APPENDICES

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YOUTH SERVICES CATALOG

Charlotte, North Carolina

This catalog presents information on the organizations and programs that provide services related to workforce development to at-risk and disconnected youth in Charlotte, North Carolina.

UNC CHARLOTTE
Urban Institute

Goodwill
Industries of the Southern Piedmont

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Youth Services Catalog
CHARLOTTE, NC

INTRODUCTION

This catalog is an inventory of organizations and programs that provide services related to workforce development to at-risk and disconnected youth in the Charlotte area. It contains a range of information on each program/organization, including basic contact information, the mission, who it serves, what services it offers, and how it operates. The creation of this catalog was sponsored by Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont as an integral piece of a larger youth needs assessment conducted by the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute. Goodwill recognized the importance of having a comprehensive database of organizations and programs serving this population in Charlotte to provide a picture of what services are being offered to what subgroups of this population. Further, it provides a valuable resource for individual programs in referring youth as needed to other options in the service community and in identifying opportunities for collaboration and partnerships between similar programs.

Process

Beginning with a list of organizations and programs identified by Goodwill and other youth service providers, the research team gathered basic information from each organization's website. This information was then enhanced through in-depth interviews with a representative from each organization. To make sure that the catalog portrays these programs accurately, the organizations were given the opportunity to revise their entries before we incorporated the information into the catalog.

To ensure this catalog remains a relevant resource, Goodwill is sponsoring its maintenance by the Institute. The catalog will be updated as information becomes available, adding any new programs/organizations, removing those that no longer exist, and revising any information about existing programs/organizations as needed. The opportunity for changes to the online information remains open at all times by contacting the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute (lshipley@uncc.edu). The catalog will be available at http://ui.uncc.edu on the Goodwill data partner portal.

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Program Directory

Arbor Education and Training

Program Director: Darnell Middleton • darnellmiddleton@arboret.com
Address: 5624 Executive Center Dr., Suite 100, Charlotte, NC 28205
Phone: 704-442-2209
Website: www.arboret.com

BRIDGE Jobs Program

Executive Director: Patricia Heard, MSW, MBA • pheard@bridgecharlotte.org
Address: 2732 Rozzelles Ferry Rd., Suite B, Charlotte, NC 28208
Phone: 704-377-5371
Website: www.bridgecharlotte.org • info@bridgecharlotte.org

Communities In Schools

Executive Director: Bill Anderson • banderson@cischarlotte.org
Address: 601 E. 5th St., Charlotte, NC 28202
Phone: 704-335-0601
Website: www.cischarlotte.org • partners@cischarlotte.org

Elon Homes and Schools for Children

President/CEO: Rev. Dr. Frederick G. Grosse • Fred.grosse@elonhomes.org
Address: 1717 Sharon Rd. W., Charlotte, NC 28210
Phone: 704-369-2500
Website: www.elonhomes.org/elonhomes

Genesis Project

Executive Director: J.R. Black • jrblack@genesisproject1.org
Address: 5736 N. Tryon St., Suite 300, Charlotte, NC 28213
Mail to: PO Box 560723, Charlotte, NC 28256-0723
Phone: 704-596-0505
Website: www.genesisproject1.org • admin@genesisproject1.org

Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont Youth Services Program

Youth Services Manager: Rich Vreeland • richard.vreeland@goodwillsp.org
Address: 2122 Freedom Drive, Charlotte, NC 28202
Phone: 704-916-1621
Website: www.goodwillsp.org

Mayor's Youth Employment Program (MYEP)

Program Manager: Dawn Hill • dhill@ci.charlotte.nc.us
Address: 600 E. 4th St., Charlotte, NC 28202
Phone: 704-336-4445
Website: www.charmeck.org/Departments/Economic+Development/Your+Workforce/MYEP.htm

Partners in Out-of-School Time (POST)

Project Director: Kate Shem • kshem@postcarolinas.org
Address: 1609 E. 5th St., Charlotte, NC 28204
Phone: 704-376-1845
Website: www.postcarolinas.org • info@postcarolinas.org

The Q Foundation

Program Director: Marc Brooks • mbrooks@qfoundation.com
Address: 5633 Monroe Rd., Charlotte, NC 28212
Phone: 704-566-4969
Website: www.qfoundation.com/programs.html

