Our Emerging Workforce in New York State

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Council Overvview:

The NYS Council on Children and Families acts as a neutral body to coordinate the state health, education and human services systems to ensure that all children and families in New York State have the opportunity to reach their potential. While the Council neither funds nor operates programs, it engages in both interagency policy development and research. The Council responds to emerging issues by convening the appropriate agencies to bring their collective expertise in the development of strategies to address the problem.

OUR EMERGING WORKFORCE IN NEW YORK STATE

February 2003

Dear Friends:

A fundamental goal of Council members is to help youth become prepared for their eventual economic self-sufficiency. This touchstone is essential for the future well-being of our youth and our state. This special report, one in a series of New York State Touchstones/KIDS Count Special Reports, is intended to provide a wide audience of readers with a broad base of information regarding the issues surrounding our emerging workforce with a particular emphasis on ways your community can share in the responsibility of helping our youth successfully transition to adulthood.

As our economy becomes more global, we must provide our youth with a careful balance of educational opportunities that help them build academic and vocational skills useful for future careers as well as offer them rich developmental experiences that cultivate personal growth. These opportunities will allow our youth to master technical skills that enable them to seek jobs and workplace skills that will help them become flexible and able to adjust to new jobs as the workplace changes. This cannot be done solely in homes, schools, or businesses. Instead, partnerships that build on the expertise from all these areas are needed.

I invite you to read this report, share it with others, and use it to begin discussions with colleagues and community partners—creatively challenge one another to identify ways we can work together to further enhance the quality of well-being for our youth in New York State.

Sincerely,

Alana M. Sweeny

Alana M. Sweeny
Executive Director

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Introduction

"Youth will be prepared for their eventual economic self-sufficiency."

New York State Touchstones

This is a valued and widely accepted goal for the children of New York State (1) and as our youth progress through adolescence, we have a collective responsibility to guide them successfully to adulthood where they will be able to assume roles as contributing citizens and capable members of the workforce. If adolescents are to achieve self-sufficiency, we must provide them with a careful balance of educational opportunities that help them build academic and vocational skills useful for future careers as well as offer them developmental experiences that cultivate personal growth and help with the transition to work.

The opportunities and resources that enhance youths' healthy development and promote their positive outcomes have been categorized into a variety of frameworks, including: protective and risk factors related to youth, family, peers and community; lists of characteristics that reflect a child's internal and external assets; and personal qualities such as character, competence, confidence, and contribution. Regardless of the youth development model favored, a consistent set of elements emerges from these frameworks as necessary components for healthy youth development—a sense of belonging; meaningful relationships; access to role models; safe environments; and being held to high expectations (2,3,4). These components, coupled with sound academic skills can effectively prepare our youth for their role in the workplace. Moreover, applying a youth development approach to workforce preparation fosters those essential personal traits that enhance youths' potential for long-term success. Employers recognize the value of these traits, often referred to as soft skills, employability skills or prosocial behaviors, and have acknowledged that employees with excellent technical skills who lack these traits are unlikely to be hired or, if hired, unlikely to advance (5).

So, who should assume the daunting task of preparing our youth, building their skills, and providing them opportunities that will allow them to develop into self-sufficient adults? Research and experience make it quite clear—we all should (2, 6). Clearly, families play a key role in sharing values pertaining to education, careers and self-sufficiency. Also, schools are viewed as the most likely community entity to bear responsibility for workforce development since educational attainment plays a vital role in self-
sufficiency and frequently serves as a proxy for economic well-being. However, the "community-at-large" must support families and the educational system. This requires businesses, civic, religious, recreational, health and social service agencies to become involved in the task of workforce preparation. State and local entities are assuming their responsibility and exercising their authority by working with communities to build collaborations through local Workforce Investment Boards, Youth Bureaus, One-Stop Partners and various public/private initiatives. This community approach is important since findings from youth development research consistently provide evidence that caring relationships, mentoring and role modeling promote positive outcomes for youth regardless of where they occur (4, 7).
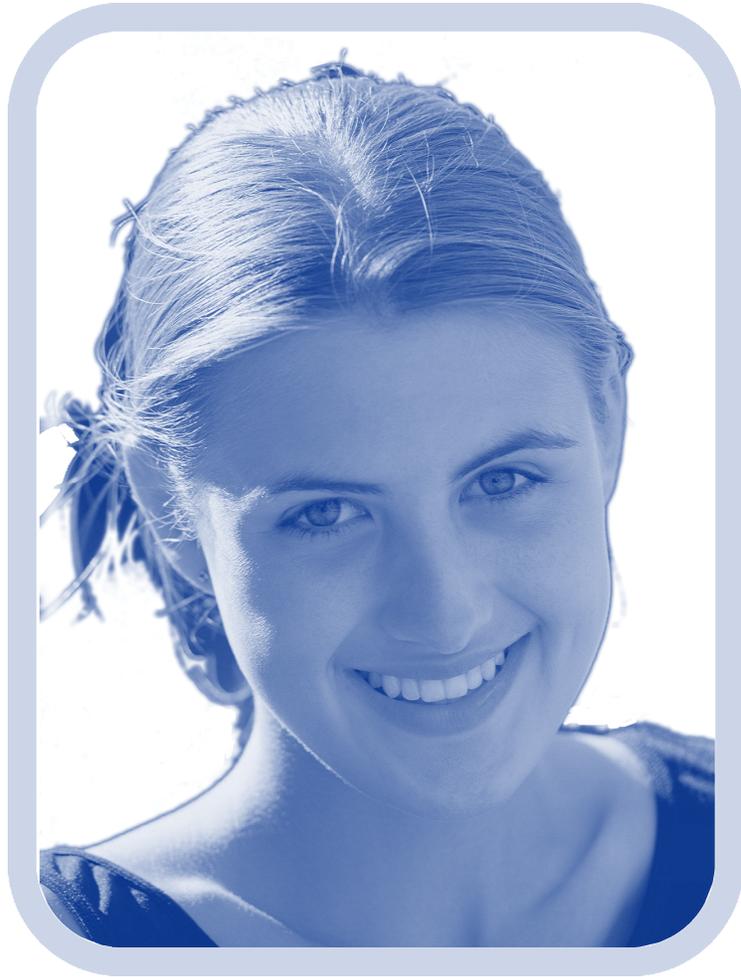
Who is part of the emerging workforce?

When one considers who represents the emerging workforce, it is common to view those exiting the educational system as the most apparent new members of this group. While recent graduates are a definite part of our emerging workforce, it has been noted that the age range for this group is considerably broader than 18 to 21 year olds. Demographers and researchers often refer to anyone between the ages of 16 and 25 as potential new members of the workforce, since it frequently takes some time beyond postsecondary education and/or training to settle on a career path (8). The lower end of this continuum was recently extended to 14 year olds through the Workforce Investment Act and the Emerging Worker Subcommittee[1], a component of the New York State Workforce Investment Board, extended this further to include all youth under 21, including youth who are disabled or out of school.

The Emerging Workforce

❍ Based on a review of the most recent Census information, the profile of our emerging workforce is changing. Nationally, it is expected that there will be a 21 percent increase in young people between 1995 and 2010 and of these children, approximately one-fourth will be born into poverty with many being immigrants or children of immigrants (9).

❍ Similarly, New York State Census results indicate there was an increase of children by approximately 10 percent between 1990 and 2000 with the majority of those youth representing minority groups. Of particular note is the increased number of children in New York City where the population of individuals under 18 years old increased by about one quarter million children (increase of 253,551 children) (9).

❍ However, during the time period from July 1, 1990 through July 1, 1999, the population of emerging workers, individuals, 20 to 24 year olds, decreased by 20 percent while the number of persons 25 to 34 years old decreased by 17 percent. This decrease may be offset somewhat by international in-migration—net migration to New York from other countries (10).

❍ During the Fall of 2000, 400,386 students were enrolled in special education. This represented approximately 12 percent of the public school population. This does not include students with disabilities enrolled in State Agency programs or in residential programs when they are placed by the local Social Service Districts, Courts or State agencies. Of those students in special education, 7.7 percent received services in separate settings. (11).

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[1]The Emerging Worker Subcommittee is composed of a comprehensive group representing state agencies, community groups and business leaders.

New York State Population by Age and Sex, 1990 and 2000

Age	Percent (left chart)								Age	Percent (right chart)

85+
80-84
75-79
70-75
65-69
60-64
55-59
50-54
45-49
40-44
35-39
30-34
25-29
20-24
15-19
10-14
5-9
0-4

4 3 2 1 0 1 2 3 4
Percent

85+
80-84
75-79
70-75
65-69
60-64
55-59
50-54
45-49
40-44
35-39
30-34
25-29
20-24
15-19
10-14
5-9
0-4

4 3 2 1 0 1 2 3 4
Percent

■ Male   ▧ Female

What career paths do our youth take as they transition from adolescence to adulthood?

Typically, individuals' career decisions at this point in their lives consist of pursuing postsecondary education, entering the military, or assuming a role in the workforce. This decision is important on both a personal and community level, since it often sets the direction for a youth's future as well as influences the quality of the workforce where youth reside, especially in those regions where youth decide to seek employment directly following high school or decide to terminate their education prior to high school graduation.

