very poor	0	0.0%
Satisfaction with matching of YEP youth and agency		
Very satisfied	35	48.6%
Satisfied	24	33.3%
Neutral	10	13.9%
Dissatisfied	2	2.8%
Very dissatisfied	1	1.4%
Preparation of YEP youth for employment		
Very prepared	22	30.6%
Prepared	34	47.2%
Neutral	12	16.7%
Unprepared	4	5.6%
Very unprepared	0	0.0%
Satisfaction with experience as YEP employer		
Very satisfied	36	50.0%
Satisfied	22	30.6%
Neutral	11	15.3%
Dissatisfied	3	4.2%
Very dissatisfied	0	0.0%
TOTAL	**72**	**100%**

Most respondents (89 percent) indicated that they would be interested in serving as an employer for the YEP program again, and 11 percent were unsure. All employers said they would participate in the program again if given an opportunity (*Figure 9*).

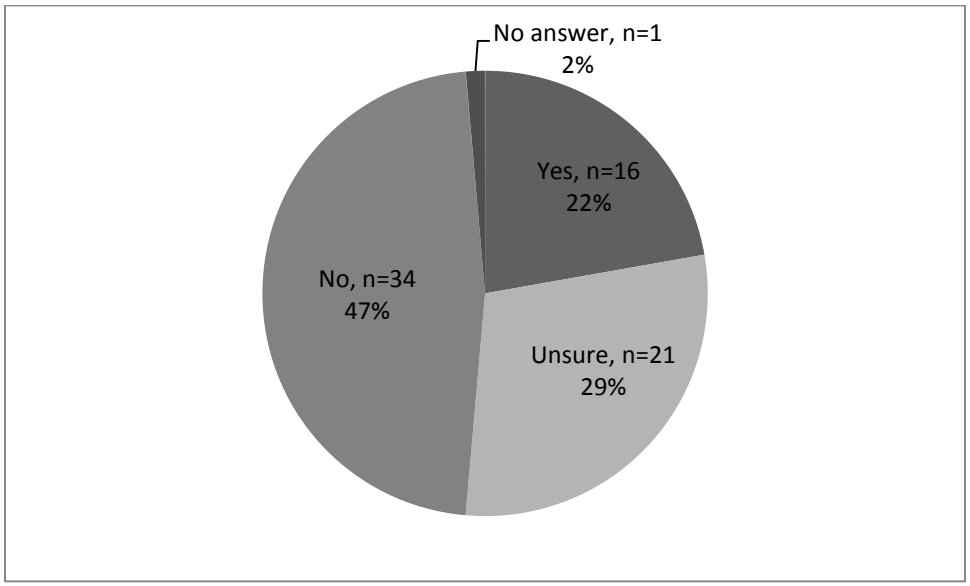
Figure 9
Interest in serving as YEP employer again (n=72)



Hiring YEP youth post-program

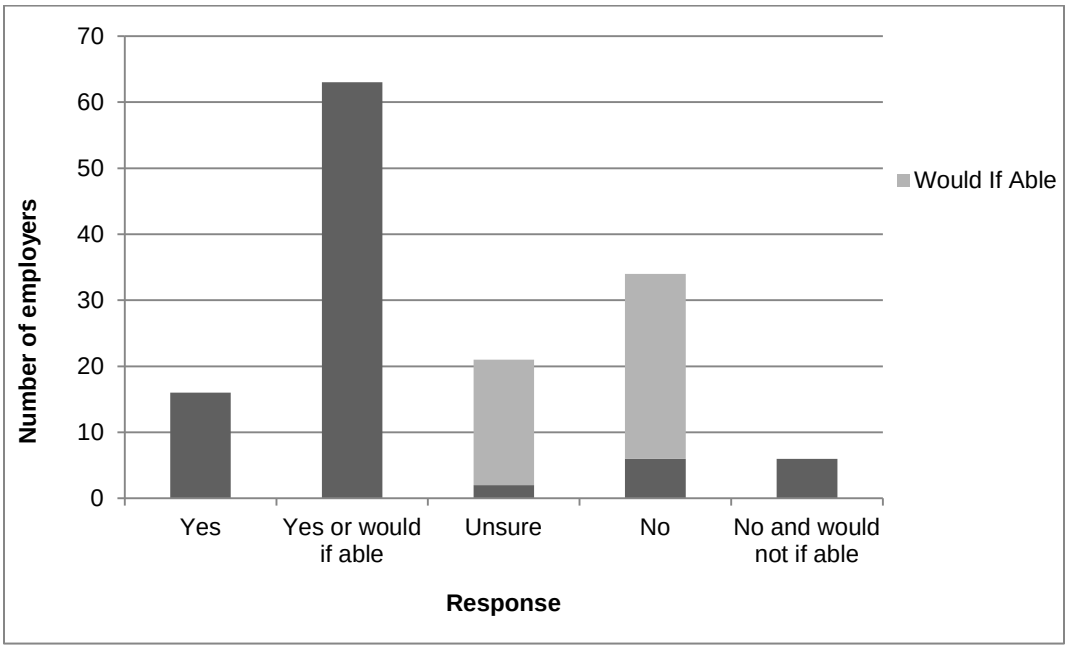
Almost one-fourth of YEP employers (22 percent) indicated plans to permanently hire the youth who were placed in their agencies, and 29 percent were unsure. About half said that they would not be hiring any YEP participants, and one employer did not respond. However, many of the employers stated that they would hire YEP participants if they were able (n=47). Therefore, 88 percent of the sample (n=63) would hire youth or would hire them if able. *Figure 10* shows the employers' responses.

Figure 10
Hiring YEP youth (n=72)



Of those 34 employers who responded "*no*," they would not hire YEP youth after the program ended, 28 employers (82 percent) said they would hire the youth if they could. Of those 21 employers that indicated they were "*unsure*" they would hire YEP youth, 19 of them (90 percent) said they would if they could. *Figure 11*depicts employer responses on hiring youth.

Figure 11
Employers on hiring YEP youth (n=72)



Employers unable to hire

Of those 55 employers who indicated they would not hire YEP youth or were unsure if they would hire YEP youth, 47 said they would hire if they were able and 6 indicated that they would not hire even if they were able (two were unsure). Employers unable to hire youth cited funding issues and the youth's returning to school as primary explanations. Thirty-three employers cited budget issues as the reason for not hiring; twenty-four employers indicated the youth's lack of requited education was a factor. Seventeen stated that they were not hiring, and six noted that the youth were not eligible for permanent employment at the company, due to unmet education, certification, or age requirements.

Whether employers would hire the youth if able was calculated by totaling which employer stated yes or no and which reason(s) were indicated. Employers that answered that the youth was a bad fit or that the youth had performed poorly were coded as "no and would not if able." Those who stated that their reason for not hiring was budget, the fact that the company was not hiring, that the youth was returning to school, or that the youth was not eligible for employment in that company were coded as "would hire if able." In cases where employers indicated reasons across coding categories, the employer was coded as "no and would not if able."

Why employers would not hire

The 55 employers who indicated that they would not hire the youth (34 who said "*no*" and 21 who said "*unsure*" about hiring youth) were asked why they would not hire the youth. Employers could select one or more of seven reasons or write in their own reason.

Four employers indicated the reason they would not hire was poor performance of the youth. Three employers indicated youth was not a good fit for the position or company. No employer cited problems with YEP as the reason for not hiring youth.

Additional comments about the program

Of the additional comments made by employers, twenty-six were positive reflections on the program. The employers thought highly of the youths' motivation and dedication to their tasks. They also approved of the program's role of instilling good values and providing training. One employer stated, "I think this program is vital to the youth served. It not only teaches them work ethic but life lessons as well. Dealing with people outside of their circle enlarges their territories and sets them up for greater expectations from themselves."

One employer described YEP as his or her way of giving back to the community, "I think it's important for every agency and business in a community to take part in helping under-employed young people gain skills and experience. The YEP helped us to do that in a way that also benefitted our organization."

However, 14 employer comments were negative. Five employers were displeased with the youths' performance and responsibility. They cited a lack of dedication and punctuality, not showing up for work, and general poor work ethic. In the words of one employer, "I had a wonderful overall experience with the youth. Many were punctual, dedicated, and helpful to the

lead teacher in the early education childhood classroom. However, there were instances when I felt that the youth were somewhat nonchalant about the job because they knew it was just a temporary commitment. Towards the end of the commitment many youth stopped showing up altogether. I think there needs to more emphasis put on the importance of gaining work experience and building their resumes so they don't take the employment lightly."

Five employers suggested improving communication between mentors, employers, and agencies. One respondent stated that employees needed more training before working in certain fields, such as early childhood education.

Conclusions from employer surveys

Overall, the employer experiences were positive; 81 percent of employers were satisfied with their experience with YEP and 88 percent considered the program successful. Some employer comments indicated a need to improve youths' work ethic and responsibility. Employers also recommended improving communication.

Mentor exit survey

A total of 97 mentors completed online surveys. The survey consisted of 14 questions asking mentors to assess the program, their mentoring relationship, and their mentoring experience.

The following 19 communities returned surveys.

- Albany Park (n=6)
- Auburn Gresham (n=9)
- Austin (n=2)
- Brighton Park (n=1)
- Cicero (n=1)
- East Garfield Park (n=3)
- Englewood (n=8)
- Grand Boulevard (n=1)
- Greater Grand Crossing (n=1)
- Hermosa/Belmont Cragin (n=4)
- Humboldt Park (n=1)
- North Lawndale (n=8)
- Pilsen/Little Village (n=9)
- Rich/Bloom Township (n=3)
- Rogers Park (n=4)
- South Shore (n=4)
- Thornton/Bremen Township (n=11)
- West Chicago (Chicago Lawn, Gage Park) (n=6)
- Woodlawn (n=8)
- Unknown (n=7)

Assessment of the program

Mentors were asked to evaluate the mentor component, the employment component, the managers and coordinators, and the mentor training on a scale of one to five (very good=5 and very poor=1). Almost all respondents (92 percent) rated the mentor component good or very good. The average rating was 4.62 (out of five). A majority (85 percent) rated the employment component as good or very good, with an average rating of 4.43. Most (80 percent) indicated that the support from the managers and coordinators was good or very good with an average rating of 4.47. Most (86 percent) rated their mentor training as good or very good with an average rating of 4.51 (*Table 17*).

Table 17
Mentor ratings of aspects of YEP

	n	Percent
Quality of the mentor component		
Very good	68	70.1%
Good	21	21.6%
Average	8	8.2%
Poor	0	0.0%
Very poor	0	0.0%
Unknown	0	0.0%

Table 17 continued

Quality of employment component		
Very good	57	58.8%
Good	25	25.8%
Average	13	13.4%
Poor	0	0.0%
Very poor	1	1.0%
Unknown	1	1.0%
Quality of support from managers and coordinators		
Very good	68	70.1%
Good	10	10.3%
Average	12	12.4%
Poor	4	4.1%
Very poor	1	1.0%
Unknown	2	2.1%
Training for role as Mentor		
Very good	65	67.0%
Good	18	18.6%
Average	11	11.3%
Poor	1	1.0%
Very poor	1	1.0%
Unknown	1	1.0%
TOTAL	**97**	**100%**

Mentor relationship

Almost all mentors (93 percent) were satisfied or very satisfied with the matching of the youth with them as a mentor. *Table 18* depicts the breakdown of responses.

Table 18
Satisfaction with matching of mentee to mentor

	n	Percent
Very satisfied	60	61.9%
Satisfied	30	30.9%
Neutral	7	7.2%
Dissatisfied	0	0.0%
Very dissatisfied	0	0.0%
TOTAL	**120**	**100%**

Thirty-seven percent of mentors conversed with their mentees by phone (n=36), and 70 percent met their mentee at their community agency (n=67). Over half of respondents met in the community at parks, restaurants, libraries, and churches (56 percent, n=54). Fifty-six percent of respondents met the youth at their job sites (n=45). Eight percent indicated that they met their mentee at another location.

Mentors were asked on average how often they met with their mentee in a group. Two thirds (69 percent) met in groups once per week, and 27 percent met more than once per week. Mentors were asked on average how often they met their mentee one-on-one. A majority (70 percent) met with their mentee weekly. Some mentors (27 percent) met with their mentees more than once a week. Most (94 percent) met with their mentees one hour or more. *Table 19* indicates the frequency and length of meetings between mentors and mentees.

Table 19
Frequency of meetings with mentees

Met as a group	**n**	**Percent**
More than once per week	26	26.8%
Once per week	67	69.1%
Less than once per week	4	4.1%
Unknown	0	0.0%
Met one-on-one		
More than once per week	26	26.8%
Once per week	68	70.1%
Less than once per week	0	0.0%
Unknown	3	3.1%
Length of meeting		
One hour or more	91	93.8
Less than one hour	5	5.2%
Unknown	1	1.0%
TOTAL	**97**	**100%**

Mentors were asked to describe their relationship with their mentees. Almost all (98 percent) stated that the relationship was close or very close. Two-thirds of respondents (66 percent) indicated that they felt they made a difference in their mentees' lives. None of the respondents thought that they did not make a difference in their mentees' lives. *Table 20* depicts the responses about their relationship.