The Relatives (Alexander Youth Network)

Executive Director: Brennon Graham • bgraham@therelatives.org
Address: 1100 East Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28203
Phone: 704-377-0602
Website: www.therelatives.org • development@therelatives.org

Right Moves for Youth

Executive Director: Tayuanee Dewberry • tdewberry@rightmovesforyouth.org
Address: 2211 W. Morehead St., Charlotte, NC 28208
Phone: 704-377-4425
Website: www.rightmovesforyouth.org • information@rightmovesforyouth.org

Seigle Avenue Teen Center (North Charlotte Youth Network)

Martine Wurst • martine@carolina.rr.com
Address: 600 Seigle Ave., Charlotte, NC 28204
Phone: 704-661-1848
Website: www.seigleavenue.org/SAPCTeenCenter/tabid/1704/Default.aspx

Steele Creek Youth Network

Officer Lisa K. Speas • Lspeas@cmpd.org
Address: 2211 W. Morehead St., Charlotte, NC 28208
Phone: 704-575-3191
Website: www.charmeck.org/Departments/CMPD/Patrol+Divisions/Steele+Creek+Division/
Steel+Creek+Division+Special+Projects.htm

United Way of Central Carolinas

Executive Director: Jane McIntyre
Address: 301 S. Brevard St., Charlotte, NC 28202
Phone: 704-371-6226
Website: www.uwcentralcarolinas.org • info@uwcentralcarolinas.org

Urban League of Central Carolinas, Inc.

Project Director: Diane McClinton • dmcclinton@urbanleaguecc.org
Address: 740 W. 5th St., Charlotte, NC 28202
Phone: 704-373-2256
Website: www.urbanleaguecc.org • info@urbanleaguecc.org

Workforce Development Board

Executive Director: Deborah Gibson • dgibson@ci.charlotte.nc.us
Address: 700 Parkwood Ave., Charlotte, NC 28205
Phone: 704-336-3952
Website: www.joblinkcenter.org • www.charlotteworks.org

YMCA of Greater Charlotte

President and CEO: Andy C. Calhoun
Address: 500 E. Morehead St., Suite 300, Charlotte, NC 28202
Phone: 704-716-6200
Website: www.ymcacharlotte.org

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ARBOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Address	5624 Executive Center Dr., Suite 100 Charlotte, NC 28205
Contact Person	Darnell Middleton, Program Director darnellmiddleton@arboret.com 704-442-2209 ◆ **www.arboret.com**
Mission	Arbor Education and Training is comprised of dedicated and caring people who form a company providing excellent human services that enhance the lives of individuals. With efficiency and effectiveness, they strive to provide the highest measurable quality supports for the people and organizations they serve, their employees, their shareholders and their communities. They serve with skill, compassion, respect and care.
Area Served	Arbor's Inspire Program serves youth in Mecklenburg County.
Target Population	Arbor's Inspire Program is open to low-income youth between the ages of 16 and 21 who are U.S. citizens, and it is especially designed for high school graduates or recent high school dropouts, foster children, teen parents, and criminal offenders.
Number of Youth Served	Arbor Education and Training serves between 75 and 160 youth each year.
Programs and Services	Arbor Education and Training offers the following youth services: **Vocational Assessment** **Résumé Development** **Customer Service Training** **Job Readiness Training** **Mentoring** **Job Referral** **Other:** Arbor also offers leadership training, academic assistance for

	those still in school and assistance in obtaining a GED for those who are not, career exploration and assistance in finding a job, and help in getting a CNA or Fork Lifting License.
Program Length	Youth remain in the program anywhere from 4 months up to a year.
Symbol of Completion	There is no symbol of completion for this program.
Follow-up	Arbor Education and Training provides 1 year of follow-up services for all youth who complete its programs.
Success Indicators	Arbor Education and Training uses the federal benchmarks required for all Workforce Investment Act youth programs.
Fee	There is a no fee for participation in this program.