Career Paths

❍ Studies have shown that parental education is a powerful predictor of adolescents' vocational development (13).

❍ It is well documented that family socio-economic background influences whether youth enroll in postsecondary education and the type of postsecondary education they access. Graduates from high socio-economic backgrounds are nearly twice as likely to enroll, as are youth of low socio-economic backgrounds. Family socio-economic background also influences the type of institution one attends with youth from lower levels attending two-year rather than four-year institutions (14).

❍ Fifty-one percent of New York State public school students who graduated in 2001 planned to attend a 4-year institution while another 26 percent intended to enroll in a 2-year institution (11).

❍ Approximately seven percent (7.2%) of New York State public school students graduating in 2001 intended to pursue employment following high school—this represents 10,213 new members to the workforce, with most being minority students (11).

❍ The percent of public high school graduates in New York State who decided to go directly to the workplace following high school tends to vary by geographic region. During the 2000-2001 school year, approximately one in five high school graduates from the counties of Hamilton (19.2%) and Washington (20.5%) intended to directly enter the workforce following graduation. One in four (25.2%) of the students in Cortland intended to seek employment directly following high school (11).

New York State Class of 2001 High School Graduates' Plans Following Graduation

Category	Percent
Other	11.6
Employment	7.2
Military	2.5
Other Postsecondary	1.5
2 Yr. Postsecondary	26.2
4 Yr. Postsecondary	50.8
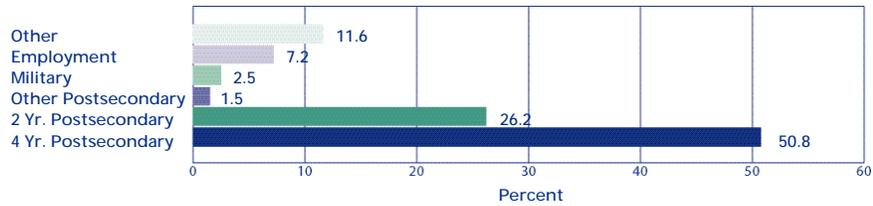
Percent

Source: School Report Card Database for Public Schools in New York State, 2001 (11).

While a large percentage of youth intend to pursue a postsecondary education, we are aware that many will alter those plans and not earn degrees. This is particularly true for low-income and minority students who are often less prepared for higher education due to the courses they take while in high school (14).

How well prepared is the emerging workforce?

"The most fundamental public policy impacting the supply of workers is education."

This statement (15) reminds us how important the mastery of academic skills is to workforce quality as well as the quality of life for each student and his/her ability to be self-sufficient. The connection between school achievement and success in the workforce is unmistakably clear—workers who have a record of academic success, as measured by high achievement test scores, are unemployed less and earn more than workers with lower scores (16).

The importance of education in workforce preparation is underscored by the Emerging Worker Subcommittee goal that states "youth are enabled to meet New York's education/learning standards." In an effort to increase school standards, improve student achievement and enhance the quality of the emerging workforce, the New York State Board of Regents has modified assessment methods by designing exams that are carefully aligned with New York State standards. This modification allows us to obtain a more valid measure of how well students master the standards.

Regarding New York State student assessments (11):

❍ During the 2000-2001 school year, sixty-one percent of public school fourth grade students met the standard for the New York State Assessment Program (NYSAP) in English Language Arts; approximately seven in ten (69%) of these students met the standard for the NYSAP in mathematics.

❍ Forty-six percent of public school eighth grade students met the standard for the NYSAP in English Language Arts, with 2 in five (40%) doing the same in mathematics.

Regarding new standards (11):

Students entering ninth grade are required to pass Regents examinations in all required competency areas (i.e., English, Math, Science, Global History, U.S. History, and a second language) in order to receive a high school diploma. The exception to this is any student who qualifies under Section 504 of the Rehabilitative Act.

❍ In 2000, 90 percent of tested students scored 55 or higher on the Regents English exam.

❍ Approximately three in four students tested (73%) scored 55 or higher on the Regents mathematics exam. Passing both exams is necessary for high school graduation.

❍ In 2000, 66 percent of students with disabilities passed the Reading Regents Competency Test (RCT); 69 percent passed the writing RCT and fifty-seven percent passed the mathematics RCT.

Business owners across the state view these more stringent requirements favorably and see this as a way to improve the skills of individuals who decide to enter the workforce immediately following high school (17).

Regarding high school completion:

Nationally, the high school completion level among young adults 25 to 29 years old was 88 percent while the college completion level was 29 percent (18).

A goal of the National Education Goal Panel was to increase to at least 90 percent, the percentage of 18-24 year olds who have a high school credential. In 1996, New York was one of 15 states to achieve this goal with 94 percent of individuals in this age group earning the credential. In 1990, 88 percent of this group had a credential, reflecting a 6 percent increase (19).

A certain percentage of the potential workforce in New York State does not complete its high school education leaving this group without a high school diploma or a General Education Diploma (GED).

- ❍ During the 2000-2001, 3.8 percent of New York State public high school students left school without earning a credential of any kind—a statistic consistent with previous years. (11).

- ❍ The areas with the highest percentages of students not earning a credential were Chemung County and New York City (6.5%); Seneca County (4.6%) and Clinton County (4.3%) (11).

- ❍ National statistics indicate the dropout rate among youth with disabilities varies considerably. Children identified as having an emotional disability were least likely to complete school (50%) while youth who were deaf were least likely to leave school (11%). Absenteeism and course failure were key predictors of school dropout among youth with disabilities (20).

- ❍ Approximately seven percent of New York students with disabilities left public school without completing requirements (11).

- ❍ Statewide, minority students, our growing future workforce, were more likely than white students to leave school without a credential (11).

2000-2001 Public School Annual Dropout Rates by Race/Ethnicity

	Black	Hispanic	American	Asian/Pacific	White	Total
■ Race/Ethnicity	6.2	7.0	6.5	2.9	2.1	3.8
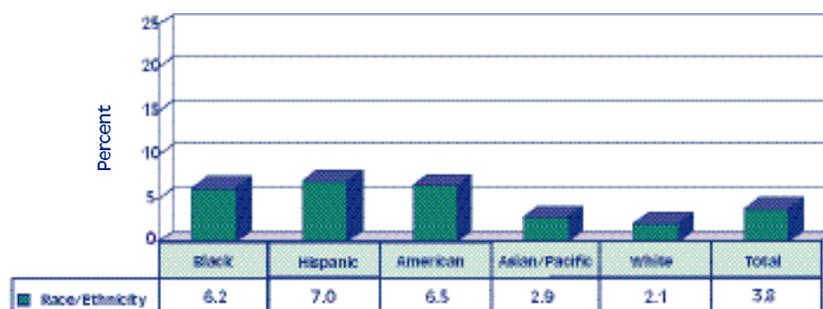
Source:A Report to the Governor and the Legislature on the Educational Status of the State's Schools, 2002 (11).

Numerous studies indicate students often drop out at critical transition points. Through work conducted by the US Department of Education Drop Out Prevention Center, we have learned that focusing on transition years can prevent students at risk of dropping out of school from actually leaving (21).

- ❍ A review of the research on transition programs finds that students are less likely to leave high school if they participate in programs that help them transition from the middle to high school.

- ❍ Effective strategies that aid students in their transition from middle to high school include the 9th grade academies, schools-within-schools and smaller learning communities.

Characteristics of effective dropout prevention programs are (22):

- ❍ School environments perceived as safe, orderly and non-threatening

- ❍ Staff that create "family atmospheres" and practice cultural sensitivity

- ❍ Schools with early identification of, and interventions for students at risk of dropping out—early identification, family involvement, clear instructional objectives and monitoring of student progress are effective elements for dropout prevention.

Regarding higher education:

- ❍ In New York State, about two in three (63%) first year community college students return to school for their second year while almost 8 in 10 (78%) freshmen at 4-year colleges/universities return for their sophomore year (23).

- ❍ Nationally, approximately two-thirds (63%) of the high school graduating class of 2000 was enrolled in colleges or universities in the fall (24).

- ❍ While postsecondary enrollments have increased, the proportion of college students completing degrees of any kind has remained flat and the extent that students are prepared for college varies considerably by race and family income with a higher percentage of qualified students being white and/or from higher income families. (14).

- ❍ Approximately four in ten (37%) students entering community colleges have attained a degree five years later. (14).

- ❍ About 32 percent of individuals age 16-24 earn a bachelors' degree or higher (14).

- ❍ Among youth with disabilities who had been out of high school 3 to 5 years, 27 percent enrolled in postsecondary schools compared to 68 percent of youth in the general population (20).

- ❍ A higher proportion of white high school graduates than minority students were enrolled (64% white, 56% black, 53% Hispanic) (20).

    Females talented in math noted their career choices were influenced by family members and educational opportunities (25).

- ❍ The number of minority students awarded degrees in math and science remained constant between 1990 and 1996. Encouraging interest in these areas will be important as the demand for employees in these fields increases (26).

- ❍ The Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSEP) is an example of how minority students can be encouraged to pursue careers in science and technology. CSTEP was designed to increase the enrollment and retention of underrepresented or economically disadvantaged undergraduate and graduate students in programs leading to professional licensure or to employment in scientific, technical, and health-related careers. CSTEP grants are awarded to postsecondary institutions with registered science, technical, or health-related

programs, and/or programs leading to professional licensure and which will provide program students with research opportunities and career-related internships, academic and career counseling, and enriched academic course work.