Table 20
Responses on relationship with mentees

Closeness of relationship	**n**	**Percent**
Very close	39	40.2%
Close	56	57.7%
Not very close	1	1.0%
Unsure	0	0.0%
Unknown	1	1.0%
Made a difference in mentees' lives		
Yes	64	66.0%
No	0	0.0%
Some yes, some no	32	33.0%
Unsure	1	1.0%
Unknown	0	0.0%
TOTAL	**97**	**100%**

Mentors were asked to share what they thought their mentees gained or learned from their relationship.. Sixty percent answered that their mentee learned about communication, 62 percent said they taught job skills, and 58 percent said they taught their mentee about the importance of education. Fifty-eight percent of mentors indicated that their mentee learned about responsibility, 57 percent said that their mentees learned about or gained respect, 56 percent learned about setting and achieving goals, and 54 percent indicated that their mentee gained confidence. Just more than half of mentors (52 percent) believed their mentee gained a caring relationship and support and half said that their mentee gained maturity. Nearly half (47 percent) indicated that their mentee learned about or gained trust Nearly half indicated their mentee learned about time management(46 percent).

Mentoring experience

Mentors were asked to indicate how satisfied they were with their experience as a mentor. Most mentors (94 percent) were satisfied or very satisfied. Two-thirds of mentors (67 percent) responded they learned about themselves "to a great extent." A majority of mentors (60 percent) noted they found it easy to be a mentor. Most mentors believed they made a positive connection with their mentees (88 percent); no mentors indicated that they made no connection with the youths. A majority of respondents (89 percent) expressed interest in serving as a mentor for the program again. *Table 21* depicts the responses about mentors' experience.

Table 21
Responses on mentoring experience

Satisfied with experience as a mentor	**n**	**Percent**
Very satisfied	67	69.1%
Satisfied	24	24.7%
Neutral	5	5.2%
Dissatisfied	1	1.0%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0%
Learned new things about myself		
To a great extent	65	67.0%
Somewhat	26	26.8%
Not at all	4	4.1%
Unknown	2	2.1%
Found it easy to be a mentor		
To a great extent	58	59.8%
Somewhat	32	33.0%
Not at all	4	4.1%
Unknown	3	3.1%
Made a positive connection with youth		
To a great extent	85	87.6%
Somewhat	12	12.4%
Not at all	0	0.0%

Table 21 continued

Interested in serving as mentor again		
Yes	86	88.7%
No	0	0.0%
Unsure	11	11.3%
TOTAL	**97**	**100%**

Mentors were asked to provide additional comments on the program. More than half (n=45) of the 71 comments were positive about the program. One mentor wrote, "Overall this program helped to touch the lives of young adults in a positive way. It gave them a sense of someone caring for them to guide them through life." Mentors indicated that the program helped them learn about themselves and to bond with their mentees. One stated, "This program has taught me a great deal about myself along with youth as we completed the 'Winning Futures' workbook. My group and I were able to bond quickly with each other after exploring the job readiness program and the materials the program offered."

Eight mentors thought the program should be longer in duration and expanded to include more youth. In the words of one mentor, "I believe this program should be a yearlong program instead of four months. The youth need consistency and someplace safe all year around. If we want to see real results the program needs to be longer."

Conclusions from mentor surveys

Mentors rated the quality of the mentor component, employment component support from the managers and coordinators, and the quality of their training for their roles as good or very good. Almost all of the respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the matching of the youth with them as a mentor (93 percent). Mentors felt they were close to their mentees and made a difference in their lives. Most comments about the program were positive. Increasing the program duration was mentioned as the main changes mentors would like to make to the program.

Youth participant exit survey

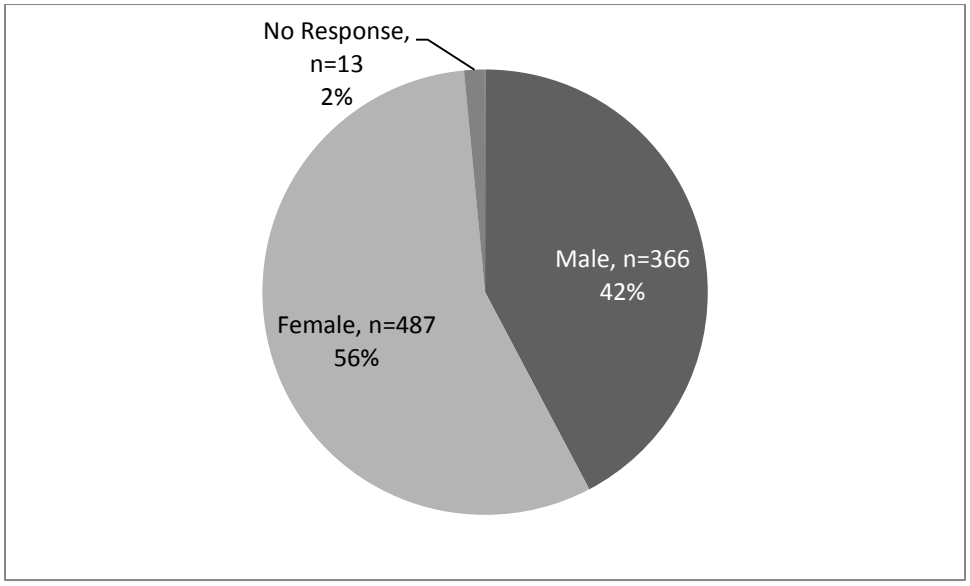
At the end of YEP, 866 youth participants completed exit surveys. The survey was designed for youth to assess the program and reflect on their experiences with the program employment, mentoring, and community service. The respondents were affiliated with 16 communities:

- Albany Park (n=80)
- North Lawndale (n=75)
- Greater Grand Crossing (n=72)
- Brighton Park (n=69)
- Cicero (n=69)
- Austin (n=65)
- Englewood (n=65)
- South Shore (n=53)
- Thornton/Bremen Township (n=51)
- East Garfield Park (n=50)
- Roseland (n=49)
- West Garfield Park (n=45)
- Maywood (n=44)
- Rogers Park (n=39)
- Humboldt Park (n=27)
- West Chicago (Chicago Lawn, Gage Park) (n=13)

Sample characteristics

Slightly more than half of the participants were female (56 percent). *Figure 12* shows the gender of the participants.

Figure 12
Participants' gender (n=866)



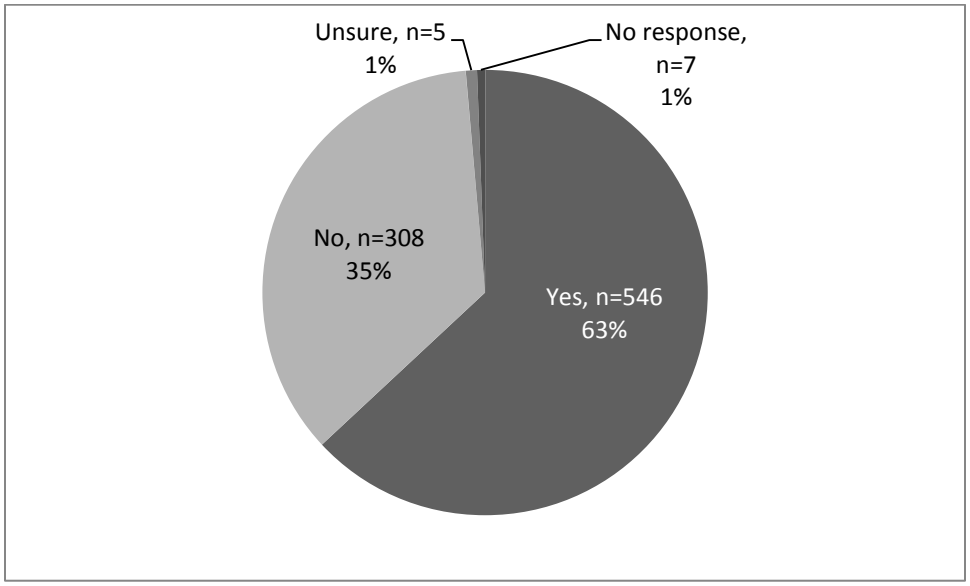
Participants' ages were calculated based on their dates of birth and the midpoint of the program, June 26, 2014. The most common ages for participants during the program were 17 (n=191, 22 percent), 18 (n=191, 22 percent), and 19 (n=138, 16 percent). *Table 23* shows the ages of the program participants.

Table 23
Participants' ages

Age	n	Percent
15	2	0.2%
16	64	7.5%
17	191	22.3%
18	191	22.3%
19	138	16.2%
20	91	10.6%
21	63	7.4%
22	46	5.4%
23	41	4.8%
24	25	2.9%
25	4	0.5%
Total	**866**	**100%**

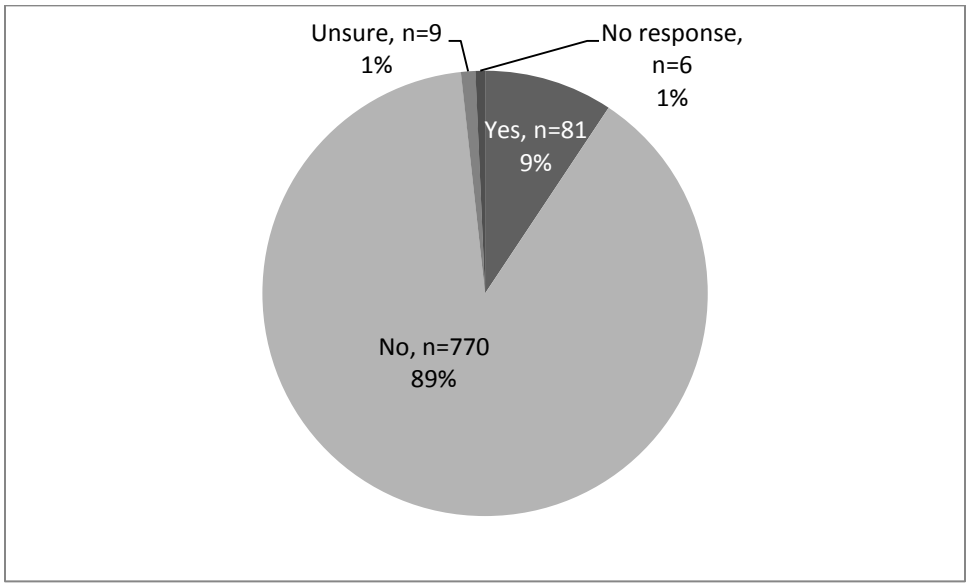
Participants were asked whether they had been previously employed. Most participants (63 percent) held a job before, while 35 percent had not. *Figure 13* shows the participants' responses.

Figure 13
Previously employed (n=866)



Participants were asked whether they had a prior arrest history. Most participants (89 percent) reported they did not have a prior arrest history, but 9 percent did. *Figure 14* shows the participants' responses.

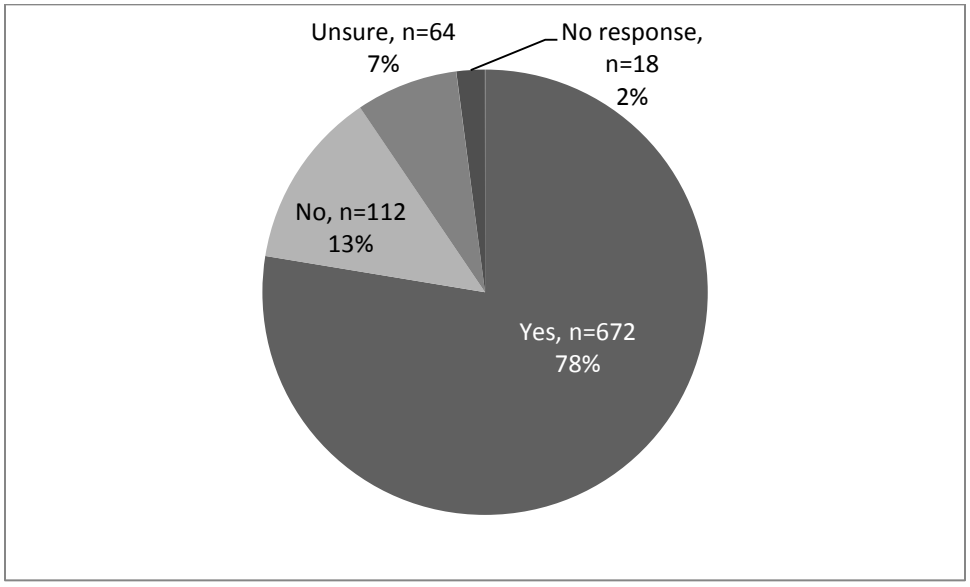
Figure 14
Prior arrest history (n=866)



School attendance

The survey asked participants about their future academic plans. Most youth participants (78 percent) stated that they would be attending school in fall 2014. A few (13 percent) stated that they would not be attending school. *Figure 15* shows the responses.

Figure 15
Will you be attending school in the fall? (n=866)



When asked what type of school they would be attending, 42 percent said they would be enrolled in a traditional high school (n=365), and 1 percent said they would be enrolled in a correspondence high school (n=8). Over one-third of survey respondents indicated they would be attending college (38 percent). Of those, half answered junior college, community college, trade school, or vocational school and half of respondents planned on attending a four-year college (n=162). Eighteen percent did not respond (n=157), and 1 percent chose "*other*" (n=8). *Figure 16* and *Figure 17* depict the type of school participants planned to attend in 2014.