BRIDGE JOBS PROGRAM

Address	2732 Rozzeles Ferry Rd., Suite B Charlotte, NC 28208
Contact Person	Patricia Heard, Executive Director pheard@bridgecharlotte.org 704-377-5371 ◆ **www.bridgecharlotte.org**
Mission	BRIDGE is dedicated to helping high school dropouts and the unemployed and underemployed citizens of Mecklenburg County obtain and sustain long-term, career enhancing employment by providing them with career counseling and support as they complete their education.
Goals	The BRIDGE Jobs Program has two goals: helping clients finish high school and helping clients find a job.
Area Served	BRIDGE serves all of Mecklenburg County. Two percent of inquiries also come from outside the county, and BRIDGE does not turn them down.
Target Population	BRIDGE serves youth ages 16 to 24. The target population is out-of-school youth, though BRIDGE will also serve youth about to leave school who are recommended by school counselors or social workers. A high number of these latter referrals come from West Charlotte High School. BRIDGE assists anyone who needs job assistance or any dropout that needs assistance getting a GED. The program targets youth who are not old enough or lack the basic skills to be accepted to the CPCC GED program.
Number of Youth Served	BRIDGE offers five 8-week sessions a year and a 3-week mini-session in January. The program serves over 650 youth a year.
Waiting List	On the 5th week of a program session, BRIDGE admits youth on the waiting list to replace dropouts.
Selection Process	Approximately a third of youth are referred by public schools; a third come from agencies including the Health Department, DSS, the Probations Office, and other non-profits; and a third are referred by relatives or friends currently enrolled in the GED or job training courses. When students first arrive, they attend an information session, followed by orientation and placement testing. Youth are constantly being rolled into classes, which are held year-round except for the last 2 weeks of December.

Programs and Services	BRIDGE offers the following youth services: **Vocational Assessment** **Résumé Development** **Customer Service Training** **Job Readiness Training** **Financial Education:** BRIDGE offers classes on credit, personal savings, taking out loans, and finding and keeping an apartment. **Mentoring** **Job Referral:** BRIDGE uses a formal inventory to identify employers that are interested in employing youth and help plan their career path. The program offers job referral and will take youth to interviews and help them call potential employers. **Other:** BRIDGE offers GED preparation classes for youth and adults. The preparation classes cover 5 subjects and allow people to pass directly to the CPCC GED program without being placed in the adult basic literacy program. The youth GED classes include courses in job skills like appropriate dress and résumé writing. BRIDGE teaches both soft skills and hard skills. Youth receive a communication curriculum that teaches verbal and non-verbal communication skills to improve interaction with a supervisor as well as instruction in Microsoft Office products. BRIDGE focuses on GED preparation classes, helping people find jobs, and teaching life skills, all of which occur in one session.
Program Length	On average, youth remain in the program for 3 months.
Symbol of Completion	Youth have completed the GED portion of the classes when they are above the 9th-grade level in all subjects and are eligible to take and pass the entrance exam at CPCC. A youth has completed the job skills portion when he/she is working a minimum of 8 hours a week. BRIDGE offers a cap and gown ceremony with a speaker for students who miss the CPCC GED graduation ceremony in May.
Follow-up	The program uses interns for follow-up and sends out reply cards to former clients. BRIDGE is interested in the work experience for employed youth.

	While youth may not always report success, they generally report back when they lose hours or employment. Youth will also return to BRIDGE to use the center's computers and get copies of their paperwork.
Success Indicators	BRIDGE looks at attendance, academic skills upon entrance and every 8weeks thereafter, and the time it takes each student from entrance to passing the GED test. They check monthly to determine which clients are working, how many hours they are working, and if they have had an increase in hours or pay since getting their job. The program also collects demographic data.
Fee	There is a $20 registration fee to participate in this program, but all books and supplies are free.
Collaborative Partners	BRIDGE collaborates with the public school, local group homes, foster care associations, and DSS. BRIDGE also works with Goodwill Industries, Jacob's Ladder, Dropout Prevention, Educational Options Taskforce, and the Public School Community Collaborative.

COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS (CIS)

Address	601 E. 5th St., Suite 300 Charlotte, NC 28202
Contact Person	Bill Anderson, Executive Director banderson@cischarlotte.org 704-335-0601 ◆ **www.cischarlotte.org**
Mission	Communities In Schools (CIS) helps young people stay in school, successfully learn, and prepare for life by connecting needed community resources with schools. Communities In Schools believes that all students need and deserve five basic resources to succeed in school and in life: a one-on-one relationship with a caring adult, a safe place to learn and grow, a healthy start and future, a marketable skill to use upon graduation, and a chance to give back to their peers and community.
Goals	Communities In Schools has four main objectives: attendance, promotion, staying in school, and graduation. CIS tracks attendance of students and follows up if the youth has excessive absences. CIS follows up with the youth themselves if they are in high school or their parents if they are in elementary or middle school. CIS works under the belief that if a child comes to school every day and gets promoted every year, that child will graduate. Success for CIS is helping the at-risk children they serve stay in school; chart their course through elementary, middle, and high school; and plan for college and/or a career. Within this context, CIS has established the following outcome goals for at-risk students enrolled in CIS for the 2009-2010 school year: • 85% of CIS students will have an average daily attendance of 90% or above; • 80% of CIS students will be promoted to the next grade level; • 98% of CIS students will remain enrolled in school until the end of the school year; and • 85% of CIS students will graduate from high school with a high school diploma.
Area Served	Communities In Schools provides a "safety net" of support in 44 of the most impoverished schools (17 elementary, 12 middle, and 14 high schools) in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Of the 14 high schools, CIS

	only serves 9th and 10th grades in 3 of them.
Target Population	CIS works with over 5,000 of the neediest, most vulnerable students in Charlotte-Mecklenburg's highest poverty, lowest performing schools. Over 70% of CIS students have been classified as "economically disadvantaged" by CMS and 75% of CIS alumni attending college are the first in their family to do so. Students targeted for enrollment in CIS typically exhibit one or more of the following risk factors associated with dropping out of school • Low economic status • High risk peer group • Teen parenthood • Low academic achievement • Poor attendance • Lack of effort • No extracurricular participation • Misbehavior • High family mobility • Family dysfunction and disruption • Sibling(s) dropped out • Low educational achievement by parent • Trouble with the juvenile justice system CIS serves students who qualify for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), students who are in foster care, or students who are otherwise economically challenged. Most students are African-American and 20% are Hispanic. Each site coordinator has a maximum caseload of 100, and site coordinators regularly work at maximum.
Number of Youth Served	Last year, 4,792 students participated in the program. CIS differentiates between level 2 students, who participate in the full program, and level 1 students, who can show up at dental screenings or food giveaways for services but do not receive counseling. Level 2 students only have to attend a school that CIS is serving.
Waiting List	There is a waiting list, particularly for 9th graders. As per their mission, CIS is interested in targeting students most likely to drop out. Students often have to be triaged as they move into middle and high school, where there are fewer programs.
Selection Process	Youth are selected based on referrals from teachers, administrators, counselors, parents, rising 6th graders, and rising 9th graders. As long as the student stays at one of the administered schools and they want

	to participate, the program will continue to serve them.
Programs and Services	Communities In Schools offers the following youth services: **Vocational Assessment** **Résumé Development** **Financial Education:** The program also offers financial education to help families maintain a budget. **Mentoring** **Other:** It is the goal of CIS to identify students' strengths and provide guidance. This includes getting students thinking about careers, and can include offering specific job shadowing programs in banking and food preparation. CIS helps students understand how to dress properly, interact with people on a job interview, and understand the concept of a résumé. CIS provides healthcare, dental screenings, eyeglasses and eye exams, physical exams, clothing assistance, some rental assistance, and food. CIS is concerned with at-need people as well as at-risk people. The organization also works to connect people with DSS and Crisis Assistance.
Program Length	On average, youth stay in the program for 3 years. CIS is working to follow up with students. The program is currently building an alumni database, beginning with graduates from 1998–2004.
Symbol of Completion	Each year, CIS holds Celebrating Our Graduates in April. This annual celebration luncheon honors the accomplishments of the CIS seniors who have overcome tremendous challenges to stay in school and graduate from high school.
Follow-up	Typically, CIS does not follow up with students that leave the program, due to the difficulty of tracking thousands of students.
Success Indicators	The leading indicators CIS uses are attendance, graduation rate, promotion rate, and stay-in-school rate.
Fee	There is no fee for any services.