Percent of Math and Science Degrees Awarded

	1991	1996
All students	41	44
Minorities	43	43
Females	53	43
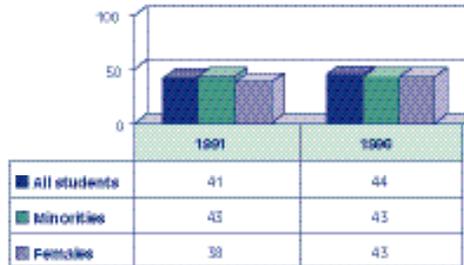
Source:National Center for Education Statistics, 2000 (26).

Suggestions for how participation among minorities might be increased include (27):

❍ Provide funding to schools for developing innovative community based recruitment efforts and compensate faculty for their involvement in these programs.

❍ Develop partnerships with colleges and universities, government (i.e. Department of Education) and foundations to develop and support pipeline initiatives and to coordinate the initiatives that already exist so more grass root level support exists between programs and students.

Levine & Nidiffer remind us of the importance of youth development principles when working with disadvantaged groups. Getting poor people prepared and into college "is retail, not wholesale, work in the sense that it requires intensive involvement with individuals rather than passing contact with larger numbers."

"In simplest terms, the recipe for getting to college is mentorship—one arm around one child. What mattered most is not carefully constructed educational policy but rather the intervention of one person. Sometimes the mentor was a loving relative; other times it was someone paid to offer expert advice. In either case, it was the human contact that made the difference" (28).

A review of the distribution of degrees deferred by ethnic category between 1990 and 2000 indicates an increased percentage of degrees conferred in all ethnic categories (29).

Percent of Adults Age 25 to 29 Who Earned a Bachelor's Degree by Ethnicity: 1990 to 2000

	Total	Whites	Blacks	Hispanics
1990	27.1	29.3	16.4	14.0
2000	33.0	36.2	20.6	15.4
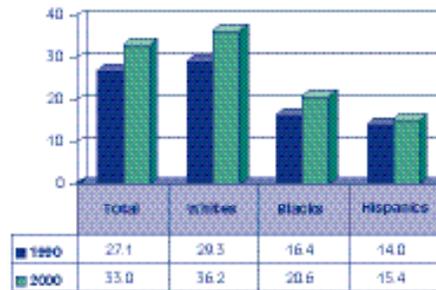
Source:National Center for Education Statistics (2001)

What programs are available to assist emerging workforce members and special needs groups?

Youth employment programs and youth development tenets seem like logical partners in workforce preparation since the transition to the workplace is a natural part of adolescents' progression to adulthood. However, the link between the two has not always been a solid one. In fact, many of the early youth employment programs designed to level the playing field for disadvantaged youth focused primarily on job placement and retention, which meant youth concerns beyond employment were addressed through referrals to other agencies and organizations. Research results indicate the outcomes from these programs tended to be short-term (29, 30).

Research of federally funded employment programs, such as Job Partnership Training Act (JPTA) programs, showed that narrowly-focused, time-limited employment and training programs did not result in long-term gains for young people. This was particularly the case for out-of-school youth. When the five-year earnings and employment outcomes of JPTA participants were examined, the analyses showed some positive short-term effects, however, JPTA failed to produce any significant long-term effects on earnings or employment rates. By the fifth year, individuals who had participated in the program had earnings and employment rates that were somewhat higher than those who did not participate; however, the higher earnings were not significant and could not be attributed to JPTA rather than chance alone (30). Critics of the research claimed that programs showed ineffective results due to poor program implementation and pointed out that those programs with more personal contact and youth-adult mentoring show effective results (30).

The programs described below are instrumental to workforce development since they enhance the academic and vocational skills learned in educational settings. Many of these programs help provide youth with the work skills, life skills, and supports necessary to succeed in the job market as well as expose them to an array of potential career opportunities—two goals of the Emerging Worker Subcommittee.

Workforce Investment Act

Attempts to incorporate lessons learned from earlier programs are evident in many of the current workforce development efforts, such as the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). WIA was established to integrate the types of services provided by the JPTA with the rest of the workforce development system[2] and was intended to build on previous programs designed for youth and adults who experience barriers to employment and/or further education (31).

A strength of WIA is its potential to serve as a means for system change since the legislation emphasizes elements that include employer engagement; integration of workforce resources; accountability through age-specific outcomes; and 'unified plans' that engage workforce, welfare, community colleges, and adult and vocational

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[2]Excluding educational programs funded through another source.

education (32). The local Workforce Investment Boards, which consist of local work-force stakeholders, can play an especially important role in this system change since board members have the ability to overcome regional fragmentation and ensure employer engagement.

Another strength of WIA is its clear goal to incorporate youth development principles into workforce preparation activities. Specifically, WIA emphasizes adult mentoring, leadership training, work-based training and age appropriate outcome measures through comprehensive, year-round services.

> **The following 10 program elements highlight the youth development approach within WIA:**
>
> ❍ tutoring study skills
> ❍ leadership development
> ❍ summer employment
> ❍ alternative school services
> ❍ comprehensive guidance
> ❍ supportive services
> ❍ occupational skills training
> ❍ work experience
> ❍ follow-up
> ❍ mentoring

Youth Councils

The Workforce Investment Act that requires that Youth Councils be established by each local Workforce Investment Board. The primary purposes of Youth Councils are to (1) provide expertise in youth policy and assist the Local Boards in developing and recommending local youth employment and training policy and practice; (2) broaden the youth employment and training focus in the community to incorporate a youth development perspective; (3) establish linkages with other organizations serving youth in the local area and (4) take into account a range of issues that can have an impact on the success of youth in the labor market. Essentially, Youth Councils ensure youth principles are incorporated into all local workforce preparation planning.

While workforce development tends to occur in schools and business settings, Youth Councils are broader in that they are community based and may include a number of community organizations beyond schools and businesses. The local Workforce Investment Board's focus on youth and Youth Councils provides opportunities to link learning that occurs in school and other settings (e.g., work-based learning, community special projects) in a more systemic way (32).

One-Stop Career Centers

The primary method of delivering services under WIA is through a system of One-Stop Centers designed to unify employment and training programs under a single customer-friendly umbrella (31). This is an effort to centrally locate information about the array of employment and training programs made available at the state, federal and local level and to appropriately link individuals to the services they need. These centers serve a combination of youth, adults and employers.

The One-Stop Center in Suffolk County has an area dedicated to youth through the Youth Career Center. The One-Stop is designed to provide youth with information, allow them access to state-of-the art technology and software appropriate for their age as well as help them build employment-seeking skills. A series of workshops are also available. For example, youth are instructed on how they can prepare for their future by learning how their course-taking patterns in high school influence their education and career options later in life. Youth enrolled in a WIA component are able to receive these services while private funding makes these services available to non-WIA youth. A variety of strategies are employed to increase youth participation, including monetary incentives and provision of transportation. In an effort to locate and identify out-of-school youth, linkages have been established with the Department of Social Services (youth applying for assistance), Criminal Justice, and school districts (lists of youth who have dropped out of school). This center was awarded the 2001 Workforce Development Award for Excellence by the National Association of Counties. The US Department of Labor has recommended that this center serve as a model when designing youth services.

A Success Story

Rocky, a 17-year-old Hispanic youth, dropped out of school in 10th grade but enrolled in a youth program in February 2001. Although he needs to work on his math and reading skills, Rocky enjoys computers and graphic arts. As a member of a youth program, Rocky is enrolled in GED classes and plans to take the GED exam. Future plans include attending community college to study computer programming. Rocky is quickly gaining work experience through two positions he obtained through the youth program. They include designing the web page for a community-based organization and working with a corporate Internet business. According to Rocky, the support of caring adults has made a difference in his life as he pursues educational and employment opportunities.

Youth Bureaus

Youth Bureaus play a key role in youth development across the state. Established in each county and many municipalities, the bureaus are designed to promote the physical and social well-being of youth and families through networks of youth service programs and professionals. Many Youth Bureaus are members of Youth Councils with some taking the lead in that initiative, serving as Youth Council Chairs.

❍ The West Seneca Youth Bureau partnered with other community service organizations to help renovate the interior of a church so it could be used for a community center and grade school. Volunteers now provide tutoring to the students (33).

❍ The Oswego Youth Bureau matches youth with employment opportunities in city departments and provides orientation that highlights work ethics—soft skills. Youth are able to participate in Counselor-in-Training programs that allow 15 and 16 year olds to work part-time at summer camps with the remainder of their time spent participating in skill development training. Older youth can become full-time counselors at the summer camp. The bureau also conducts a variety of youth development programs that lay the groundwork for youths' successful participation in employment opportunities. These programs include the *Leadership Oswego County Youth Program*, *Teen Institute*, the *Youth Court Program* and *Reality Check*, a youth empowerment program against tobacco.