Figure 16
Type of school attending after program (n=866)

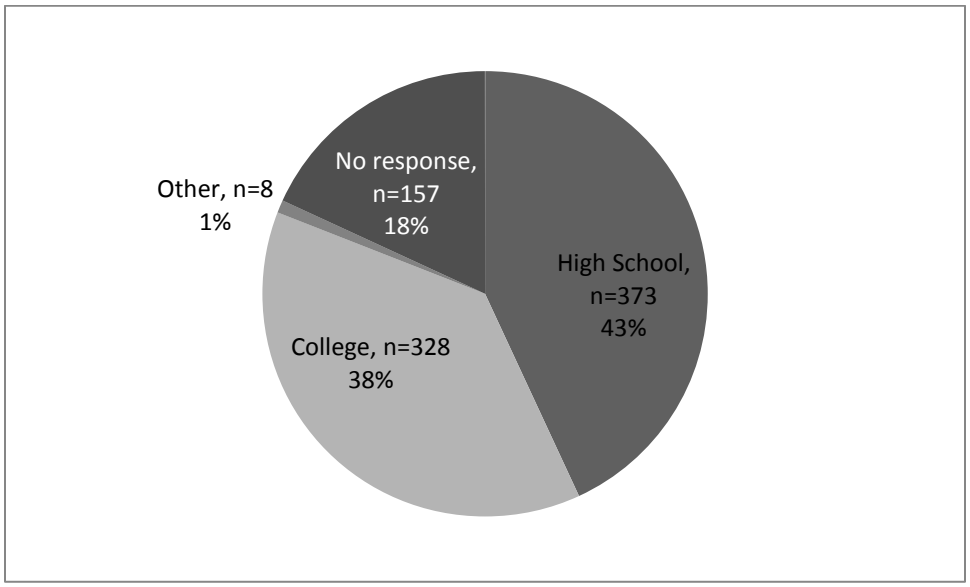
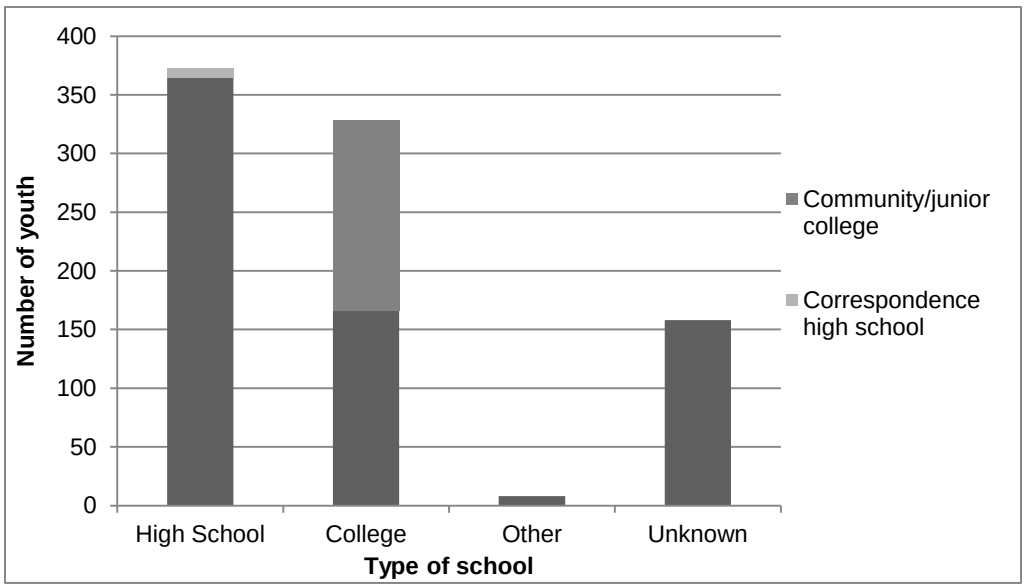
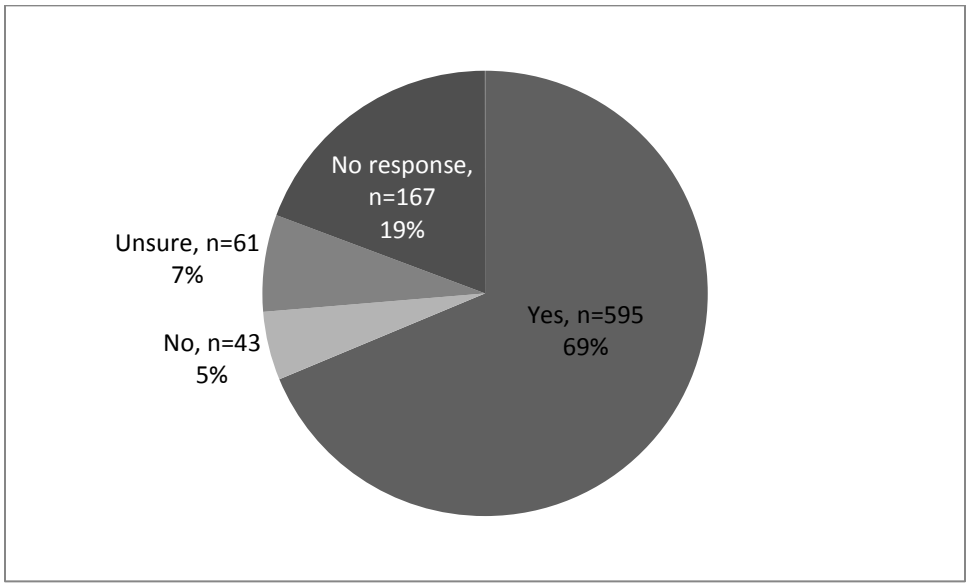


Figure 17
Type of school attending after program (n=866)



Respondents were asked if they thought they would use any of the YEP skills in their future education. The majority (69 percent, n=595) replied "*yes*," and 5 percent responded "*no*" (n=43). *Figure 18* illustrates whether the youth participants will use the skills that they learned from YEP in school.

Figure 18
Will use any skills learned in the YEP program at school? (n=866)



YEP participation

Youth participants were asked how they learned about YEP. Most participants heard about the program from a friend or relative (57 percent), the Internet (17 percent), or a community agency (15 percent).

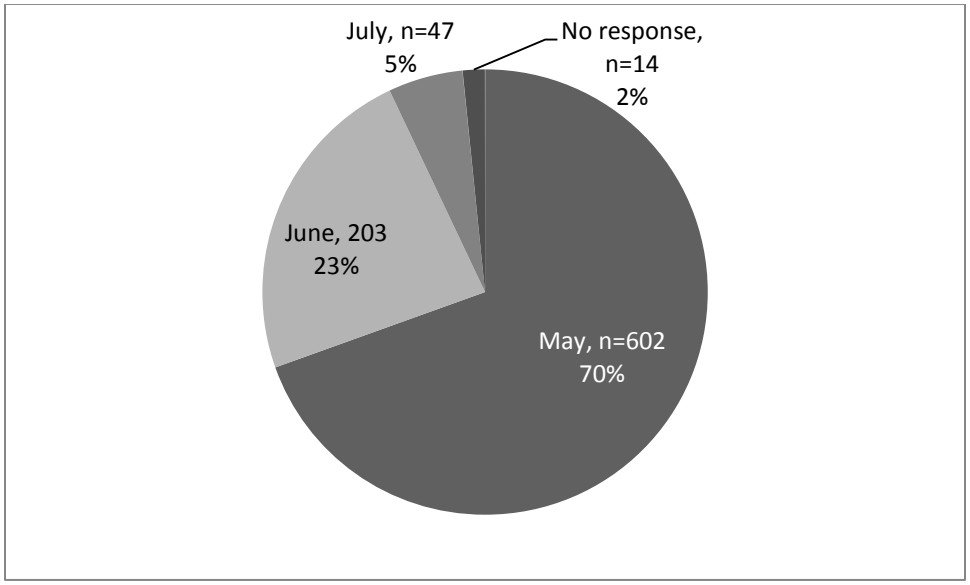
Respondents were able to write in an answer if they indicated "other." Of the 44 answers written in, 10 participants named a specific person. Six respondents stated that they learned about the program at church, and five learned about YEP from another program. *Table 24* depicts how participants learned about YEP.

Table 24
How participants learned about YEP

	n	Percent
Friend, relative	494	57.0%
Online, website	148	17.1%
Community agency	126	14.5%
Flyer	24	2.8%
School	23	2.7%
Other	23	2.7%
Previously worked with YEP	15	1.7%
No response	10	1.2%
Radio	3	0.3%
TOTAL	**866**	**100%**

Participants were asked to indicate in which month they started the program – May, June, or July. Most participants (70 percent) started in May, but some (23 percent) started in June. *Figure 19*depicts how participants learned about YEP before applying to the program.

Figure 19
How participants learned about YEP (n=866)



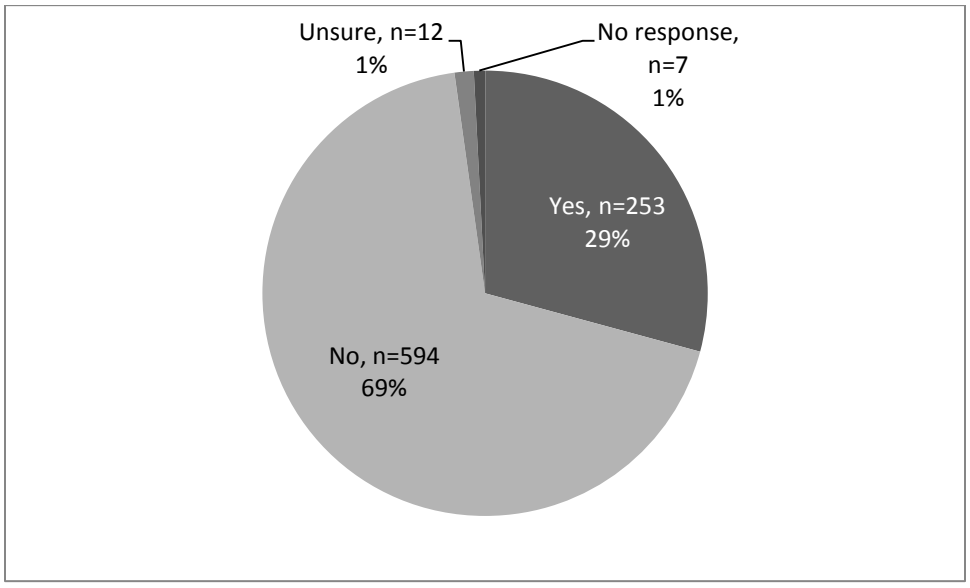
Participants were asked why they participated in the program and could select as many reasons that applied from a list. The most frequently selected reasons were to have a job or money (74 percent), to get job readiness training (66 percent), and to have something productive to do (62 percent). Respondents who indicated "*other*" were able to write in a response. Of the 23 responses offered, the most common were to learn job skills (n=8, 35 percent), to meet new people (n=6, 26 percent), and to set an example for their children (n=3, 13 percent). *Table 25* shows the participants' reasons for participating in YEP.

Table 25
Reasons for participating in YEP (n=866)

	n	Percent
Part-time job/ money	642	74.1%
Get job readiness training	569	65.7%
Have something productive to do	537	62.0%
Give back to the community	278	32.1%
Have a mentor	230	26.6%
Other	24	2.8%

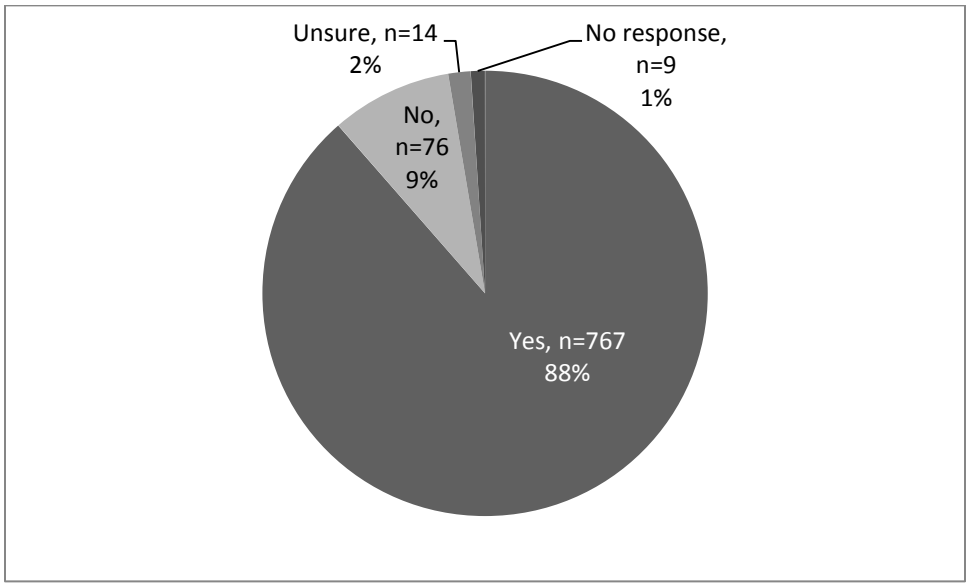
Participants were asked whether they had previously participated in YEP. Most participants (69 percent) had not participated in the program before, while 29 percent had. *Figure 20* shows the participants' responses.