Collaborative Partners	In addition to working closely with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, the Charlotte Housing Authority, the Sheriff's Department, and Mecklenburg County, CIS collaborates with more than 100 community agencies and groups to support Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. CIS is also one of nine agencies housed in the Children & Family Services Center and is an active member of the Children's Alliance, United Agenda for Children, Crossroads Charlotte, and the Institute for Social Capital.
Best Practices Networks	CIS Charlotte is part of the nation's largest, most effective dropout prevention network and benefits from the CIS National organization's leadership as well as the "best practices" from over 200 affiliate programs in 27 states. The organization also exchanges information and best practices with the Institute for Social Capital, United Way, and Mecklenburg County.

ELON HOMES AND SCHOOLS FOR CHILDREN

Address	1717 Sharon Rd. W. Charlotte, NC 28210
Contact Person	Rev. Dr. Frederick G. Grosse, President/CEO Fred.grosse@elonhomes.org 704-369-2500 ◆ **www.elonhomes.org/elonhomes**
Mission	Elon Homes and Schools for Children provides a continuum of services intended to enhance the quality of spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual, and relational well-being of youth and their families.
Goals	Elon is interested in providing a safe haven, teaching life skills, and educating.
Area Served	Elon operates two locations in North Carolina. One, located on the Kennedy Campus in Charlotte, operates in Mecklenburg County. The Elon Campus serves Alamance and Guilford County.
Target Population	Elon Homes and Schools for Children offers foster care services, a mental health service called Kids Central of the Carolinas, and operates the Kennedy Charter Public School. Elon offers foster care to youth who have been placed out of their home due to abuse and neglect. Although Elon's services extend to youth ages 0– 21, most foster children are under 14. The Kennedy Charter School largely serves high school aged youth but also has a growing elementary school population. Kennedy School focuses on youth at or near the poverty level.
Number of Youth Served	During the fiscal year 2008–2009, Elon served approximately 1,200 youth.
Waiting List	There is a waiting list for the high school but not for other services. As Elon's elementary school expands, the program will draw fewer high school students externally.
Selection Process	Youth select themselves for the school. Youth are brought to foster care through the Department of Social Services (DSS). Kids Central draws youth from the Kennedy School and foster care.

Programs and Services	Elon offers the following youth services: **Vocational Assessment** **Résumé Development** **Job Readiness Training** **Mentoring** **Job Referral/Placement** **Other:** Elon offers students the North Carolina core curriculum through the charter school. Kids Central offers on-site psychological counseling. The services listed above are all offered through the charter school. Students who enter the school are either on an occupation or college-placement track. The occupation track students receive the services listed above.
Program Length	On average, youth are at the school for 2– 3 years. Youth generally remain in foster care for 6 to 12 months.
Symbol of Completion	The Kennedy Charter School marks completion with a traditional high school graduation. Re-unification of biological families or adoption out of foster care is not celebrated.
Follow-up	DSS conducts follow up on foster youth. Other follow up comes from self-reporting.
Success Indicators	The leading indicator for foster care is re-unification or placement in a permanent home. The leading indicator for the school is graduation and test data.
Fee	There is no fee for youth in the program.
Collaborative Partners	Elon works most closely with DSS and the Teen Health Connection.
Best Practices Networks	Elon belongs to the Alliance for Children and Families, the Children Family Services Association of North Carolina, and the Child Welfare League of America.

GENESIS PROJECT

Address	5736 N. Tryon St., Suite 300 Charlotte, NC 28213
Contact Person	J.R. Black, Executive Director jrblack@genesisproject1.org 704-596-0505 ◆ **www.genesisproject1.org**
Mission	Genesis Project is committed to the development of programs that address the factors that perpetuate poverty, addiction, and abuse.
Goals	The Genesis Project works with families, as a total unit, to provide individual and collective services, such as counseling, structured groups, exposure events, and in-home meetings, with the goal of empowerment and family growth and success. Genesis' services have been developed to address the developmental, social, and community needs of school-age children and their families in at-risk communities. The Genesis Project's purpose is to introduce new skills, supports, awareness, and opportunities to young adults in order to deter negative life decisions and inspire families to progress from a perpetual state of surviving to a more satisfying state of thriving.
Area Served	Genesis Project serves all of Mecklenburg County in two departments that serve a west zone and an east zone. The program has about 43 people on staff, including interns.
Target Population	Genesis Project works with both youth and adults. Though youth generally bring their families to Genesis, the program is concerned with serving the entire family- at-risk youth and the people these youth are connected to.
Number of Youth Served	About 250 youth between the ages of 14 and 24 participate in the program.
Waiting List	There is no waiting list.
Selection	Youth are not selected for the program; they choose to come and often