- The Colonie Youth Bureau has worked extensively to develop linkages with employment resources and created flexible access points so youth are able to learn about and participate in bureau programs. For example, youth may access the bureau's website, learn about services in community newspapers, and meet staff who are located in youth's schools. Staff are available in schools during the school year and work closely with BOCES staff and guidance counselors. The bureau also offers a 9-unit curriculum for youth with barriers to work. The curriculum is a structured course that helps youth develop the range of soft and hard skills that make them valuable employees as well as educates youth about employee responsibilities (e.g., legal and illegal interview questions, job rights).

School-Work Collaborations

A number of programs that have been made available through schools have allowed students to "sample" employment. That is, students are able to explore career options by participating in activities such as internships, fieldwork, and special community projects. These programs allow students to apply their academic skills to the work-place while building those "soft" skills that are so important to employers. Essentially, work serves as a means for students to develop a broad array of life skills. An example of such an initiative is School-to-Work.

School-to-Work Act

The School-to-Work Initiative was an early initiative designed to better prepare youth for either postsecondary education or employment opportunities, depending on youths' preferences. The initiative, which served middle and high school youth, involved three core elements—school-based learning, work-based learning and connecting activities. There are several lessons to be learned from this program that could be applied to current school and business linkages. Strategies associated with successful school-to-work initiatives indicate program planners should consider aspects that motivate participation among youth and employers (34, 35):

- Screen youth carefully for interest in the target occupations—this will decrease student dropouts, which in turn, will promote employer satisfaction.

- Cluster youth in key courses to make integration of worksite and academic/ vocational education easier—grouping youth with similar career interests allows instructors to make instruction more meaningful and relevant to a particular career.

- Obtain employer input into curriculum revisions.

- Incorporate employer incentives (e.g., guaranteed continuation in the work-site placement, tuition assistance, priority in permanent hiring) into school-to-work programs.

- Create linkages between secondary and postsecondary education by carefully defining career pathways then match pathways to programs.

- As appropriate, delay intensive work-site activities to improve matching of youth with workplace experiences—job shadow or visit more than one employer before making job assignments.

- Identify a third-party (e.g., chamber of commerce, private industry council, trade association) to recruit employers.

- Engage large, well-known employers to recruit other employers.

- Coordinate employer recruitment among communities (e.g., districts, schools or community-based organizations) within a region—this will decrease competition for employer commitments and burden on local firms.

❍   Train mentors—mentors familiar with adolescent behavior and issues are able to more effectively encourage and guide students.

Career Clusters

Making a career choice can be overwhelming to youth given the diversity of careers they can consider. One way that allows youth to focus their interests and learn about their choices is through career clusters. Career clusters are a way to group occupations and broad industries by common core competencies.

❍   It is expected that dividing the job market into Career Clusters can help students view job possibilities more clearly.

❍   We know that those who explore career options and find the best match are more likely to be satisfied and have higher job retention.

❍   The U.S. Department of Education has established 16 broad Career Clusters that reflect a new direction for education. Each cluster consists of all entry-level through professional-level occupations in a broad industry area. Each cluster includes both the academic and technical skills and knowledge needed for further education and careers. Clusters provide an ideal organizing tool to assist educators, counselors and parents in their work with students to identify their interests and goals for the future (36).

Career Clusters

Agriculture & Natural Resource
Architecture & Construction
Education & Training
Government & Public Administration
Hospitality & Tourism
Information Technology
Manufacturing
Scientific Research/Engineering
Law & Public Administration

Retail/Wholesale Sales & Service
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics
Arts, A/V Technology & Communications
Business & Administration
Finance
Health Science
Human Services
Retail/Wholesale Sales & Service
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

Gear-Up

Gear up (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) is an initiative that introduces disadvantaged students to the possibilities of higher education. The program is designed for 7th and 8th grade students who are provided tutoring and mentoring services that prepare them academically for college, increase career awareness, and introduce them to the "culture" of higher education. In addition to services for youth, Gear Up sponsors staff development initiatives through statewide conferences. For example, workshops are offered to teachers working out of their area of certification to familiarize them with basic concepts and instructional strategies that can enhance their teaching. Parents are also involved—explaining the

importance of Regents diplomas, inviting them to high school and college orientation sessions, and providing bilingual materials are examples of how parents are included in activities.

Community College Collaborations

Community colleges play a major role in workforce development in that many two-year institutions are partnering with businesses to provide job training. Company-specific curricula are being developed and used at community colleges in an effort to prepare a skilled workforce for jobs with local businesses.

This role has been termed "entrepreneurial college."

Community colleges can become an important option for career paths since (37):

- ❍ They are local, rather than distances from students' homes;

- ❍ They have a strong link with local businesses;

- ❍ They do not cream most capable students, rather they work with students of varying levels; and

- ❍ They are local institutions with strong ties to local legislatures and regional institutions.

Tech Prep

Tech Prep is an example of collaboration between schools and community colleges. This program is designed to integrate academic and technical instruction during 11th and 12th grade; it combines two years of applied learning in areas of math, science or technology in high school with a two-year related program in college, requiring a cooperative effort between secondary and post-secondary institutions. An evaluation of Tech Prep programs in New York State found (38):

- ❍ When Tech Prep students were compared to their non- Tech Prep peers, Tech Prep students:
    - — were absent from high school fewer times, and
    - — were more likely to pass the mathematics and science Regents Competency Tests.

- ❍ Among students graduating with local diplomas, Tech Prep students performed better than their peers in their first and second years of college.

- ❍ Among students graduating with Regents diplomas, Tech Prep students achieved lower first year college GPAs than their non Tech Prep peers. However, by the end of the second year of college, Tech Prep students obtained GPAs that were higher than those of the non Tech Prep counterparts.

- ❍ Tech Prep coordinates education and training in high schools and postsecondary institutions to allow students to proceed smoothly from courses that are less complex to more demanding areas.

Task Force on Employment and Training for Court-Involved Youth

The Task Force on Employment and Training for Court-Involved Youth was formed to increase collaboration between the juvenile justice system and the employment and training system (39). This link is particularly important for youth, since it has been shown that programs providing work-based opportunities and building skills

necessary for job-seeking and retention are the most effective treatments for court-involved youth (39, 40). Meaningful, gainful employment has been shown to be related to youthful offenders "maturing out" of delinquent behavior (41).

Commonalities found among effective employment programs for youth offenders were (40):

Commitment to rehabilitation

Integrated education

Support structures

Continuum of care

Outcome measurement

Accountability

Collaboration

Business Efforts

Businesses recognize the need for a quality workforce and are finding creative solutions to address their needs.

Business Linkages

❍   Boeing is attempting to boost hiring by providing paid-on-the-job training. Applicants who meet certain criteria can receive three months paid training then decide whether they want to accept the job (42).

❍   Wegmans, a chain of grocery stores in western New York, began an innovative three-year program for youth that offers over 1500 hours of paid, school-supervised work experience, supported by related instruction through school. Students combine their high school studies with hands-on structured work experiences related to their career objectives. Students may begin their work experience at Wegmans at the age of 15. With the support of a Wegmans Advocate and department manager/mentor, students complete a customer service experience and are given guidance to meet the grades and attendance requirements for each level of the program. Key learning experiences include customer service, teamwork, valuing differences, product knowledge/rotation, food safety, and department profitability concepts. They are required to complete a senior project in addition to the 1500+ hours. Students who successfully complete the program will receive (1) a Certificate of Employability or Certificate of Completion; (2) a full-time employment opportunity; (3) Wegmans Scholarship Award; and (4) Wegmans Career Intern candidate eligibility for college bound students (43).

❍   Another youth program designed by Wegmans is targeted for at-risk youth—individuals unlikely to graduate from high school. Wegmans provides funding for youth advocates, part-time jobs, and workplace mentors for students. To date, the program has helped more than 800 young people get through school, get jobs and, in many cases, go on to college. Up to 80 percent of the program participants have graduated from high school. This program served as the model for Teen Works, an employment training initiative funded through New York State Department of Labor (43).

❍ Macy's is involved in a youth development program where they partner with the YMCA to deliver an eight-week course on opportunities in retailing to young women, identified by YMCA staff as "at-risk." The purpose of this program is to expose youth to beginning career options in the retail industry. Due to the success of this program, Macy's hired several program participants as employees (44).

❍ Bell Helicopter decided to identify individuals collecting unemployment insurance or who were in low paying, dead-end jobs and train them in partnership with the community college. The company screened applicants, tested their skills, designed special curriculum and set up new, nontraditional assembly teams to ensure employee success. As a result, Bell reports a 78 percent drop in turnover and a 181 percent rise in productivity (45).

Other Approaches

❍ A number of communities, including Jefferson-Lewis, have involved youth in asset-based community development efforts with one such effort called Community Youth Mapping. Essentially, youth assist economic developers in mapping assets—individuals, institutions, and physical characteristics with maps eventually used to guide economic development plans. This strategy allows youth to participate in meaningful activities while learning more about their community (45, 46). Following training sponsored by the US Department of Labor, a Youth Council in the New York region used the community youth mapping approach. Youth gathered information and compiled it into a directory that highlighted services, job opportunities and general resources for youth (46, 47, 48).

❍ The Youth Leadership and Employment Program, a 2001 PEPNet Awardee, is designed to help youth enter the workforce through a progression of experiences. The Youth Leadership component is designed for 14 to 16 year olds while the Employment component is geared for 17 to 24 year olds. A unique feature of this program is the blending of youth development and workforce development—youth learn computer skills then are able to share those skills with homebound seniors in the housing development. Collaborations are established with outside providers to provide support services such as counseling, general health services and arrangements for childcare (49).