Figure 20
Previous participation in YEP (n=866)



Most participants (88 percent) reported that they completed the program to the end, but 9 percent were not able to complete the full program (*Figure 21*).

Figure 21
Able to complete the full program (n=866)



Assessment of the program

Respondents were asked to rate parts of the program from Poor=1 to Excellent=5. Most respondents (90 percent) rated the job readiness training as good or excellent; an average rating of 4.37 out of five. Almost all respondents (91 percent) rated their job tasks as good or excellent with an average rating of 4.37. A majority of the youth participants (90 percent) rated their supervision on the job as good or excellent (average of 4.41). Most respondents (90 percent) rated their mentor as good or excellent; an average of 4.50. Many of the youth (85 percent) rated the program overall as good or excellent (average of 4.36). *Table 26* shows the ratings of the program and parts of the program.

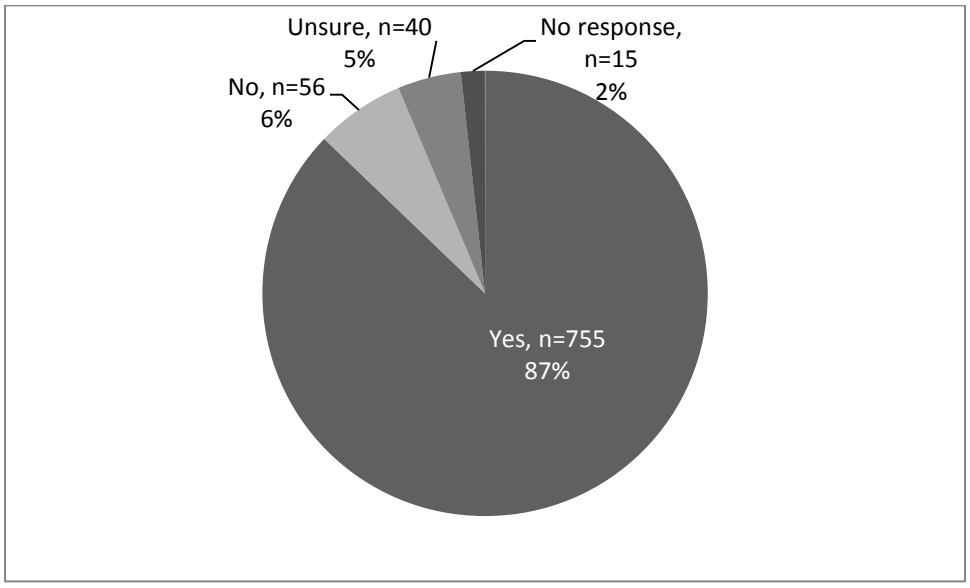
Table 26
Ratings of aspects of the program

Job readiness training	**n**	**Percent**
Excellent	416	48.0%
Good	359	41.5%
Average	67	7.7%
Poor	9	1.0%
Very Poor	5	0.6%
Unknown	10	1.2%
Your job tasks		
Excellent	408	47.1%
Good	376	43.4%
Average	74	8.5%
Poor	3	0.3%
Very Poor	2	0.2%
Unknown	3	0.3%
Supervision on job		
Excellent	445	51.4%
Good	329	38.0%
Average	80	9.2%
Poor	5	0.6%
Very Poor	2	0.2%
Unknown	5	0.6%
Your mentor		
Excellent	543	62.7%
Good	233	26.9%
Average	65	7.5%
Poor	12	1.4%
Very Poor	8	0.9%
Unknown	4	0.5%
Overall Youth Employment Program		
Excellent	431	49.8%
Good	334	38.6%
Average	80	9.2%
Poor	9	1.0%
Very Poor	7	0.8%
Unknown	5	0.6%
TOTAL	**866**	**100%**

Employment component

Participants were asked, *Do you think the job readiness training helped prepare you for your job?* Most respondents indicated "*yes*" (87 percent, n=755), and 6 percent responded "*no*" (n=56). *Figure 22* shows the responses.

Figure 22
Did job readiness training help prepare you for job? (n=866)



Respondents were asked if they used certain skills taught in the job readiness training during their employment. On the survey, respondents could select all options that applied. A majority used the skills of time management (77 percent), dressing appropriately for the job (72 percent), and professional vocabulary and communication (68 percent). A majority used the money management training (61 percent). *Table 27* depicts the responses on the use of skills.

Table 27
Use of skills taught in training

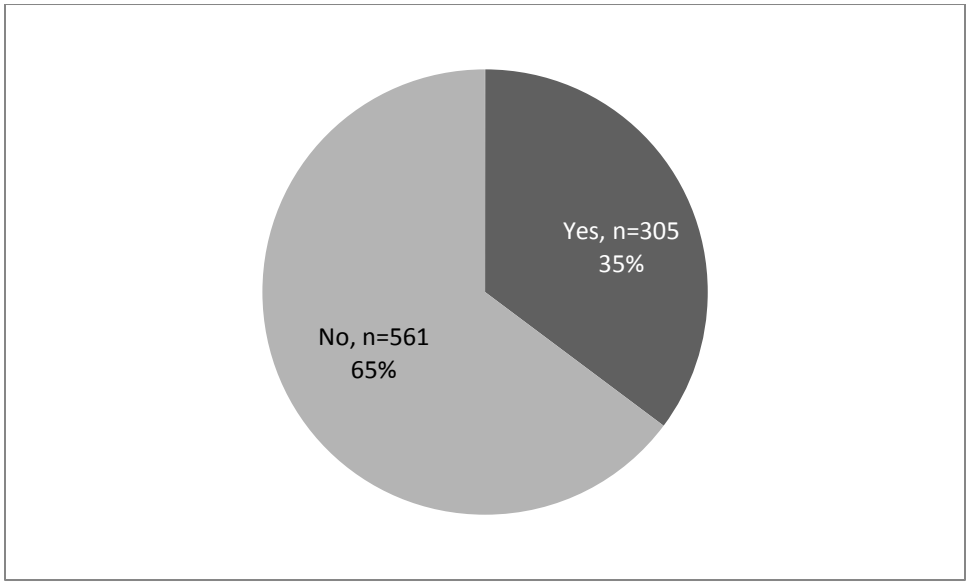
Skill	n	Percent
Time management		
Yes	670	77.4%
No	196	22.6%
Dressing appropriately		
Yes	625	72.2%
No	241	27.8%
Professional vocabulary and communication		
Yes	585	67.6%
No	281	32.4%
Money management		
Yes	529	61.1%
No	337	38.9%
Conflict resolution		
Yes	422	48.7%
No	444	51.3%

Table 27 continued

Interview techniques		
Yes	411	47.5%
No	455	52.5%
Creating resumes		
Yes	398	46.0%
No	468	54.0%
Computer literacy		
Yes	354	40.9%
No	512	59.1%
TOTAL	**866**	**100%**

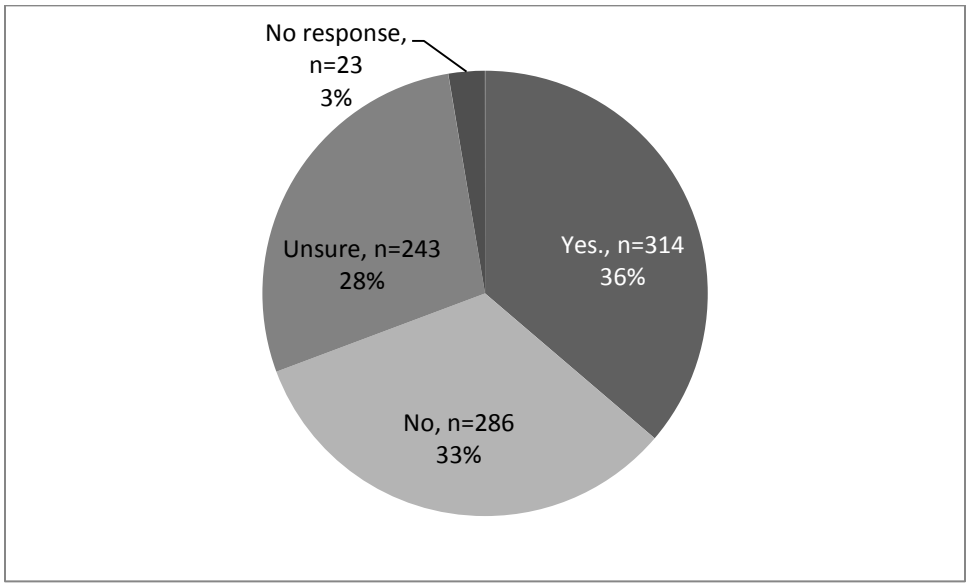
Participants were asked if this was their first paid job, 65 percent responded "*no*," and 35 percent responded "*yes*." *Figure 23* shows the responses.

Figure 23
Was this your first paid job? (n=866)



Respondents were asked if they thought that they would have been employed in the summer of 2014 without YEP. Just over one-third of respondents (36 percent) indicated "*yes*," and one-third responded "*no*." *Figure 24* shows the responses.

Figure 24
If not enrolled in YEP, would you have been employed this summer? (n=866)



Participants were asked to share the types of duties or tasks they performed as part of their job and respondents could check all that applied to them. The most common job duties were teaching or supervising children (41 percent), janitorial work (28 percent) and community outreach (26 percent). The least common job type was landscaping (11 percent). *Table 28* shows the duties and tasks performed by the youth at their job.

Table 28
Duties or tasks on job

Duty/Task	*N*	Percent
Teaching or supervising children		
Yes	353	40.8%
No	513	59.2%
Janitorial		
Yes	238	27.5%
No	628	72.5%
Community outreach		
Yes	223	25.8%
No	643	74.2%
Sales/Customer service		
Yes	182	21.0%
No	684	79.0%
Clerical		
Yes	176	20.3%
No	690	79.7%

Table 28 continued

Other		
Yes	110	12.7%
No	756	87.3%
Landscaping		
Yes	92	10.6%
No	774	89.4%
TOTAL	**866**	**100%**

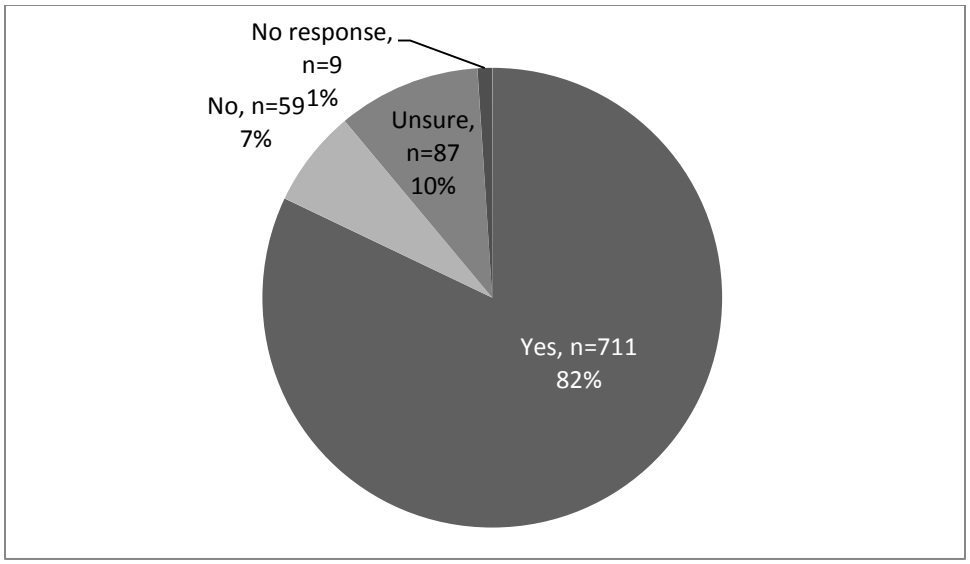
Respondents indicated what types of employment skills they learned on the job. Respondents could check all that applied to them. A majority of youths learned speaking and listening skills (86 percent), teamwork (79 percent), and multitasking (73 percent). Most participants learned organizational skills (63 percent), and more than half gained self-confidence (53 percent). Participants who indicated "*other*" were able to write in any other skills they used. Of the 13 responses written in, three participants wrote in "music technology" or "video technology training," three wrote in "interpersonal skills," or and four said "none." *Table 29* presents the responses on employment skills learned on the job.