Process	hear about the program through word of mouth. The Mecklenburg County Local Management Entity (LME) for mental health often recommends Genesis to troubled youth and adults. The program has service criteria that determine which services each person qualifies for.
Programs and Services	Genesis Project offers the following youth services: **Vocational Assessment** **Résumé Development** **Job Readiness Training** **Financial Education** **Mentoring** **Other:** Genesis Project also offers youth counseling, community advocacy, advocacy at schools, and self-esteem programs. The Project includes Prodigal Sons, a support group for at-risk young men, and GLASS, a support group for women ages 13–21. Although Genesis does not place youth in jobs, it builds relationships with employers and is developing partners to offer job training. Genesis Project applies a 5 Pillar of Health model to all of its consumers, providing mental, financial, social, spiritual, and physical care. Genesis emphasizes empowering the family and youth and its goal is for families and youth to develop relationships with nonprofessionals to help when Genesis is not there. Every family has a team assigned to them, including a case manager, therapist, and support worker. This team teaches the family to identify and use natural supports, as well as to determine and address personal goals.
Program Length	The goal is for youth to remain in the program for 12– 18 months. While some want to hang around longer, Genesis wants to be there if anyone needs them but also wants to become less prominent in the youth's life over time as he or she develops their own skills.
Symbol of Completion	Genesis marks completion of the program with a graduation ceremony and party, in which participants are awarded certificates and their success is celebrated with food and balloons. These events are held twice a year.
Follow-up	Genesis Project believes that once someone is a part of Genesis, they are always a part of Genesis. Genesis is in the process of developing a tracking mechanism and hopes to provide follow-up 6 months, a year,

	and 2 years after someone graduates. At the moment, Genesis keeps in touch with families by keeping them on the mailing list and inviting them to community events. Families will often return to the offices to report their progress.
Success Indicators	Genesis uses qualitative indicators to measure the quality of relationship, level of communication, and identity development of each person in the family. These measures are taken as the family enters and progresses through the program. Genesis also meets with the family each month to evaluate their treatment plan and provide feedback. The program is working on developing quantitative indicators.
Fee	There is no fee charged directly to the family. Fees are usually paid for by public insurance, but Genesis will provide services beyond the provision of public insurance, for those with no insurance, or for those with private insurance that will not pay. Genesis is also one of the few programs of its kind recognized by many private insurance providers.
Collaborative Partners	Genesis Project collaborates with Meck Cares, Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation, area libraries, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, community centers, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations Committee, the Black Political Caucus, UNC Charlotte, the Multicultural Association of Charlotte, the Latin American Coalition, and the NAACP.
Best Practices Networks	Genesis is a member of the executive board of the Mecklenburg Provider Council, a best practices committee for organizations that practice systems of care. Genesis also belongs to the National Black Child Development Institute and an ethics committee that ensures that agencies run ethical practices.

GOODWILL INDUSTRIES OF THE SOUTHERN PIEDMONT

Address	2122 Freedom Drive Charlotte, NC 28202
Contact Person	Rich Vreeland, Youth Services Manager richard.vreeland@goodwillsp.org 704-916-1621 ◆ **www.goodwillsp.org**
Mission	Changing Lives Through the Power of Work!
Goals	The goal of the Youth Services program is to provide young people the tools, resources and services needed to help them achieve career and educational goals.
Area Served	Goodwill has open enrollment with most participants from Mecklenburg County. However, Goodwill provides services for an 18-country territory in the Southern Piedmont region in North and South Carolina.
Target Population	The Youth Services Program provides services to the following populations: • Youth Job Connection: 14-21 years • GoodGuides Mentoring Program: 12-17 years • Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Program: 16-21 years Goodwill's primary youth population includes those with barriers to employment, institutional and generational poverty, criminal background, and being in the foster care system. For the WIA Youth Program, participants must meet federal eligibility requirements. Serving at-risk youth is central to Goodwill's mission. Goodwill wants to break the cycle of poverty through employment.
Number of Youth Served	In 2009, during the first full year of the Youth Job Connection's operation, Goodwill worked with over 1,400 youth through training workshops and individual career counseling sessions.