❍ Programs and resource materials are increasingly available to teach youth how to become entrepreneurs. For example, the new Youth Entrepreneur curriculum is a series of 12 youth-oriented educational modules containing instructional materials, learning activities and checkup exercises designed to teach students key elements of entrepreneurship. Parents are particularly important supports for youth who are interested in this career path (50, 51).

❍ The Leaders of Tomorrow program, launched in February 2001 by the New York Lottery, recognizes high school seniors with demonstrated leadership skills and commitment to community service. Exemplary high school seniors, recognized for both community service and academic achievement are awarded scholarships to pursue their goal of post-secondary education (52).

❍ Career Zone, a website available through the Department of Labor, provides information on career choices in six areas: arts and humanities; business and information systems; engineering and technology; health services; human and public services; and natural and agricultural science. The Career Portfolio component, which is consistent with Regents Learning Standards, is used in many youth programs to help successful completers secure academic credit for their work (53).

❍ The New York State Area Health Education Center System located in western New York has designed programs to increase parents' awareness of career opportunities in healthcare. This allows parents to have the most current and accurate information, which may not be available through school guidance programs. Similar information is also shared with church organizations. This approach builds on the importance of families and is consistent with research that shows the family plays an important role in fostering values of independence, career orientation and career choice (54).

❍ The continuum of employment and training opportunities available to youth in New York State is outlined in Appendix A. Clearly this represents a set of service systems with unique areas of expertise and resources. However, these programs also underscore the need for flexibility within and collaborations across systems if effective outcomes are to be achieved. A complete listing of employment services to youth around the State is provided in the Youth Resource Pack (55).

Partnerships to Prevent Unintended Pregnancy

Unplanned pregnancy can influence youth employment programs' success since it can result in program participants leaving the program prematurely or influencing participants' ability to find and/or maintain a job. In a recent study conducted by the Center for Law and Social Policy, staff of youth employment programs were surveyed regarding their attitudes about pregnancy and unplanned parenthood. Seventy-one percent of the staff view unplanned parenthood as a problem for program participants and noted that program dropout is more common for those who get pregnant or have a child than for those who do not become parents. Due to this reality, many innovative programs have developed strategies to assist program participants (56):

❍ The Community Youth Corp, located in Norwalk, California, partners with the county health department to conduct a one-day workshop on sexuality education. Also, a one-day parenting class is provided to all participants, whether they are parents or not, to provide information on the responsibilities of parenting, child development and childcare.

❍ The Vocational Foundation, Inc., located in New York City, has a full-time nurse who acts as a referral source for any services needed. The nurse provides workshops and each participant has a case manager who reiterates the consequences of early parenthood.

❍ The Delaware Valley Job Corps Center, located in Callicoon, New York, offers health services on site in addition to the traditional employment supports. They have implemented a peer-education training program that enables participants to contact peer educators. This is done in an effort to make information more accessible, particularly if participants feel it is a personal matter.

Self-Assessment of Youth Employment Programs

The National Youth Employment Coalition has established a system and information base that identifies what works in youth employment. The Promising and Effective Practices Network (PEPNet) has developed a self-assessment tool that allows youth employment program staff to diagnose the quality of their programs by examining successes and planning improvements. A strength of this self-assessment tool is its inclusion of youth development principles into the five broad categories: (1) purpose and activities; (2) organization and management, (3) youth development, (4) workforce development, and (5) evidence of success. The full self-assessment tool is provided in Appendix B.

Educational attainment—
A bridge to self-sufficiency?

"Nearly across the board—whether one is looking at the data for education, earnings, social well-being, home ownership, family formations, health insurance, employment, incarceration or almost any other determinant of personal and social progress—those with only a high school education or less than a bachelor's degree have lost considerable ground versus their counterparts only a decade earlier.

The Forgotten Half Revisited

Educational attainment continues to be a key factor for self-sufficiency. While it is not the only determinant for employment, we have learned that workers with higher educational attainment are unemployed less and earn more than workers with lower educational attainment. Furthermore, employment rates and wages increase significantly with each additional level of education (16, 57).

Regarding employment:

❍ Earning a GED certificate increases full-time employment by five percent and earnings by 10 to 20 percent, varying by gender.

❍ Compared to high school graduates, GED recipients are less likely to be employed, have a higher job turnover and earn less.

❍ The 1999 unemployment rate for adults (25 years old and older) who had not completed high school was 6.7 percent compared with 3.5 for those with 4 years of high school and 1.8 percent for those with a bachelor's degree or higher.

❍ The unemployment rate was 13.1 for members of the class of 2000 who graduated from high school but did not enter college; it was 28 percent for those who did not complete high school.

❍ Youth with disabilities have made substantial gains in competitive employment ((57%), however the rate of employment remains lower than youth in the general population (69%) (20).

Employment and Unemployment Among 16 to 24 Year Old Youth by Highest Level of Educational Attainment

	HS Dropouts	HS Graduate	1-4 Yrs College	4+Yrs college
☐ unemployed	50.5	25.7	17.1	9.2
☐ Employed part-time	14.6	14.3	15.7	8.5
☐ Employed full-time	34.9	60	67.2	82.3
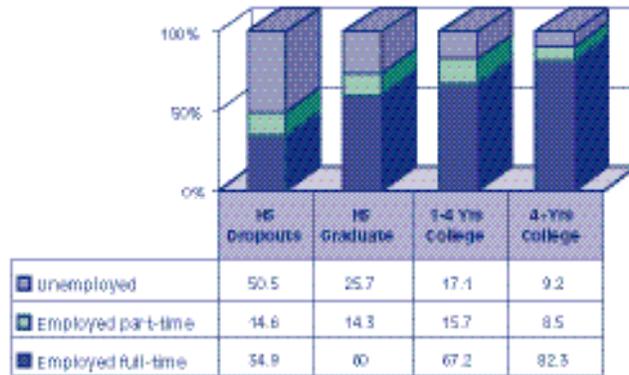
Source: Forgotten Half Revisited,1998 (57).

Regarding earnings (57, 58):

❍ Young adults ages 25 to 34 that completed at least a bachelor's degree earned more than those who had less education.

❍ In 1998, male and female college graduates earned 56 and 100 percent more, respectively, than those who completed high school.

❍ Those who dropped out of high school earned 30 and 31 percent less, respectively, than their peers who received a high school diploma.

❍ Annual earnings for African Americans who earned associate, bachelor and advanced degrees were comparable to whites, but those with only a high school diploma earned less than their white counterparts.

❍ Annual average earnings in 1999 for those ages 18 and over who had completed only high school was $24,572; for those with a bachelor's degree it was $45,678.

❍ Out-of–school males under age 25 earned one-third less than their counterparts were earning a generation earlier; young women earned 16.5 percent less.

The graph that follows depicts how weekly earnings of employed youth vary considerably by their full-time/part-time status and educational attainment.

Average Weekly Earnings of Full-Time Employed Young Adults 16 to 24 Years Old by Educational Attainment October 1981 to October 1996 (in 1996 dollars)

	1981	1996
No HS Diploma	$366	$224
HS Diploma, no college	388	297
1-3 Years College	441	346
Bachelor's or more	522	521

Source: Forgotten Half Revisited,1998 (57).

The path to self-sufficiency is circuitous, at best, for those who do not go on to college. It has been noted that the transition to permanent employment is taking longer; young workers who do not go on to college, especially high school dropouts, are more likely to experience periods of unemployment and rely on part-time jobs for a greater number of years while those attending college are more likely to work while enrolled and draw out their studies (7). Yet we are cautioned that college should not be the only path option available for our youth if they wish to successfully transition into the workplace and become independent. Currently, public and private sectors subsidize those individuals who choose to go on to college. However, little if any support is available for those who decide on an alternative career path that may need training. Researchers and analysts suggest we identify a variety of career ladder opportunities for youth who may not decide to attend college, support those alternatives and make career alternatives as respectable as the college diploma.

Does the emerging workforce meet the needs of employers?

*"What I want in a new worker, no high school can supply—
a twenty-six year old with three previous employers."*

Businesses, like schools, are a logical partner in workforce preparation since they might be viewed as the beneficiaries or victims of how well-prepared youth are for this major transition. Employers repeatedly note that young employees are lacking in both academic and interpersonal skills needed to fill basic positions. Approximately two-thirds (63%) of employers feel a high school diploma is no guarantee of mastery of basic skills and tend to use a bachelor's degree as a screening tool. As one employer explained, "What I want in a new worker, no high school can supply—a twenty-six year old with three previous employers" (59).

A study was conducted in five major cities in an effort to understand what skills are needed to enhance job prospects for indivi duals who do not complete higher education (60).

❍ Findings indicated the most commonly used skills include:
— Arithmetic (64%);
— Dealing with customers (58%); and
— Reading (55%)

❍ Approximately half (51%) of the jobs required daily use of computers and about one-third required daily writing (30%).

These results underline the need for students to develop both "hard" and "soft" skills in order to be successful members of the workforce.