Table 29
Employment skills learned on the job

Employment Skill	***n***	**Percent**
Responsibility		
Yes	742	85.7%
No	124	14.3%
Teamwork		
Yes	686	79.2%
No	180	20.8%
Multitasking		
Yes	628	72.5%
No	238	27.5%
Organization skills		
Yes	549	63.4%
No	317	36.6%
Self-Confidence		
Yes	459	53.0%
No	407	47.0%
Job specific skills		
Yes	427	49.3%
No	439	50.7%
Punctuality		
Yes	423	48.8%
No	443	51.2%
Computer skills		
Yes	245	28.3%
No	621	71.7%
Other		
Yes	39	4.5%
No	827	95.5%
TOTAL	**866**	**100%**

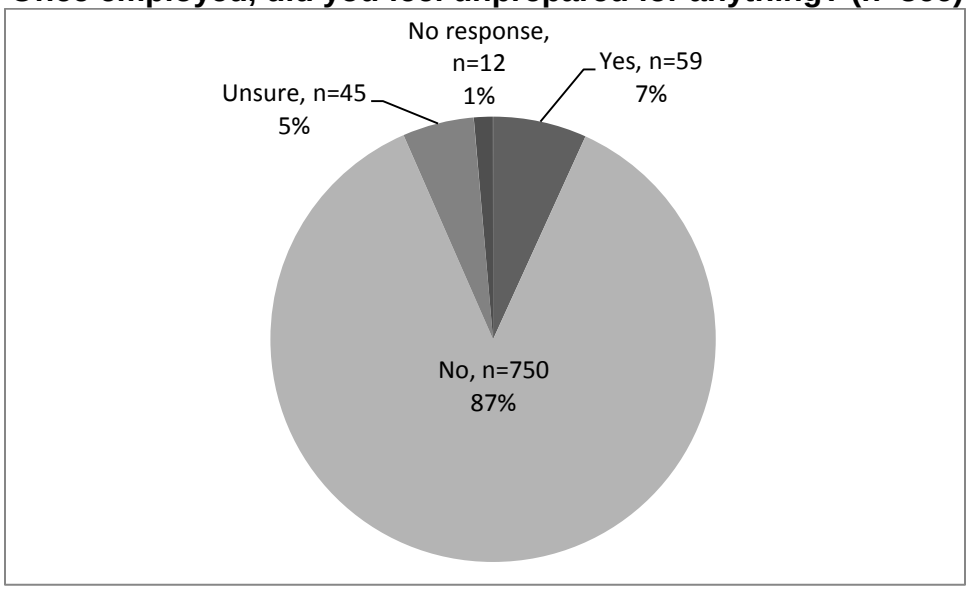
When youth participants were asked if they believed their job was a good match for their skills and interests, 82 percent replied "*yes*." Of the 59 respondents that answered "*no*" (7 percent), 37 answered the follow-up question, "*If no, why not?*" Fourteen indicated placement did not fit with their future employment or academic interests, 15 respondents did not feel their assignment fit their personality or interests, seven felt their job was too simple, and one said he was unable to excel at his assigned work. *Figure 25* shows the responses.

Figure 25
Do you feel like the job was a good match for your skills and interests? (n=866)



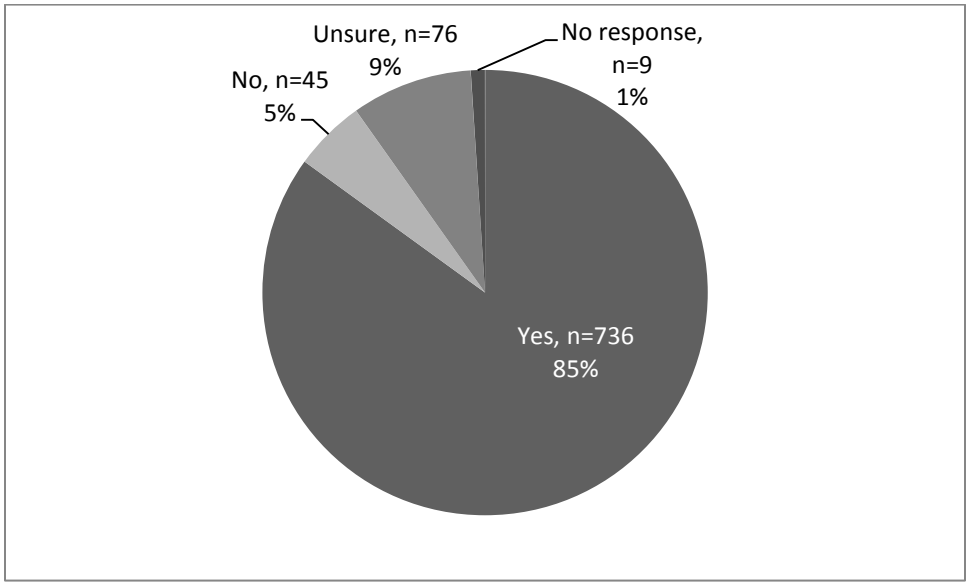
Respondents were asked if they felt unprepared for their work assignment. Most (87 percent) responded "*no*," they did not feel unprepared. *Figure 26* illustrates the responses.

Figure 26
Once employed, did you feel unprepared for anything? (n=866)



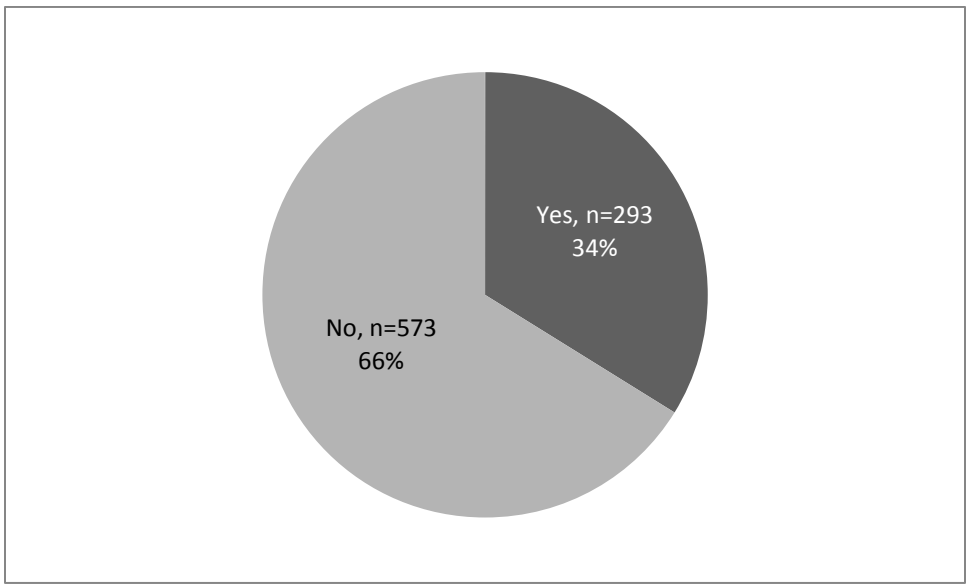
Participants were asked if they thought that their work benefitted the agency or company at which they were employed. A majority (85 percent) responded "*yes*," and 5 percent indicated "*no*." *Figure 27* displays the responses.

Figure 27
Do you think your work benefitted your employer? (n=866)



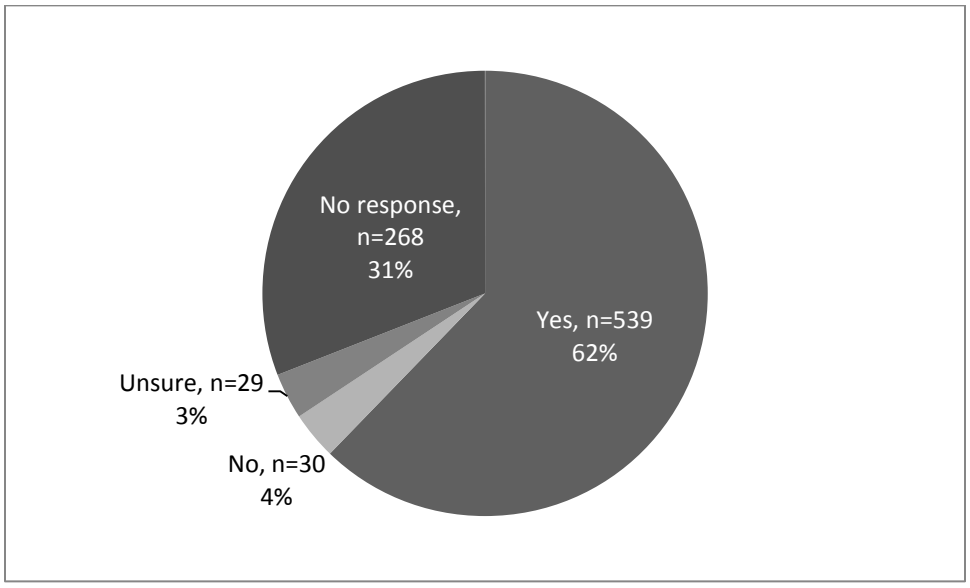
Participants were asked if they were offered to stay at their job after the end of the program. Many participants (34 percent) were asked to continue in the job, but a majority of respondents (66 percent) replied "*no*." *Figure 28* shows participants' responses.

Figure 28
Offered to continue in job after YEP program? (n=866)



Participants not continuing at their job through YEP were asked if they would use what they learned from YEP to find another job. In all, 62 percent of respondents said "*yes*," they would be using these skills to find other employment, and 4 percent answered "*no*." *Figure 29* depicts the responses.

Figure 29
Do you plan to use what you learned to look for another job? (n=866)



Participants were asked how they would spend the money they earned. A majority of respondents (71 percent) replied they used or would use their income on clothing. Most planned to save the money (69 percent), and 67 percent indicated that they used the money for school. Slightly more than half of the participants spent the money on food (54 percent) and nearly half spent it on household expenses (46 percent). *Table 30* displays the responses about how the youth participants spent or would spend their earnings.

Table 30
How spend money earned

Spending category	n	Percent
Clothes		
Yes	617	71.2%
No	249	28.8%
Savings		
Yes	595	68.7%
No	271	31.3%
School		
Yes	577	66.6%
No	289	33.4%
Food		
Yes	463	53.5%
No	403	46.5%

Table 30 continued

Household expenses, bills		
Yes	395	45.6%
No	471	54.4%
Entertainment		
Yes	333	38.5%
No	533	61.5%
Other		
Yes	125	14.4%
No	741	85.6%
TOTAL	**866**	**100%**

Mentoring component

Respondents were asked about their meetings with their mentor, including where they met and for what length of time. They could select all answers that applied. The most common choices for meetings were at the mentee's job site (46 percent), in the community (41 percent), and at a community agency (39 percent). *Table 31* displays the responses about where they met their mentor.

Table 31
Mentoring meeting locations (n=866)

Method of meeting	n	Percent
Mentee's job site	395	45.6%
In the community	335	41.0%
Community agency	334	38.6%
Phone	3	30.4%
Other	45	5.2%

According to program participants, 66 percent met their mentor once a week in a group, 76 percent met once a week one-on-one, and 83 percent saw their mentor for one hour or more. *Table 32* shows the breakdown of time spent with mentors.

Table 32
Time spent with mentor

In a group	***n***	**Percent**
Less than once a week	72	8.3%
Once a week	571	65.9%
More than once a week	201	23.2%
Unknown	22	2.5%
One-on-one		
Less than once a week	75	9.0%
Once a week	656	75.8%
More than once a week	111	12.8%
Unknown	21	2.4%
Length of meeting		
Less than one hour	131	15.1%
One hour or more	715	82.6%
Unknown	20	2.3%
TOTAL	**866**	**100%**

Participants were asked to respond to several statements about their mentor on a scale of strongly disagree=1 to strongly agree=4. A majority of respondents "*agreed*" or "*strongly agreed*" that their mentor challenged them to succeed (average of 3.42 out of four and that they look up to their mentor (average of 3.43). Almost all respondents "*agreed*" or "*strongly agreed*" that their mentor encouraged them to do well (average of 3.48); helped them see different ways to solve problems (average of 3.46); and that they talked to their mentor about their future (average of 3.52). *Table 33* indicates the responses to the statements about mentors.

Table 33
Responses to statements about mentors

My mentor helped me challenge myself to succeed	***n***	**Percent**
Strongly agree	427	49.3%
Agree	352	40.6%
Disagree	48	5.5%
Strongly disagree	12	1.4%
No response	27	3.1%
I am able to look to my mentor for guidance		
Strongly agree	430	49.7%
Agree	349	40.3%
Disagree	47	5.4%
Strongly disagree	10	1.2%
No response	27	3.1!
My mentor praised me and encouraged me to do well		
Strongly agree	452	52.2%
Agree	348	40.2%
Disagree	30	3.5%
Strongly disagree	10	1.2%
No response	26	3.0%

Table 33 continued

My mentor helps me to see different ways I can solve my problems		
Strongly agree	448	51.7%
Agree	342	39.5%
Disagree	41	4.7%
Strongly disagree	11	1.3%
No response	24	2.8%
I discuss with my mentor what I would like to do in the future		
Strongly agree	496	57.3%
Agree	296	34.2%
Disagree	35	4.0%
Strongly disagree	13	1.5%
No response	26	3.0%
TOTAL	**866**	**100%**

Community service component

All youth participants in the program were expected to perform community service. However, of all survey respondents, 56 percent (n=487) reported starting a community service project, and 55 percent (n=475) reported completing a community service project. Many respondents reported that they did not complete a community service project (45 percent, n=391). Youth participants were asked to share their community service project. Most common responses were the Albany Park World Fest, community clean-up projects, a fashion show, back to school events, and collection drives for homeless shelters. The community service projects included the following:

- Community festival (n=55)
- Community clean up (n=35)
- Fashion show (n=31)
- Back to School events (n=28)
- Collect donations for shelters (n=20)
- Food drive/Feed the homeless (n=18)
- Anti-violence programs (n=17)
- Church events (n=16)
- Fundraising runs (homelessness, hunger, bullying, weight loss) (n=15)
- Resource fair (n=13)
- Paint a mural (n=10)
- Produce videos about underage drinking, texting and driving, Humboldt Park, senior citizens (n=10)
- Community garden (n=9)
- Park clean up (n=7)
- Summit of Hope (n=7)
- Safety Day (n=5)
- Shelter clean up (n=4)
- Health fair (n=4)
- Youth summit against homelessness (n=2)
- Childcare (n=2)
- Donut Fair (n=2)
- Think AIDS Telethon (n=1)
- Anti-discrimination workshop (n=1)
- Build a book room (n=1)
- Family focus (n=1)
- Build a parade float (n=1)
- Parent café (n=1)
- Juvenile justice focus group (n=1)

Community descriptions

Youth participants were asked to rate the seriousness of certain problems in their community. Some youth noted that violent crime was a "*big problem*" or a "*very big problem*" (39 percent). Many respondents answered that shootings were a "*big problem*" or a "*very big problem*" (43 percent). Some participants indicated that violence among community members was a "*big problem*" or a "*very big problem*" (39 percent). *Table 34* depicts ratings of violence in their communities.

