



Peer to Peer Training Youth Engagement Strategies

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Youth Employment Services



Goal: Identify strategies for recruitment, onboarding, and retention of youth and young adults to increase engagement in employment and education support programs.

Outline:

YES Duluth Services

Funding Streams

Youth Served

Recruitment

Onboarding

Retention

Success Story: OSY

Success Story: ISY

Program Strengths and Challenges



Services

YES Duluth provides employment and education counseling to youth and young adults, to support their learning in Work Readiness and Leadership Development, Financial Literacy, exploration of Career Pathways, education systems and Labor Market Information.

Education and Training

- Support and incentives to assist with completion of High School Diploma and GED programs
 - Public high schools, charter high school, alternative learning high school and adult education
- Post-secondary training exploration, supports and tuition assistance
 - Community colleges and universities in Duluth and Superior, WI

Employment Services

- Paid Work Experience
- Job Skills/Work Readiness Training
- Individualized career exploration assessments and guidance
- Job seeker services including job search, resume writing and interview preparation

Supportive Services

- Supportive mentoring
- Referrals to community resources
- Financial supports such as transportation, cell phone reimbursements and clothing for work



Funding

Grant Funded Programs	
Minnesota Youth Program	\$143,623
WIOA Youth (40% In-School and 60% Out-of-School)	\$310,307 (2 year)
Youth at Work	\$75,000
TANF Youth	\$13,000
Youth Support Services	\$25,000
Total	\$566,930

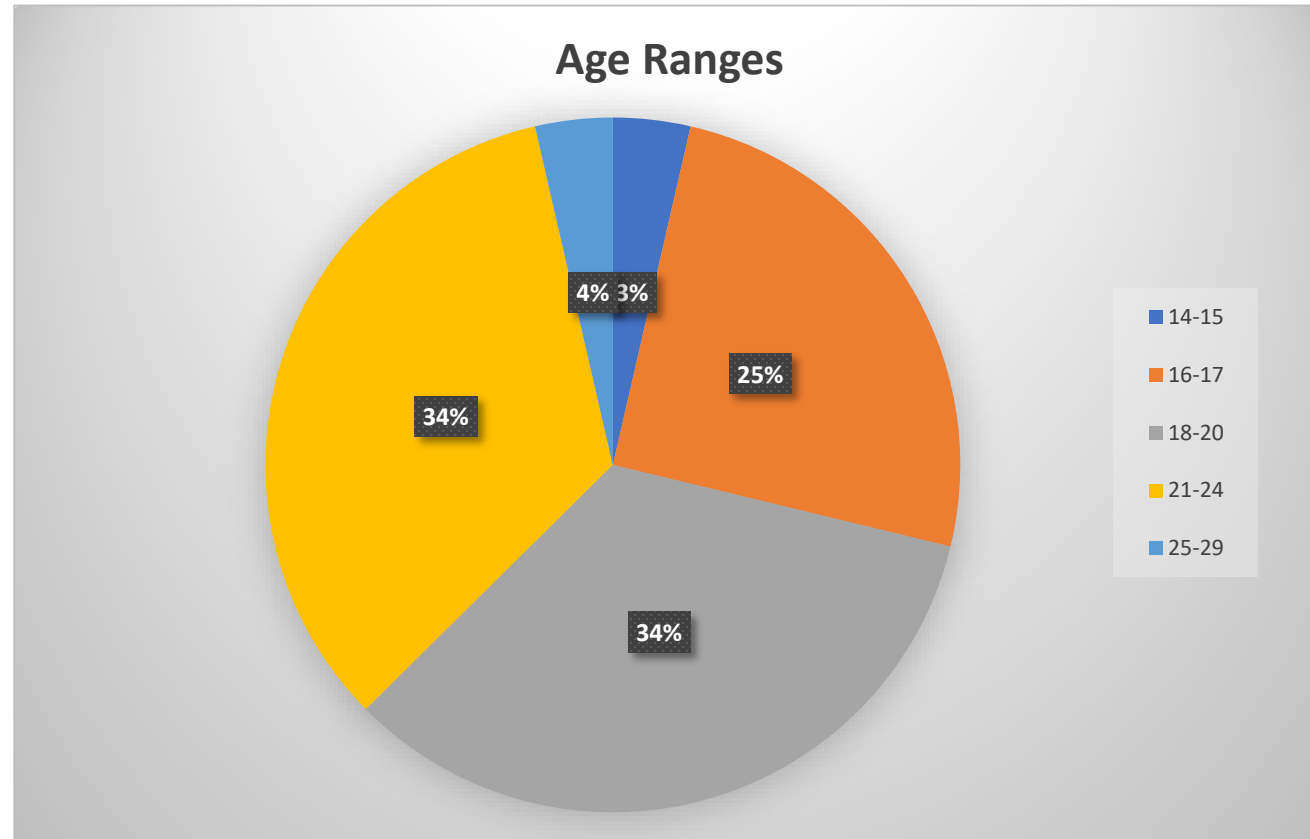
Other Funding – Contract for Services Provided	
Pre-ETS (fee for service)	Up to \$150,000 (2 year)