The need for hard and soft skills is also evident in the skills outlined by the Report of the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS). The SCANS convened expert panels, conducted focus groups with workers from a wide range of jobs, and reviewed research literature. Based on these activities, a framework of necessary skills was developed that reflected work "know-how" for all employment, regardless of educational attainment or level of professional expertise. While these skills are consistent with the skills identified in the study mentioned above, the SCANS Commission estimated that less than half of all young adults had achieved the needed reading, writing and math minimums (61). The SCANS framework, organized into five competencies and a three-part foundation of skills and personal qualities, is presented below.

Five Competencies

1. Resources—identifies, organizes, plans and allocates resources (e.g., time, money, materials, human resources)

2. Interpersonal—works with others

3. Information—acquires and uses information

4. Systems—Understands complex interrelationships

5. Technology—works with a variety of technologies

Three-Part Foundation

| Basic Skills	Thinking Skills	Personal Qualities
Reading Writing Mathematics Listening Speaking	Creative thinking Decision making Problem solving Visualizes Knowing how to learn Reasoning	Responsibility Self-esteem Sociability Self-management Integrity/honesty

The employability skills and knowledge identified in the SCANS report were incorporated by the Board of Regents into the Career Development and Occupational Studies learning standards and endorsed by employers in a survey of workplace skills conducted jointly by the New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals and the New York State Department of Labor.

The SCANS 2000 Center at Johns Hopkins University (JHU) partnership with the Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS) is an example of how to develop and implement a high school model that infuses technology, the SCANS skills, and rigorous academic curricula. Three CD-ROM workplace scenarios were developed by the SCANS 2000 Center, and are available through South Western Educational Publishing (see www.scans2000.swep.com). Teachers use the case studies in classes such as English, Algebra, and Biology in order to enhance what students are learning through technology and project-based learning focused on careers.

The skills identified by the SCANS were incorporated into a survey conducted by the Business Council of New York State. When members of the Business Council of New York State were polled, members expressed a concern regarding the basic skills of newly hired high school graduates. The survey results, which included 483 respondents, found employers remain concerned about recent high school graduates' preparedness for jobs and careers (17):

❍ Eighteen percent of the employers who responded to the survey *strongly disagreed* with the statement that high school graduates are well prepared with an additional 39 percent *somewhat disagreeing* with the statement.

❍ Approximately 3 in 4 employers (77%) believe the tougher academic standards established by the New York State Department of Education will better prepare students for jobs.

Preparation of Newly Hired High School Graduates

	Academic skills	Technology skills	Interpersonal skills
■ Very Poor	7	15	9
■ Poor	11	10	10
■ Fair	50	31	30
■ Good	11	15	15
■ Excellent	2	1	2
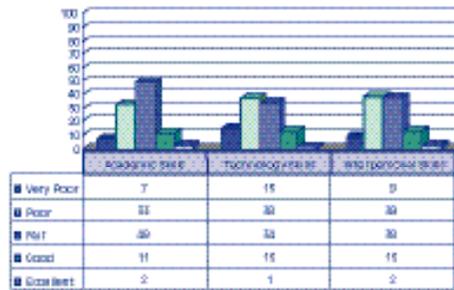
Source: Business Council of New York State, 1999 (17).

❍ When compared to newly hired high school graduates, Business Council respondents tended to rate *newly hired community college* and *college graduates* more *favorably*. A smaller percentage of *community college* graduates received a *very poor* or *poor* rating for their academic, technology and interpersonal skills (15%; 15%; and 19% respectively) than their high school counterparts. This *decreased* further for *graduates of 4-year colleges* (academic 4%; technology 8%; and interpersonal skills 12%). Many factors may have contributed to these improved ratings including more education and training, increased involvement in various work settings, and personal development. Interpersonal skills, those soft skills that allow one to integrate successfully into the work culture were the weakest skill area, regardless of educational attainment.

Findings of the Business Council are consistent with results from a survey conducted by the National Manufacturing Institute (62) where employers believe:

❍ Forty percent of all 17 year olds lack requisite math skills

❍ Sixty percent do not have the necessary reading skills to hold down a job in manufacturing

The importance of these skills was echoed in work conducted by the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, with the compilation of 21st Century Skills (63).

Digital-Age Literacy	Inventive Thinking	Effective Communication	High Productivity
Basic scientific, mathematical and technological literacy

Visual and information literacy

Cultural literacy and global awareness | Adaptability/ability to manage complexity

Curiosity, creativity, and risk taking

Higher-order thinking and sound reasoning | Teaming, collaboration, and interpersonal skills

Personal and social responsibility

Interactive communication | Ability to prioritize, plan, and manage for results

Effective use of real-world tools

Relevant, high-quality products |

Clearly, emphasis is placed on "employability skills"—those skills that enable an individual to acquire and, possibly more importantly, to keep a job. When employers were asked to assess whether they would hire potential applicants, bad attitude had the greatest negative effect on employers' decisions to hire. Applicants with a negative mind-set were not considered for a position, regardless of their education and training (5).

While vocational programs may be the most obvious place to teach employability skills, it is recommended that schools integrate this type of training within the academic setting as well.

The following strategies are recommended for incorporating employability skill development in the classroom (64):

Students should be expected to:

❍ have a good demeanor in the classroom (i.e., teachers should have guidelines for punctuality, class-cutting and discipline);

❍ express work values through classroom behavior (i.e., teachers should require timeliness of assignments and that students apply their personal best); and

❍ display a positive attitude in the classroom.

Teachers should:

❍ provide encouragement in order to foster self-esteem;

❍ incorporate instructional materials that illustrate how employability skills affect a person's ability to find, get and keep a job; and

❍ provide opportunities for students to complete group work assignments and work in teams so they are able to discuss ideas, build problem-solving skills and develop interpersonal skills.

Employers recognize there are benefits to being involved in young people's early work experiences. When asked what initiatives they would support, New York State Business Council members rated areas of support as follows:

❍	Help define competencies	65%
❍	Offer summer jobs	39%
❍	Provide apprenticeships	24%
❍	Offer work experiences	56%
❍	Provide staff development for teachers	34%
❍	Participate in mentor programs	21%

Source: Business Council of New York State, Inc., 1998 (17).

A majority of the respondents (65%) clearly wish to have an active role in the formal educational system and are interested in determining what students learn however, they also recognize the benefits associated with providing youth opportunities to work. Their responses are consistent with the SCANS that noted the most effective way of learning skills is "in context" placing learning objectives within a real environment rather than insisting that students first learn in the abstract what they will be expected to apply.

Employee injuries: Are employers meeting the needs of young employees?

Just as employees must be prepared for the work environment, employers must be prepared to create a work environment that is safe for their employees, especially for our youngest members of the workforce. This means employers have a responsibility to provide proper training and supervision for young employees as well as ensure youth are given tasks for which they are developmentally prepared.

❍ Approximately 5 percent of injuries and illnesses involving days away from work were for employees between the ages of 14 and 19. While most teen injuries occur within family-owned businesses, others occur among wage and salary workers.

❍ Most injuries occur in the agricultural field (43%) followed by retail trade (19%; e.g. homicides) and construction (14%) .

❍ Teen injuries conservatively represent approximately 4 percent of the total injuries occurring in the workplace, however the percent may be higher due to narrowly defined measures.

❍ The rate of injury per hour worked is about twice as high for children and adolescents than adults.

❍ The rate of injury is about 4.9 injured per 100 full-time equivalent workers among adolescents, compared with 2.8 per 100 full-time equivalent workers for all workers.

Demographics of teens injured while working

Characteristics	Number	Percent
Sex		
Males	416	88.9
Females	52	11.1
Race/Ethnicity		
White	399	85.3
Black	26	5.6
Asian or Pacific Islander	11	2.4
Other	32	14.3
Employee Status		
Wage and salary workers	311	66.5
Self-employed or family business	157	33.5
Working in family business	141	30.1

Demographics of teens injured while working (Cont.)

Characteristics	Number	Percent
Age		
Under 15	134	28.6
15	54	11.5
16	100	21.4
17	180	38.5

Note: These statistics do not include work injuries from federal, state and local governments, the self-employed and workers in their own family businesses, and agricultural enterprises with fewer than 11 employees.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000 (65).

The Committee on the Health and Safety Implications of Child Labor recognizes the needs and abilities of children and adolescents differ from those of adults and have compiled recommendations guided by empirical evidence (66).

Recommendations of the Committee on the Health and Safety Implications of Child Labor

Guiding Principle 1: Education and development are of primary importance during the formative years of childhood and adolescence. Although work can contribute to these goals, it should never be undertaken in ways that compromise education or development.

Guiding Principle 2: The vulnerable, formative, and malleable nature of childhood and adolescence requires a higher standard of protection for young workers than that accorded all workers.

Guiding Principle 3: All businesses assume certain social obligations when they hire employees. Businesses that employ young workers assume a higher level of social obligation, which should be reflected in the expectations of society as well as in explicit public policy.

Guiding Principle 4: Everyone under 18 years of age has the right to be protected from hazardous work, excessive work hours, and unsafe or unhealthy work environments, regardless of the size of the enterprise in which he or she is employed, his or her relationship to the employer, or the sector of the economy in which the enterprise operates.

Where are there workforce shortages?