Table 34
Ratings of seriousness of violence in communities

	n	**Percent**
Violent crime (like people being beaten, robbed, assaulted)		
A very big problem	190	21.9%
A big problem	148	17.1%
Average	217	25.1%
A small problem	123	14.2%
A very small problem	157	18.1%
No response	31	3.6%
Gunshots and shooting		
A very big problem	240	27.7%
A big problem	128	14.8%
Average	204	23.6%
A small problem	120	13.9%
A very small problem	144	16.6%
No response	30	3.5%
Violence among community members		
A very big problem	186	21.5%
A big problem	154	17.8%
Average	228	26.3%
A small problem	130	15.0%
A very small problem	136	15.7%
No response	32	3.7%
TOTAL	**866**	**100%**

One-third stated that non-violent crime is a "*big problem*" or a "*very big problem.*" Many respondents stated that people selling drugs were a "*big problem*" or a "*very big problem*" (40 percent). Some participants stated that an inability to walk safely in the neighborhood is a "*big problem*" or a "*very big problem*" (31 percent). Many respondents indicated that groups of people hanging around causing trouble were a "*big problem*" or a "*very big problem*" (39 percent). *Table 35* shows the ratings of community problems.

Table 35
Ratings of non-violent problems in communities

	n	Percent
Non-violent crimes (like theft, vandalism, drug sales)		
A very big problem	133	15.4%
A big problem	155	17.9%
Average	283	32.7%
A small problem	117	13.5%
A very small problem	152	17.6%
No response	26	3.0%
People selling drugs		
A very big problem	186	21.5%
A big problem	163	18.8%
Average	248	28.6%
A small problem	108	12.5%
A very small problem	135	15.6%
No response	26	3.0%
Unable to walk safely on the streets of your neighborhood		
A very big problem	150	17.3%
A big problem	119	13.7%
Average	240	27.7%
A small problem	163	18.8%
A very small problem	166	19.2%
No response	28	3.2%
Groups of people hanging around the neighborhood and causing trouble		
A very big problem	175	20.2%
A big problem	159	18.4%
Average	259	29.9%
A small problem	133	15.4%
A very small problem	111	12.8%
No response	29	3.3%
TOTAL	**866**	**100%**

Average community problems ratings were compiled for each community based on responses to statements about their community from 1=a very small problem to 5=a very big problem. Youth from North Lawndale gave the highest average community problem rating (3.79 out of five). Youths from Cicero provided the lowest average community problem rating (2.34).

The statements about their community were grouped into violent and non-violent. Participants from North Lawndale gave the highest average rating for *non-violent* community problems (3.75). Participants from Humboldt Park gave the lowest rating of *non-violent* problems (2.38). Youth from North Lawndale gave the highest community problem rating for *violent* problems (3.83), and youth from Cicero rated the *violent* community problems lowest (2.15). *Table 36* shows the ratings of community problems as violent and non-violent by community.

Table 36
Ratings of problems by communities (n=866)

Community	Average community problem rating	Average non-violent rating	Average violent rating
Albany Park	2.51	2.52	2.49
Austin	3.51	3.45	3.61
Brighton Park	2.86	2.82	2.91
Cicero	2.34	2.49	2.15
East Garfield Park	3.20	3.16	3.26
Englewood	3.57	3.47	3.72
Greater Grand Crossing	2.83	2.81	2.86
Humboldt Park	2.36	2.38	2.34
Maywood	3.19	3.13	3.23
North Lawndale	3.79	3.75	3.83
Rogers Park	3.18	3.09	3.31
Roseland	3.39	3.27	3.55
South Shore	3.51	3.36	3.71
Thornton/Bremen	3.02	2.94	3.12
West Chicago	3.46	3.42	3.52
West Garfield Park	3.35	3.30	3.40

Additional comments

Participants were asked to provide additional comments on the program. Of the 188 responses, 159 (85 percent) were positive statements. For example, one youth stated, “This was a very helpful program! I learned how to communicate with others, helped out my community and gained a job at the end of the program.” Another stated, “This program and my mentor helped me stay out of the crosshairs of violence and the police.”

There were no negative comments, but some participants offered the following suggestions:

- Increase work hours (n=3)
- Improve communication between mentors and organizers (n=3)
- More organization (n=2)
- Allow returning participants to skip the training phase (n=2)
- Provide bus cards (n=1)
- Allow participants to complete community service projects together (n=1)
- Expand the program to include more participants (n=1)
- Make the hiring process faster (n=1)
- Increase the one-on-one job training because participants were focused on their peers and not the instructor (n=1)
- Only one-on-one meetings with mentors or group meetings, not both (n=1)
- Change the instruction materials (n=1)

Conclusions from youth participant exit surveys

Overall, youth participants rated the program highly. Most respondents rated the following aspects of the program as good or excellent: job readiness training, job tasks, job supervision, mentor, and the program overall. Most YEP participants thought the job readiness training prepared them for their jobs (90 percent). Almost all youth participants thought their job was a good match for their skills and interests (91 percent). A majority of youth participants learned speaking and listening skills on the job and attendance (90 percent). Most of the respondents (90 percent) rated their mentor as good or excellent. Many of the youth rated the program as good or excellent (85 percent). The most common types of job were teaching or supervising children (41 percent) and the least common job type was landscaping (11 percent). A majority learned the skill of speaking and listening (86 percent); teamwork (79 percent); and multitasking (73 percent). Most YEP participants (85 percent) thought their work benefitted the agency or company for which they were employed. Youth program participants expressed that they developed good relationships with their mentors. Participants recommended increasing program hours, improving communication between different levels of the program, and better organization.

Coordinators and managers exit survey

A total of 28 YEP coordinators and managers completed online surveys—59 percent were coordinators (n=17) and 38 percent were managers (n=11) (3 percent, n=1, unknown). In each community, one YEP managers supervised three coordinators; coordinators in turn supervised mentors. The survey asked the coordinators and managers to assess the program, rate their preparedness for the program, and suggest changes to the program. The following numbers of surveys were received by community:

- Auburn Gresham (n=3)
- Brighton Park (n=3)
- Cicero (n=4)
- Greater Grand Crossing (n=1)
- Humboldt Park (n=1)
- Maywood (n=2)
- North Lawndale (n=1)
- Rich/Bloom Township (n=2)
- Rogers Park (n=2)
- Roseland (n=1)
- South Shore (n=1)
- Thornton/Bremen Township (n=2)
- West Chicago (Chicago Lawn, Gage Park) (n=1)
- West Garfield Park (n=2)
- Community unknown (n=2)

Assessment of the program

Ratings of aspects of YEP were on a scale from 1=very poor to 5=very good. Coordinators and managers rated the quality of the mentor component—90 percent answered good or very good with an average rating of 4.24 out of five. A majority (90 percent) rated the employment component as good or very good (average rating of 4.46). A majority of respondents (59 percent) indicated support from ICJIA was good or very good (average rating of 3.81). Most respondents (76 percent) rated the quality of support from their lead agency good or very good (average rating of 4.12). Respondents rated the quality of their training for their roles, and 76 percent chose good or very good (average rating 4.10). *Table 37* offers the ratings of aspects of the YEP.

Table 37
Coordinators and managers ratings of aspects of YEP

	n	Percent
Quality of the mentor component		
Very good	11	37.9%
Good	15	51.7%
Average	2	6.9%
Poor	2	3.4%
Very poor	0	0.0%
Quality of employment component		
Very good	15	51.7%
Good	11	37.9%
Average	2	6.9%
Poor	0	0.0%
Very poor	0	0.0%
Unknown	1	3.4%

Table 37 continued

Quality of support from ICJIA		
Very good	7	24.1%
Good	10	34.5%
Average	8	27.6%
Poor	2	6.9%
Very poor	0	0.0%
Unknown	2	6.9%
Quality of support from lead agency		
Very good	8	27.6%
Good	14	48.3%
Average	3	10.3%
Poor	1	3.4%
Very poor	0	0.0%
Unknown	3	10.3%
Quality of training for role of coordinator or manager		
Very good	12	41.4%
Good	10	34.5%
Average	5	17.2%
Poor	2	6.9%
Very poor	0	0.0%
TOTAL	**29**	**100%**

The program managers rated the mentoring component higher than coordinators (4.36 vs 4.12). Managers also rated the employment component higher (4.50 vs 4.11). Coordinators rated the ICJIA support component higher (3.93 vs 3.55). Coordinators also rated the training higher (4.41 vs 3.55). Both groups rated the support from the lead agency about the same (4.07 vs 4.10 for coordinators and managers respectively).

Information and training

The coordinators and managers were asked for which topics they needed more information or training and could choose one or more topics from a list. Seven respondents indicated that they needed no increased training. Eight proposed increasing organization or clarity of materials used at the training; five requested more training for mentors; and four suggested more training for coordinators on their role. A few expressed interest in increased preparation on job readiness instructions for youth (n=3). Two respondents desire more information about ICJIA policy.

Preparedness for the program

Coordinators and managers were asked to rate the preparedness of staff and participants in the program. Most (86 percent) respondents reported instructor-mentors were prepared or very prepared for their role as job-readiness trainers. A majority (80 percent) thought instructor-mentors and mentors were prepared or very prepared for their role as mentors. A majority (83 percent) shared that youth were prepared or very prepared for their jobs. *Table 38* indicates survey responses on preparedness.

Table 38
Coordinators and managers ratings of preparedness for YEP

	n	Percent
Preparedness of instructor-mentors for role as job-readiness trainers		
Very prepared	15	51.7%
Prepared	10	34.5%
Neutral	4	13.8%
Unprepared	0	0.0%
Very unprepared	0	0.0%
Preparedness of instructor-mentors and mentors for role as mentors for youth		
Very prepared	4	13.8%
Prepared	19	65.5%
Neutral	3	10.3%
Unprepared	1	3.4%
Very unprepared	2	6.9%
Preparedness of youth for their jobs		
Very prepared	3	10.3%
Prepared	21	72.4%
Neutral	3	10.3%
Unprepared	0	0.0%
Very unprepared	2	6.9%
TOTAL	**29**	**100%**

Increased resources to improve program

Almost all of the coordinators and managers (97 percent) indicated that the program could be improved through additional resources (n=28). The most common suggestion was to increase the duration of the program (n=13). Two respondents wanted to enhance job readiness training. Five respondents wanted to enhance mentor training or mentoring component in general. Four respondents suggested increasing funding for the program overall and four suggested paying the youth to participate in mentoring. Three respondents suggested offering other social services in conjunction with the program, and three proposed offering topical speakers with the program.

Changes to the program

The most common change to the program suggested by coordinators and managers was to increase the duration of the program (n=10). The second most common was the suggestion that the program pay the youth for their mentor hours instead of paying for their community service hours. Others suggested that the program provide bus cards and food or snacks to facilitate participation, as well as organize college visits for participants to encourage growth after the program ends.

Additional comments

Sixteen of the coordinators and managers offered additional comments. Eight commenters made general positive comments regarding the program. Two other individuals provided positive

comments on the program materials; however, one suggested adding modules to prepare the youths to act independently of their parents or guardians. One manager suggested more manager-specific training.

Conclusions from coordinator and manager exit survey

Overall, components of the program were rated favorably (good or very good). Many coordinators and managers expressed an interest in increasing the duration of the program and the paid hours for the staff, as well as increased pay for youths and mentors. Despite the need for some improvements, half of the comments were positive reflections on the program and how it made a difference and helped youth in their communities.