PY22



Youth Served in 2022



160 participants served by YES Duluth
Average cost per participant=\$4,500



Recruitment Strategies



Meeting youth where they are at: Recruitment

- Relationship building through Individual Assistance
- Presence where youth and potential partners gather
 - Educating the community about our program
 - Flexible, comfortable meeting spaces
- Adapting to digital needs

Creating community partnerships

Key Partners

• Youth Serving Agencies

Life House, Family Freedom Center/Neighborhood Youth Services, Valley Youth Center, Boys and Girls Club, SOAR Career Solutions

• Education System

ISD 709: Secondary, special education and alternative ed counselors, Adult Education, social workers, and teachers

Post-secondary institutions: Lake Superior College, UMD, St Scholastica, Northwood Tech (WI), UWS

• Employers and Industry Partners

Reverse referrals, industry-specific host sites and events

• Community Mentors

Community Service Coordinator, Community Liaisons



Onboarding Strategies



Meeting youth where they are at: Onboarding

- **Leveraging community partnerships**
 - Following the lead of key mentors and care teams
- **Ease and efficiency in enrollment**
 - Creating a user friendly, rapid response process
- **Communication and collection methods**
 - Flexible and up to date communication methods with a focus on relationship building

Retention Strategies



Meeting youth where they are at: Retention

- **Leveraging community partnerships**
 - Wrap-around approach with school staff and program staff through MOUs, communication and resource sharing

- **Communication methods**
 - Remaining flexible with communication methods including texting, third party communication and presence in partner agencies and host sites

- **Supports and incentives**
 - Supporting continued stabilization in housing and basic needs
 - Incentivizing engagement and progress in education goals

Success Story: OSY



Jesse was referred to YES Duluth by Life House staff in 2018. He was in the process of transitioning out of in-patient treatment for chemical dependency. Jesse's focus was on staying sober, finding housing and employment, and exploring his options in the trades. Jesse was enrolled in the Youth at Work grant while he participated in paid Work Experience through Life House. After securing stable housing, Jesse transitioned to paid Work Experience with the Street Maintenance department at the City of Duluth. This Work Experience inspired Jesse to examine the requirements to enter the CDL program at Lake Superior College. It was concluded that Jesse's driving record disqualified him from entering the CDL training program until 2022. Over the course of two years, Jesse worked his way up from subsidized Work Experience, to seasonal employment with the city, to unsubsidized employment in the aviation sector in Duluth. Despite the challenge to stay engaged while Jesse found success in employment during the long wait to be eligible for CDL training, YES Duluth staff were able to stay connected through support services and regular check-ins. In early 2022, Jesse completed the CDL program with tuition and support provided by the WIOA OSY grant. He obtained unsubsidized employment related to his training, was exited from the WIOA and Youth at Work grants, and has four months remaining of follow up services with YES Duluth.



Success Story: ISY



Danielle enrolled in YES Duluth under the Minnesota Youth Program grant in November 2020. At enrollment, she was at risk of dropping out of her junior year in high school due to her struggles with distance learning. Through regular home visits by her YES Duluth case manager, Danielle was encouraged to stay engaged with online classes through Spring of 2021. During this time, Danielle enrolled in the WIOA ISY grant, earned her driver's permit, and participated in a paid Work Experience. Once school reopened for in-person learning in September 2021, Danielle was committed to 'upping her game' with attendance and classroom assignments. She regularly accessed tutoring support in the afterschool program and achieved honor roll for one of the quarters her senior year. During the Spring of 2022, with the encouragement of her school guidance counselor and YES Duluth case manager, Danielle completed scholarship applications and the FAFSA, and was awarded three scholarships which will help cover her tuition and fees at Northwood Technical College in Superior, WI. Danielle is living in the dorms at college and is working through her 1st semester in a 2-year degree program. She is proud of her achievements and looking forward to completing a transfer degree as she makes a decision about which 4-year degree program to work toward.



Program Strengths

- ✓ Meeting youth where they are through the strength of community partnerships
- ✓ Focus on Relationship Building = Positive Participant Feedback
- ✓ Investment in professional development training for staff: Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and Trauma Informed Care

Program Challenges

- ✓ Balancing education and employment goals in the face of workforce shortages
- ✓ COVID's effect on education equity, credit recovery, alternative learning and GED services
- ✓ Performance measures, credential attainment and career pathways focus for the hardest to serve
- ✓ Outreach to out of school youth






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