The State Workforce Investment Board examined workforce supply and demand in the areas of education, health and technology. While these areas were targeted for review, it is important to remember that workforce demand is not limited to these three areas.

Education:

❍ The school-aged population (ages 5 to 17) in New York State increased 15 percent between 1990 and 2000.

❍ In an analysis of teacher shortages during the 1999-2000 academic year, the New York State Department of Education compared the number of teachers being certified with the number needed to replace uncertified teachers and those nearing retirement age. The areas with the largest statewide shortages reported included: mathematics, 30%; career and technical education, 24%; languages other than English, 24%; sciences, 22%; school library/media specialists, 19%, and English as a second language/bilingual education, 17%.

❍ According to the same analysis, among all regions, New York City had the largest teacher shortage overall at 20 percent.

❍ A number of financial incentives have been identified to attract individuals to the teaching profession, including signing bonuses, tax credits, loan forgiveness programs and housing incentives.

❍ One strategy used by the Philadelphia School District is to provide middle school students an opportunity to develop lessons for younger students, fostering an interest in a career in education (67).

As efforts are made to increase the number of teachers in the workforce, it is important to remember the key role teachers play in student achievement.

"In the last 10 years there's been a lot of research done about what makes a difference for student achievement, and it's now clear that the single most important determinant of what students learn is what their teachers know. Teacher qualifications, teacher's knowledge and skills, make more of a difference for student learning than any other single factor." (68)

Health Care:

❍ The percent of individuals in New York State aged 85 or over, those individuals most likely to use health care, grew 25.5 percent between 1990 and 2000 while the overall growth for all groups was about 5.5 percent.

❍ As the demand for health care services increased, every region in New York State had fewer registered nurse (RN) graduations in 2001 than in 1996. However, increases in RN graduations were projected for most regions of the state for 2002 and 2003 (69).

Registered Nurse (RN) Graduations

Regions	Number of Graduations	Percent Change		
		1996 to 2001	2001 to 2002	2002 to 2003
Western NY	551	-42.6%	-2.0%	-6.6%
Finger Lakes	461	-29.5	-0.9	12.3
Central NY	606	-30.3	11.2	16.8
NY - Penn	124	-32.2	10.5	57.7
Northeastern NY	488	-23.9	7.2	13.4
Hudson Valley	769	-27.3	0.7	6.2
New York City	1442	-36.1	8.5	12.3
Long Island	765	-18.4	-6.7	10.2
Total	5,302	-31.0	3.9	11.2

❍ It is expected that the shortage of nurses and health workers will have an impact on the quality of healthcare as well as earnings of healthcare organizations as they increase salaries to attract capable staff.

❍ Some healthcare organizations are implementing creative recruitment methods in order to assist them in locating talented workforce members (53):

❍ Code Blue is a copyrighted recruitment campaign designed by a marketing firm for four hospitals in North Carolina. Representatives conduct presentations in all the middle and high schools where they highlight the variety of professions available in the healthcare field. Code Blue was conducted 10 years earlier and was so successful that the training hospitals and schools asked to have the program terminated due to their extensive waiting lists. Posters, brochures, billboards and other marketing tools are used in addition to the personal presentations. An example of a billboard is "We want to put you in the hospital… because that's where the jobs are."

❍ Promoting the Advancement of Teens in Healthcare (PATH) is a summer program designed to introduce middle and high school students to careers in the health field. Conducted through the hospital's volunteer services, students are given the opportunity to experience jobs in the health field and attend special seminars that provide information they may need to help with career choices.

❍ Members of the New York State Area Health Education Center (NYSAHEC) identified the following programs as means they employ to introduce youth to careers in healthcare (54):

— Mini-medical school is targeted toward high school students to introduce them to the medical field.

— M.A.S.H. , a medical camp, is set up on school grounds so youth can visit and learn more about this service as well as other healthcare services and professions.

High-tech:

❍ It is estimated that employers will be required to fill over 49,000 openings annually for high-tech workers through 2008.

❍ The need for specialized computer scientists, computer engineers, and computer support specialists is growing at the fastest rate (114%, 98% and 84% respectively).

❍ Approximately 5 percent of degrees conferred in New York were in computer science in 2000-2001.

❍ From January 2002 through October 2002, almost 50 percent of the over 3,100 of the H-1B petitions filed in New York State were for computer-related, architectural/ engineering, math/science occupations. These would fill only 3 percent of the projected total openings in the state for the year.

❍ The 21st Century Workforce Commission, established by the Workforce Investment Act, is charged with examining the type of knowledge and skills individuals must possess as well as the type of educational and workforce development opportunities that should be available in order to allow individuals to successfully participate in the Information and Technology Workforce. Some programs, noted by the Commission, that are designed to increase youth interest in information technology include:

— Intel has designed a free curriculum kit available to middle school teachers—The Journey Inside: The Computer. The curriculum is intended to demystify computers by teaching the science and math behind the machines

— Youth Tech Entrepreneurs (YTE) is a non-profit organization that trains high school students to provide computer support and IT training for their schools (www.yte.org)

What gaps remain?

When asked to identify the primary causes of job performance problems, employers single out the behavioral skills and work attitudes of their employees—their "soft" skills. Although employers have consistently voiced this complaint, it has not reached the ears of policy makers, who thus far have focused on the development of employees' "hard" skills—their academic and occupation-specific abilities.

At first glance one might assume the debate about workforce preparation is a matter of hard versus soft skills or content expertise versus character (64). However, it is unlikely employers truly wish to have one set of skills without the other. What we often refer to as a skills "gap" actually reflects the need for a blending of these two skill areas. So what is the best way to accomplish this blending? The principles of youth development—positive relationships, high expectations and opportunities to participate—all enhance our ability to bridge this divide.

Schools can begin the process by helping youth build necessary skills, holding students to high standards and encouraging them to respect and support others. Since school can be viewed in some ways as a child's daily job, teachers are encouraged to use school assignments and responsibilities as a means to build a work ethic (62). However, schools are not able to replicate the workplace nor do they have the authority to determine wholesale norms that should be adopted by all children. This leaves businesses in an ideal position to show youth how to incorporate soft skills into work settings.

One of the best ways to help our youth understand the norms of the workplace and learn to apply their newly learned skills to actual work situations is to have them experience the workforce through the eyes of someone who knows that culture well and is able and willing to explain it—a mentor, a role model. The approach adopted by Wegmans acknowledges workforce preparation as a developmental process and provides the necessary combination of work opportunities and mentoring. It also highlights the importance of planned mentoring. Initial training programs assumed mentoring would be a part of what youth experienced when they were placed in work settings. However, we have learned that this was not necessarily the case. Many adults lacked the ability to adequately support youth and benefitted from training (70).

Lastly, youth development works for all populations, including at-risk youth. Despite the diverse number of opportunities we present to youth and regardless of how well planned they may be, we must recognize that a certain percentage of youth will not complete their education, even though it is essential for their future self-sufficiency. Often, many of these youth face complex circumstances that cannot be remedied by solutions that are short-term. Fortunately, a youth development approach is not bound to any particular system and can be accessible through counties, local government, schools, businesses, communities and a host of other settings where youth are involved, allowing them to benefit from opportunities on their own developmental timetable.

For further information,
you may wish to contact the following web sites:

New York State Department of Education
www.nysed.gov

Higher Education Services Corporation
www.hesc.org

US Department of Education
www.ed.gov

The School-to-Work Intermediary Project
www.intermediarynetwork.org

Dropout Prevention Demonstration Program
www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/DropoutPrev/

The Civil Rights Project—Harvard University
www.law.harvard.edu/groups/civilrights/

Workforce Development in New York State
http://workforcenewyork.org

New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals
www.nyatep.org

US Department of Labor
www.labor.gov

US Department of Labor—Education and Training
www.doleta.gov/

21st Century Workforce Commission
www.workforce21.org

National Injury and Violence Prevention Resource Center—Children's Safety Network
www.children'ssafetynetwork.org

American Youth Policy Forum
www.aypf.org

John T. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development
www.heldrich.rutgers.edu

National Youth Employment Coalition
www.nyec.org

Sar Levitan Center for Social Policy Services
www.levitan.org

National Center for Children in Poverty
www.nccp.org

Asset-Based Community Development Institute
www.nwu.edu/IPR/.html

Community and Rural Development Institute
www.cardi.cornell.edu

Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiatives
www.aspenroundtable.org

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Appendix A:
Continuum of Employment and Training Opportunities

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Summer Employment

Name	Purpose	Target Population	Funding Source	Provider	Availability
New York City Partnership	Facilitates and develops summer employment opportunities	New York City youth	NYS Partnership members	School district	Select school districts
Summer Youth Program	Full wage subsidy summer programs	TANF eligible youth up to 18 years old	Federal Welfare to Work Block grant	--------	--------

Classroom and Direct Work Experience

Name	Purpose	Target Population	Funding Source	Provider	Availability
Career Exploration Internship Program (CEIP)	Provides students with unpaid interships that are connected to class-room studies and may lead to part-time employment; career exploration, not skill training	High School students	School districts Perkins VATEA	School districts	Select School districts
Cooperative Occupational Program (COOP)	Provides students with classroom and paid work experience	Business, consumer education, and occupa-tional education high school students 16 years and older	School districts Perkins VATEA	School districts	Select school districts
General Education Work Experience Program (GEWEP)	Provides paid work experience in occupa-tions related to the field of science	General high school students 16 years and older	School districts	School districts	Select school districts