Findings: Training evaluation surveys

Youth job readiness training

A total of 1,244 youth participants completed job readiness training evaluation surveys. Surveys were received from following 19 communities:

- Albany Park (n=81)
- Auburn Gresham (n=43)
- Austin (n=64)
- Brighton Park (n=71)
- Cicero (n=72)
- Englewood (n=54)
- Greater Grand Crossing (n=67)
- Hermosa/Belmont Cragin (n= 65)
- Humboldt Park (n=33)
- Logan Square (n=80)
- Maywood (n=71)
- North Lawndale (n=73)
- Pilsen/Little Village (n=69)
- Rich Township (n=32)
- Rogers Park (n=80)
- South Shore (n=70)
- Thornton/Bremen Township (n=77)
- West Chicago (Gage Park, Chicago Lawn) (n=76)
- West Garfield Park (n=66)

While all of the instructor-mentors were trained by Winning Futures and the training materials were the same in each community's training, each community may have had slightly different trainings in terms of location, facility, food, and training style. As such, participants may have had different experiences. However, the surveys from all the of Youth Employment Program's job readiness training were aggregated and analyzed collectively.

Youth participants were asked to rate their agreement with five statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Overall, participants agreed with the positive statements provided about the job readiness training. Most participants (80 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that the training was well designed, including pacing and adequate time for questions and answers. The average rating was 4.11 out of 5. Most training participants (85 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that they received information that answered questions about employment (average of 4.21). About 83 percent agreed that the materials and handouts were useful both in the session and for future reference (average rating of 4.20 out of 5). Most (87 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that their trainer was knowledgeable and helpful (average rating of 4.35). A majority of participants (89 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that they had a better sense of what it takes to obtain and maintain a job (average rating of 4.40). *Table 39*depicts the ratings of their agreement about statements on the training.

Table 39
Ratings of the job readiness training

The training was well-designed	**n**	**Percent**
Strongly agree	468	37.6%
Agree	524	42.1%
Neutral	190	15.3%
Disagree	38	3.1%
Strongly disagree	20	1.6%
Unanswered	4	0.3%
I received information that answered my questions about employment		
Strongly agree	494	39.7%
Agree	568	45.7%
Neutral	139	11.2%
Disagree	23	1.8%
Strongly disagree	18	1.4%
Unanswered	2	0.2%
Materials provided useful content		
Strongly agree	536	43.1%
Agree	493	39.6%
Neutral	162	13.0%
Disagree	30	2.4%
Strongly disagree	20	1.6%
Unanswered	3	0.2%
Trainer(s) were knowledgeable and helpful		
Strongly agree	666	53.5%
Agree	415	33.4%
Neutral	113	9.1%
Disagree	23	1.8%
Strongly disagree	26	2.1%
Unanswered	1	0.1%
I have a better sense of what it takes to obtain, maintain a job		
Strongly agree	683	54.9%
Agree	425	34.2%
Neutral	98	7.9%
Disagree	13	1.0%
Strongly disagree	21	1.7%
Unanswered	4	0.3%
TOTAL	**1,244**	**100%**

Like best about the training

Youth participants were asked to indicate what they liked best about the training and were given choices from which they could choose one or more. A majority of the participants (66 percent) selected learning job readiness training and life skills. Another 66 percent liked interacting with other training participants (peer, trainers, mentors) the best. A majority (59 percent) liked the activities and role playing. Finally, about half selected making new friends (53 percent).

Participants were also given the option of writing in an additional item they liked about the training. A total of 38 individuals provided an "*other*" choice. Responses included learning interview skills, resume skills, time management, and conflict resolution.

Suggestions to improve the training

Participants in YEP job readiness training were asked to offer suggestions to improve the training. A total of 1,170 respondents offered 1,194 suggestions. Many youth (38 percent) said there was nothing that could improve the training and used positive words to describe the training, such as "good," "great," and "fine."

Some participants (17 percent) suggested that the trainings should include more interactive activities such as hands-on activities, role playing, and ice breakers.

About 7 percent of participants (n=81) suggested changing the content of the training in ways that included creating resumes and cover letters, learning computer skills, and job searching.

Table 40 offers a breakdown of the suggestions offered to improve the job readiness training.

Table 40
Suggestions to improve job readiness training by category (n=1,194)

	n	Percent
None or good	449	37.6%
More interactive	212	17.8%
Change content	84	7.0%
More organization	66	5.5%
Change length of training	59	4.9%
Change materials	41	3.4%
More pay or hours	35	2.9%
Change delivery of training	34	2.8%
Change mentor aspect	29	2.4%
Change time start	25	2.1%
More/better food	24	2.0%
Have smaller or larger groups of participants	21	1.8%
Change training location/facility	17	1.4%
Change trainers	16	1.3%
More control over participants	12	1.0%
Increase breaks	10	0.8%
Improve communication	9	0.8%
Change length of program	6	0.5%
More respect	5	0.4%
Other	40	3.4%

Additional comments

Job readiness training participants were asked to provide additional comments on the training or program. A total of 1,048 offered comments. Almost half offered comments such as none, nothing, or not applicable (48 percent). Many participants that they liked the training's content and delivery (41 percent).

Few training participants offered suggestions similar to the ones summarized in the previous section, such as more food, longer program duration, more pay or hours, improved materials, more breaks, and more interactive activities (9 percent). Less than 1 percent offered negative comments, such as the training not being helpful to them or that the trainers were bad.

Table 41 categorizes the additional comments on the training and program.

Table 41
Comments on training or program by category (n=1,048)

	n	Percent
None or not applicable	504	48.1%
Positive	434	41.4%
Suggestion	98	9.4%
Negative	8	0.8%
Other	4	0.4%

Conclusions from youth job readiness training

Overall, the series of youth job readiness trainings were well received. A majority of participants who completed an evaluation form (n=1,244) agreed with the positive statements on the training, trainers, and what they learned. Many youth wanted the training to be more interactive. Most of the youth expressed that their favorite parts of the training were learning job readiness skills and interacting with peers, trainers, and mentors.

Mentor training

A total of 204 mentors completed training evaluation forms following their mentoring training. Representatives from 23 communities were trained as mentors for the YEP program. The range of representatives participating in training for any given neighborhood was one to 25 with an average of nine.

The following are the 19 communities that returned mentor training surveys and the number returned.

- Albany Park (n=25)
- Auburn Gresham (n=8)
- Austin (n=12)
- Brighton Park (n=14)
- East Garfield Park (n=9)
- Englewood (n=15)
- Greater Grand Crossing (n=4)
- Hermosa/ Belmont Cragin (n=8)
- Humboldt Park (n=11)
- Logan Square (n=10)
- Maywood (n=16)
- North Lawndale (n=21)
- Pilsen/Little Village (n=10)
- Rich Township (n=1)
- Rogers Park (n=3)
- South Shore (n=8)
- Thornton/Bremen Township (n=7)
- West Chicago (Gage Park, Chicago Lawn) (n=3)
- West Garfield Park (n=8)
- Unknown (n=9)

Mentors were asked to rate their agreement with five statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Overall, participants agreed with the positive statements provided about the training seminar. A total of 79 percent agreed or strongly agreed that the training was well designed, including pacing and adequate time for questions and answers. The average rating of the training was 4.05 out of 5. Most training participants (85 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that they received information that answered questions about mentoring (average of 4.13). Most (83 percent) agreed that the materials and handouts provided useful content both in the session and for future reference (average rating of 4.16 out of 5). Almost all (86 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that their trainer was knowledgeable and helpful and had the highest average agreement rating of 4.26. A majority of participants of the training (86 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that they had a better sense of what it takes to be a mentor (average rating of 4.21). *Table 42* depicts the ratings of their agreement about statements on the training seminar.

Table 42
Ratings of mentor training

The training was well-designed	***n***	**Percent**
Strongly agree	68	33.3%
Agree	93	45.6%
Neutral	27	13.2%
Disagree	4	2.0%
Strongly disagree	8	3.9%
Unknown	4	2.0%
I received information that answered my questions about mentoring		
Strongly agree	72	35.3%
Agree	100	49.0%
Neutral	20	9.8%
Disagree	5	2.5%
Strongly disagree	5	2.5%
Unknown	2	1.0%
Materials provided useful content		
Strongly agree	82	40.2%
Agree	88	43.1%
Neutral	21	10.3%
Disagree	7	3.4%
Strongly disagree	5	2.5%
Unknown	1	0.5 %
Trainer was knowledgeable and helpful		
Strongly agree	96	47.1%
Agree	80	39.2%
Neutral	17	8.3%
Disagree	3	1.5%
Strongly disagree	7	3.4%
Unknown	1	0.5%
I have a better sense of what it takes to be a mentor		
Strongly agree	88	43.1%
Agree	87	42.6%
Neutral	17	8.3%
Disagree	2	1.0%
Strongly disagree	8	3.9%
Unknown	2	1.0%
TOTAL	**204**	**100%**

Like best about the training

Mentors were asked to indicate what aspect of the training they liked best. They were given six choices from which they could choose all that apply. Of the 204 respondents, 82 indicated the best aspect was interacting with and building relationships with other training participants (40 percent). Another 38 percent indicated “everything was great.” Some mentors thought learning how to mentor and interact with youth was the best aspect of the training (35 percent).

Ten individuals selected “other” as their favorite part of the training. Aspects offered included the pacing of the training, the manner in which the training materials were presented, and the curriculum and information provided. *Table 43* provides responses to this question.

Table 43
Best aspect of the training

Aspect of training	n	Percent
Everything was great	77	37.7%
Interacting with, building relationships with participants	82	40.2%
The trainers	43	21.1%
The role plays	24	11.8%
Interacting with youth	35	17.2%
Learning how to mentor and interact with youth	71	34.8%
Other	14	6.9%
TOTAL	**204**	**100%**

Suggestions to improve the mentor training

A total of 121 mentors responded to the question about suggestions to improve the training. Of those, 52 respondents wrote no suggestions or that the training was good. Fifteen mentors wanted more engagement during the training such as ice breakers, activities, and games. Another fourteen respondents wanted the training length to change; most wanting the training to be longer. Some desired better organization for the training, with an outline of all topics covered (n=10). Nine respondents mentioned wanting more written materials and more organized materials.

Comments on the mentor training

A total of 59 mentors provided additional comments on the training, most indicating that the training was useful, good, and informative.

Conclusions from mentor training

A majority of mentors agreed or strongly agreed that the training was well designed, their questions were answered, training materials were useful, trainers were knowledgeable, and they gained a sense of what it took to be a mentor. Some mentor training participants suggested having more participation during the training, such as role playing (n=15). Some participants suggested that the training should be longer (n=14).

Coordinator and manager training

YEP coordinators and managers were given training by Winning Futures on how to train the mentors of youth in the program. A total of 42 completed training evaluations—25 coordinators and 17 managers. Representatives of the following 20 communities completed training evaluations:

- Albany Park (n=2)
- Auburn Gresham (n=2)
- Austin (n=1)
- East Garfield Park (n=1)
- Englewood (n=4)
- Grand Boulevard (n=1)
- Greater Grand Crossing (n=1)
- Hermosa/ Belmont Cragin (n=2)
- Humboldt Park (n=3)
- Maywood (n=4)
- North Lawndale (n=4)
- Pilsen/Little Village (n=2)
- Rich Township (n=2)
- Rogers Park (n=1)
- Roseland (n=1)
- South Shore (n=1)
- Thornton/Bremen Township (n=1)
- West Chicago (Gage Park, Chicago Lawn) (n=1)
- West Garfield Park (n=6)
- Woodlawn (n=2)

Coordinators and managers were asked to rate their agreement with five statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). On the whole, these individuals responded with agree or strongly agree to the statements provided about the training seminar. They tended, however, to have slightly lower average rating than the mentor group.

Most coordinators and managers (74 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that the training was well designed which included pacing and adequate time for questions and answers. The average rating of the training was 3.83. A majority of those surveyed (67 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that they received information that answered questions about mentoring (average of 3.67). Most (83 percent) of the group agreed that the materials and handouts provided useful content both in the session and for future reference (average rating of 4.07 out of 5). Almost all (88 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that their trainer was knowledgeable and helpful and had the highest average agreement rating of 4.29. When asked whether they had a better sense of what it takes to be a mentor after completing the training, 67 percent of coordinators and managers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement (average rating of 3.80). *Table 44* depicts the total ratings of their agreement about statements on the training seminar.

Table 44
Coordinator and manager ratings

The training was well-designed	n	Percent
Strongly agree	14	33.3%
Agree	17	40.5%
Neutral	5	11.9%
Disagree	2	4.8%
Strongly disagree	4	9.5%
I received information that answered my questions about mentoring		
Strongly agree	9	21.4%
Agree	19	45.2%
Neutral	9	21.4%
Disagree	1	2.4%
Strongly disagree	4	9.5%
Materials provided useful content		
Strongly agree	17	40.5%
Agree	18	42.9%
Neutral	2	4.8%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	4	9.5%
Unknown	1	2.4%
Trainer was knowledgeable and helpful		
Strongly agree	25	59.5%
Agree	12	28.6%
Neutral	1	2.4%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	4	9.5%
I have a better sense of what it takes to be a mentor		
Strongly agree	13	31.0%
Agree	15	35.7%
Neutral	7	16.7%
Disagree	1	2.4%
Strongly disagree	4	9.5%
Unknown	2	4.8%
TOTAL	**42**	**100%**

Best liked about the training

Coordinators and managers were asked to select the best aspects of the training from a list from which they could select multiple responses. The choices on the survey regarding the best aspects of training were based upon the most common responses to the 2013 mentor training survey.

Almost half of training participants (48 percent) indicated that the best aspect was interacting with and building relationships with other training participants. One-third indicated “everything was great.” More than one quarter of the coordinators and managers selected learning how to mentor and interact with youth as the best aspect of training. With a selection of “other,” one person mentioned the curriculum, one mentioned a module on household costs and living expenses, another mentioned a trainer by name, and one stated the training was informative. *Table 45* includes more detailed information on how this group responded to the question.

Table 45
Best aspects of the training (n=42)

Aspect of training	n	Percent
Interacting with, building relationships with participants	20	47.6%
Everything was great	14	33.3%
Learning how to mentor and interact with youth	11	26.2%
The trainers	11	26.2%
The role plays	8	19.0%
Interacting with youth	8	19.0%
Other	4	9.5%

Suggestions to improve the training

Coordinators and managers were asked to provide suggestions to improve the training and 15 complied. Suggestions included increasing the amount of training and more interactive group work and role playing.

Additional comments on the training

Coordinators and managers were asked to share additional comments on the training and 17 complied, all with positive feedback on the training and the training vendor, *Winning Futures*.

Conclusions from coordinator and manager training

A majority of coordinators and managers agreed or strongly agreed that the training was well designed, their questions were answered, the materials were useful, the trainers were knowledgeable, and they had a better sense of what it took to be a mentor.

Findings: Community service projects

All community sites were asked to submit forms detailing their community service projects at the beginning of the program. Fourteen of 23 YEP communities submitted forms to ICJIA for approval. The communities planned to execute 36 community service projects in the following categories:

- *Fairs/Community resources/discussions*: Events that help community members with resources such as groceries and also events that gather members for celebrations, such as block parties, often with a theme. (n=16)
- *Community clean-up*: Events that gather the people of the community to engage in neighborhood beautification by cleaning streets and parks. (n=6)
- *Anti-violence*: Staying positive and informed on many issues such as gun violence and gangs. (n=11)
- *Health and wellness*: Activities to promote healthy living styles. (n=3)

The first YEP community service project was scheduled to begin on June 5, 2014, and the last project was scheduled to end August 29, 2014. Project timelines ranged from one day to 50 days. The average length of projects was 10.5 days. Program managers anticipated a total of 380 days of community service. The YEP program anticipated a total of 1,536 YEP youth working on service projects and 8,801 community members to attend or participate in the projects with a total 10,674 YEP participants, community members, and staff would attend the projects.

The YEP program held many of their service projects in diverse settings, the following are locations of events by category (n=36).

- Community centers/streets (n=22)
- Park (n=10)
- Church (n=2)
- School (n=1)
- U.S. Cellular Field (n=1)

The community service projects focused:

- Lack of safety security at home and school
- Lack of neighborhood maintenance
- Lack of civic engagement resolving violence
- Obesity/lack of medical care
- Poverty/ lack of groceries for families
- Lack of school supplies for youth
- Lack of support for artwork regarding murals/reducing graffiti
- Lack of knowledge of community resources
- Lack of activities for youth in communities
- Lack of community/family communication

A total of 17 YEP events were new service projects and 19 were continuing projects. Continuing projects were those established in the community or done previously through YEP the previous year.

Community sign-in sheets

The following 10 communities submitted 78 sign in sheets for various community projects.

- Albany Park (n=6)
- Brighton Park (n=18)
- Greater Grand Crossing (n=7)
- Humboldt Park (n=8)
- Maywood (n=25)
- Rich/Bloom Township (n=3)
- Rogers Park (n=4)
- Thornton/Bremen Township (n=2)
- West Chicago (n=4)
- West Garfield Park (n=1)

A total of 1,592 individuals signed-in at 78 service project locations between June 5, 2014, and September 13, 2014. The sign-in sheets requested demographic information, including age, gender, and role (participant, staff, or community member). Of those who specified their age (n=749), the average age was 27.8 years old. Of those who specified their gender (n=1,446), 68 percent were women (n=980). Of those who specified their role at the project (n=1,592), 71.4 percent were participants (n=1,136), 6.5 percent were community members (n=104), and 22.1 percent were YEP staff (n=352).

Implications for policy and practice

Focus on youth in-need, at-risk

The pre- and post-assessments revealed that youth who had lower scores on the pre-assessment experienced improvements in post-assessment mean scores on attitudes toward violence, self-esteem, attitudes toward employment, conflict resolution, and contact with the police than the higher scoring youth. This pattern suggests that those at-risk for delinquency, poor school performance, and unemployment, presumably in the low score group, would benefit more from the program than those less at-risk. The low-scoring youth made up less than half of program participants. Expanding programs based community scores could shift the focus on low-scoring—presumably more at-risk—youth.

The program did not specifically target at-risk youth. All youth in participating communities were eligible to apply for the program. Findings indicated a more targeted approach toward those more at-risk may be warranted. According to Schonert-Reichl, "Indeed, the 'at risk' concept has proliferated in recent years and has become a general term used to describe young people on a trajectory toward a myriad of problems that threaten their present and future adjustment" (2000, p.3). Targeting programs at those youth could ameliorate the negative conditions and improve their trajectories.

At-risk youth living in low-income communities, exposed to family and community violence, and living in unstable homes have greater need of such programs due to inadequate education, lower-quality schools, lack of employment opportunities, and greater exposure to violence which can cause physical and psychological harm and skill deficiencies (Koball et. al, 2011). Giving priority to those who are at greater risk would focus the limited funding on those for whom the program would make the biggest impact.

Furthermore, although all youth living in high violence community and poverty may be considered at-risk, priority may instead be placed on youth who are not enrolled in college. It could be argued that college-bound youth are less at-risk and less in need of the program than youth who are not enrolled in university. According to the exit survey, 38 percent of program participants were planning on attending college in the fall (n=328). Additionally, many college-bound participants did not complete the program. According to administrative data, 23 youth (11 percent) were terminated from the program due to returning to school. In the surveys, both youth and employers indicated that although jobs were offered at the end of the program, many students were unable to take advantage of the opportunity. (The employer survey did not specify whether the school in question was high school or college).

The selection process may have contributed to high mean scores for program participants. Participating youth took the initiative to enroll in a summer jobs program and may have already been high scorers on measures of attitudes toward employment, attitudes toward violence, conflict resolution, and self-esteem. Lead agencies should be instructed to prioritize hiring youth in need or at-risk, as they may benefit more from access to employment and mentoring.

Coordinating with high schools could help agencies identify at-risk youth and youth who would benefit from this program.

Enhance employment component

YEP followed several of the principles of effective youth employment programs (Partee, 2003) including providing caring, knowledgeable adult mentors; stressing the importance of community service and community engagement; and encouraging youth as community services resources. However, there is room for improvement on implementation quality. The program should enhance its training and use data, such as the findings in this report, to improve program performance.

The job readiness training could be improved by making the training more interactive. According to many youth participants (n=212), training should be more hands on, such as having more practice interviews. Many youth (n=81) thought the trainers should spend more time on concrete job skills, such as creating resumes and cover letters, computer skills, and job searching.

According to the pre- and post-assessment, there was an only a slight increase in positive attitudes toward employment. On the exit survey, a number of youth participants (n=59) indicated that their job was not a good match for their skills. Mentors and staff should encourage education as a means to obtain jobs the youth desire, especially positions requiring skills and licensing, and career advancement. For instance, many youth expressed interest in nursing, but that field would require youth to have a higher level of education and training than they have at this age.

Enhance mentoring component

According to the pre- and post-assessment, there was a reduction in mean score for attitudes toward violence and conflict resolution. If the program is to have a positive impact in those areas, all mentors should be trained in discussing conflict and violence and make a concerted effort to talk about those issues with their mentees. Mentors can have a positive impact on youth violence prevention and youth crime reduction (Sullivan and Darrick, 2012, p. 216-28). Mentors can teach young people conflict resolution skills, encourage positive attitudes towards employment, and develop youths' self-esteem.

The program should ensure that mentor training focuses on appropriate tactics to improve youth attitudes and behaviors. The program could also include a survey in which mentors describe which program topics from the pre- and post-assessment they discussed with the youths so that the focus of youth-mentor meetings and the relationship of mentoring to target behaviors can be evaluated.

Conclusion

According to lead agency administrative data, 3,322 youth applied to the program, 1,663 were accepted, and 1,490 were assigned a mentor. A total of 1,564 completed job readiness training, and 1,236 completed employment.

The youth participants of the program were very satisfied with the job readiness trainings. Youth enjoyed learning job readiness skills, as well as interacting with peers, trainers, and mentors. However, youth suggested that the training should be more interactive and more organized. They also wanted to spend more time on resumes, cover letters, and job searches.

Youth participant scores on attitudes toward employment, attitudes toward violence, conflict resolution, self-esteem, and contact with the police were measured before and after the program. There were small increases in mean scores in attitudes towards employment, self-esteem, and contact with the police and slight decreases in attitudes towards violence and conflict resolution. However, overall, youth participants had high mean scores at the beginning and end of the program. The youth with lower initial scores increased their mean scores in attitudes towards employment, attitudes towards violence, self-esteem, conflict resolution, and number of contacts with the police.

Almost all youth participants were satisfied with their job tasks, job supervision, their mentor, and the program overall. Most thought their job was a good match for them and that the job training prepared them or their job. Most youth were supervising children, doing janitorial work, or engaged in community outreach. A majority used the skills of time management, dressing appropriately for the job, and professional communication. Most YEP participants thought their work benefitted the agency or company for which they were employed and most stated that they would use what they learned to secure another job.

The majority of employers were satisfied with the program and communication with YEP staff and participants. Most employers were recruited by a community agency. A majority of employers either hired the youth after the program or would have hired them if they were able to do so. Almost all employers were interested in being an employer for the program in the future.

Mentors in the program were very satisfied with the mentor training. However, they recommended that the training be more interactive. At the end of the program, mentors rated the mentoring component, employment component, and staff support as good. Mentors reported having a close and positive relationship with their mentees and almost all were satisfied with the matching of the youth with them as a mentor. A majority of mentors believed they made a difference in their mentees' lives. Almost all mentors stated that they were satisfied with their experience as a mentor, had learned about themselves through mentoring, and were interested in being a mentor again. Mentors suggested increasing the duration of the program.

Coordinators and managers were satisfied with their training and the training of the instructor-mentors. Most coordinators and managers rated highly the employment component and the mentor components. Some recommended increasing the duration of the program.

Program improvements should include:

- A focus on recruitment of youth who are at-risk and in need of services offered.
- Enhancing the employment component through interactive trainings and job matching.
- More purposeful interactions between the mentors and youth with a focus on conflict resolution
- Augmenting the evaluation tools of the program.

While further evaluation, with increased participant data collection is needed, and there are opportunities for further impact, the program as a whole appears promising.

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Appendix: Pre- and post-assessment

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM
Pre- and Post-Assessment

INSTRUCTIONS: Please create a unique ID number using the first letter of your first name and the first letter of your last name followed by your date of birth.
For example, John Smith born January 31, 1995 would be ID# J – S – 01 – 31.

First letter of first name	First letter of last name	*Month* of birth	*Day* of birth
_____	_____	_____ _____	_____ _____

Please indicate:
CVPP Community:_____

Today's date:_____

☐ Pre/Before program start ☐ Post/After program disenrollment
☐ New to program ☐ Prior participant
☐ Male ☐ Female

INSTRUCTIONS: Please circle a response that best matches your agreement with the following statements.

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	I am not quite ready to handle a part-time job.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I have enough skills to do a job well.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I know I can succeed at work.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I would take almost any kind of job to get money.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I admire people who get by without working.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	The only good job is one that pays a lot of money.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Working hard at a job will pay off in the end.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Most jobs are dull and boring.	1	2	3	4	5

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	If I walk away from a fight, I'd be a coward ("chicken").	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I don't need to fight because there are other ways to deal with being mad.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	It's okay to hit someone who hits you first.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	If a kid teases me, I usually cannot get him/her to stop unless I hit him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	If I really want to, I can usually talk someone out of trying to fight with me.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	If I refuse to fight, my friends will think I'm afraid.	1	2	3	4	5

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Sometimes you have to physically fight to get what you want.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Being a part of a team is fun.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Helping others makes me feel good.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I get mad easily.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I do whatever I feel like doing.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	When I am mad, I yell at people.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I always like to do my part.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	It is important to do your part in helping at home.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Sometimes I break things on purpose.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	If I feel like it, I hit people.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Helping others is very satisfying.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I like to help around the house.	1	2	3	4	5

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal par with others.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	All in all I am inclined to feel that I'm a failure.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I am able to do things as well as most other people.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I take a positive attitude toward myself.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I wish I could have more respect for myself.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I certainly feel useless at times.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	At times I think that I am no good at all.	1	2	3	4	5

	In the past 3 months….	None	Once	Twice	3 times	3+ times
1.	How often have the police brought you home?	1	2	3	4	5
2.	How often have you gotten a ticket or citation for curfew, loitering, drinking?	1	2	3	4	5
3.	How often have you been arrested for a crime, like theft, drugs, assault, disorderly conduct?	1	2	3	4	5

Program participants: Please return to program staff

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