Classroom and Direct work Experience for At-Risk Groups

Name	Purpose	Target Population	Funding Source	Provider	Availability
NY Gear Up	GEAR UP awards grants to programs designed by middle school and post-secondary partnerships working with commu-nity groups and busi-nesses to mentor at-risk students towards achieving the goal of going to college.	Middle school children (7th & 8th grade)	US Department of Education	School districts	Select communities

Appendix A: Continuum of Employment and Training Opportunities

Classroom and Direct Work Experience for At-Risk Groups

Name	Purpose	Target Population	Funding Source	Provider	Availability
Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP)	Prepares students to enter postsecondary degree program in scientific, technical, and health-related fields by providing students basic skills to increase their level of preparation in math, the sciences, and technology	Historically underrepresented or economically disadvantaged students in grades 7-12	Postsecondary institutions with registered science, technical, or health-related programs, and/or programs leading to professional licensure	--------	Select school districts
Work Experience Career Exploration Program (WECEP)	Provides paid work experiences	High school students ages 14-15 with poor academic performance and/or attendance	School districts	School districts	Select school districts
Adolescent Vocational Exploration (AVE)	A validated career education model that combines classroom study with field experience Provides training in SCAN skills	In-school 14-15 year olds at-risk of school drop out	NYS DOL & TANF	Community-based organizations (e.g., Catholic Charities, Urban Leagues)	Select communities

Classroom and Direct Work Experience for At-Risk Groups

Name	Purpose	Target Population	Funding Source	Provider	Availability
Progressive Adolescent Vocational Exploration (PAVE)	Combines classroom activities, workplace skills development and field experience. Intended to increase participants' interest in higher education.	In-school 15 to 18 year olds at-risk of school drop-out	NYS DOL & TANF	Community-based organizations	School communities
Teen Works	Provides youth with academic assistance, work experience and supports to ensure they remain in school, develop job skills, graduate and pursue employment or college	High School students at-risk of school drop-out	NYS DOL	--------	Select communities
School to Employment Program (STEP)	Assists youth to continue their education while receiving on-the-job training and developing work skills	Youth ages 16 to 18 who are homeless or receiving aid to dependent families	--------	--------	Select school districts

Appendix A: Continuum of Employment and Training Opportunities

Classroom and Direct Work Experience for At-Risk Groups Cont.

Name	Purpose	Target Population	Funding Source	Provider	Availability
Youth Enterprise Program	Provides supports to assist youth with completion of high school and development of basic work skills through direct work experience	Youth ages 15 to 20 in OCFS aftercare, at risk of dropping out of school or at risk of entering the juvenile justice system	TANF	Not awarded at this time	Not available at this time
Another Chance Initiative for Education, Vocation, or Employment (ACHIEVE)	Intended to increase job readiness skills through on-the-job training, skills development and GED preparation	School dropouts ages 16 to 21	NYS DOL & TANF	Community-based organizations	Select communities
Junior Green Teams	Environmentally-focused placement program that provides academic skills development, GED preparation and pre-employment skills training	Out-of-school youth ages 16 to 21	NYS DOL	Community-based organizations	Select communities
Youth work Skills	Provides basic academic skills support services and work experiences, job placement into unsubsidized employment	Out-of-school youth ages 16 to 21 who are economically disadvantaged	NYS DOL	Community-based organizations	Select communities

Classroom and Direct Work Experience for At-Risk Groups

Name	Purpose	Target Population	Funding Source	Provider	Availability
Welfare Education Program (WEP)	Improve participants' basic skills, obtain a GED, master employability skills and receive job readiness training	Out-of-school youth ages 16 and older	NYS SED	School districts and BOCES	Select school districts
Jobs for Youth Apprenticeship Program (JYAP)	Provides academic and work-related instruction and supervised on-the-job training. Placement in apprenticeship programs follow upon completion of program	In-school or out-of-school youth ages 17-21	NYS DOL	--------	Select communities
Youth Councils	Provides youth with employment opportunities	Disadvantaged youth	US DOL	Community-based organizations	Statewide

Appendix A: Continuum of Employment and Training Opportunities

Classroom and Direct Work Experience for At-Risk Groups

Name	Purpose	Target Population	Funding Source	Provider	Availability
Employment Training Program	Trainees receive training in exploring the world of work, resume writing and interviewing skills, developing career plans and basic life skills	In school youth in special education programs	--------	--------	--------

Vocational Counseling

Name	Purpose	Target Population	Funding Source	Provider	Availability
Joint High School Program	Helps seniors with career development counseling and work-related activities Helps school drop-outs find jobs	High school seniors who plan to work after graduation and high school drop outs	--------	--------	Select school districts
Youth Employment	Provides vocational counseling and assistance with job placement	Out-of-school youth ages 16 to 22	--------	--------	Select school districts
Youth Enterprise Program	Facilitates completion of high school and development of basic workplace skills through entrepreneur-ship training and work experience in a cooper-ative business	Youth ages 15 to 20 at risk of dropping out of school or entering the juvenile justice system	--------	--------	--------

Career-Specific Training and Preparation

Name	Purpose	Target Population	Funding Source	Provider	Availability
Trade and National Skill Standards Programs	Helps students achieve national skill standards for their industry of interest	Occupational education students	School districts Perkins VATEA	BOCES	Select school districts
Pre-apprentice-ship related Supplemental Instruction Program	Provides career explo-ration, job shadowing and job skills develop-ment training that are related to building construction trades	High school students ages 16 to 21 (older students may be in alternative education program)	NYS DOL Built on Pride Welfare-to-Work	School districts	Select school districts

Appendix A: Continuum of Employment and Training Opportunities

Career-Specific Training and Preparation Cont.

Name	Purpose	Target Population	Funding Source	Provider	Availability
Apprentice-related Supplemental Instruction Program (ARSIP)	Provides classroom component of apprenticeship training	High school graduates or GED recipients	NYS SED	School districts	Select school districts
Youth Construction Initiative Program (YCIP)	Prepares youth to work in construction and construction-related occupations	Non-college bound high school students who are socially and economically disadvantaged	NYS DOT	DOT	Select school districts
Tech Prep	Combines two years of applied learning in area of math, science or technology in high school with a two-year related program in college	High school students in grades 11 and 12	Perkins VATEA	Big 5 city school districts, BOCES or post-secondary institutions	Select school districts, BOCES. Higher education institutions
Youth Opportunity Program	Provides students with an interest in health-related careers on-the-job work experience, support services and basic life skills training, then places them in a structured work environment where they serve consumers in the OMH or OMRDD system	High School students ages 16 to 21, academically under-prepared and financially in need	--------	--------	--------
Youth Construction Initiative (YCIP)	Prepares youth to work in construction and construction-related occupations	Non-college bound high school students who are socially and economically disadvantaged	State	--------	Select counties

Appendix B:
PEPNet Self-Assessment Instrument

Appendix B: PEPNet Self-Assessment Instrument

Purpose and Activities

CRITERIA	RATING (1-4)	EVIDENCE OF STRENGTH	EVIDENCE OF WEAKNESS	PLANNED OR PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
Presents a clear and consistent mission				
Logical and visible relationship between the initiative's mission, activities and youth it serves				
Mission shapes structure and offerings				

Organization and Management

CRITERIA	RATING (1-4)	EVIDENCE OF STRENGTH	EVIDENCE OF WEAKNESS	PLANNED OR PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
Maintains a strong, engaged, continuous and competent leadership				
Incorporates staff development as a management strategy				
Leverages resources through collaboration				
Is committed to a continuous improvement strategy				
Attracts stable and diverse funding				

Youth Development

CRITERIA	RATING (1-4)	EVIDENCE OF STRENGTH	EVIDENCE OF WEAKNESS	PLANNED OR PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
Nutures sustained relationships between youth and caring, knowledgeable adults				
Engages youth in their development and sets high expectations for them				
Tailors program experience for each youth and also provides age and/or state appropriate services for its participants				
Encourages positive relationships with family and peers				

Appendix B: PEPNet Self-Assessment Instrument

Youth Development (Cont.)

CRITERIA	RATING (1-4)	EVIDENCE OF STRENGTH	EVIDENCE OF WEAKNESS	PLANNED OR PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
Provides youth with supportive services and opportunities beyond education and training				
Helps youth develop a sense of group membership while fostering a sense of identity and self				

Workforce Development

CRITERIA	RATING (1-4)	EVIDENCE OF STRENGTH	EVIDENCE OF WEAKNESS	PLANNED OR PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
Nurtures career awareness and embeds career planning and readiness throughout the program				
ensures that employers are actively engaged in the initiative				
Relates academic learning to real-life work issues and situations; stresses active learning; engages youth in challenging academic preparation				
Documents extended services and support				

Evidence of Success

CRITERIA	RATING (1-4)	EVIDENCE OF STRENGTH	EVIDENCE OF WEAKNESS	PLANNED OR PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS
Collects information on current operations, services and participants				
Establishes measurable objectives that reflect goals and communicates solid information about the results of its activities				
Seeks sources of comparative information and data				