Waiting List	None
Selection Process	Youth complete an application to initiate services for each program. The application can be completed online or in person.
Programs and Services	Goodwill offers the following youth services: **Youth Job Connection:** Goodwill provides youth assistance in all aspects of the job search process, including job leads, and interview skills. The following workshops and services are available to all youth: **Assessment** **Resume Development** **Basic Customer Service** **Job Readiness Skills** **Financial Education** **Retail Essentials Training** Goodwill provides insight on a career in retail, including training in good customer service, safety awareness, stocking and hands-on cashier training. **Career Counseling** Goodwill provides career counselors to assist youth in creating an action plan to achieve their goals (e.g. obtaining a seasonal or permanent job, internship or volunteer opportunity). **GoodGuides Mentoring Program:** Goodwill matches committed, caring and supportive adults with youth to empower them to make positive choices and enable them to maximize their current and future potential. A GoodGuides mentor works with youth for a minimum of a year to develop their education and career goals by engaging them in activities such as: career exploration sessions, field trips (i.e. local businesses, regional colleges and universities, and the local arts community) and GoodGuides only social events. **Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Program:** Goodwill, in partnership with Urban League of the Central Carolinas (ULCC), provides qualified youth with a variety of training (i.e. GED, job readiness/life skills and vocational training) and work experiences

	opportunities. The program focuses on three priority populations identified by the Mecklenburg County Workforce Development Board: pregnant/parenting youth, youth involved with the foster care system, and youth involved with the juvenile justice system
Program Length	The Youth Services programs are self-paced, so the length of participation varies. The assessment and training classes should take a couple of weeks. Working with a career development specialist can vary from a month to a year, depending on an individual's goals.
Symbol of Completion	For the Youth Job Connection, participants receive a certificate and are eligible to receive a letter of recommendation for job placement when they complete the program.
Follow-up	Goodwill attempts to stay in touch with participants in all of their programs. The follow-up guidelines are as follows: **Youth Job Connection**: Youth who participate in career counseling and either successfully complete their action plan or gain seasonal employment are contacted at 30, 60, and 90 days. For youth who gain permanent employment, they are also contacted at 6 months and a year. **GoodGuides Mentoring Program**: Staff reach out to both youth participants and adult volunteer mentors on a monthly basis to assess the match and to provide guidance and support. There is no follow-up once youth leave the program. **WIA Youth Program**: Youth who are enrolled in the program are contacted at 3, 6, and 12 month intervals.
Success Indicators	Goodwill reviews a variety of indicators based on the goals for each program which can include: total number of people served, attainment of a degree or training certificate (including GED), increase of numeracy or literacy skills, total number of people who gain employment after using our services, and employment retention.
Fee	There is no fee to participate in the youth services programs.
Collaborative Partners	Goodwill has been fortunate to work with a variety of partners for all of the Youth Services Programs. The partners include, but aren't limited to: City of Charlotte; Mayor's Youth Employment Program; CPCC;

	Urban League of the Central Carolinas; Youth and Family Services; Johnson C. Smith University; CMS and Communities In Schools.
Best Practices Networks	Goodwill participates on the Workforce Development Board's Youth Council and the Teen Mentoring/Teen Violence Court Committee. Goodwill is also a member of the Community Collaborative brought together by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools to address the dropout rate in Mecklenburg County.

MAYOR'S YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (MYEP)

Address	600 E. 4th St. Charlotte, NC 28202
Contact Person	Dawn Hill, Program Manager dhill@ci.charlotte.nc.us 704-336-4445 ◆ www.charmeck.org/Departments/Economic+Development/Your+Workforce/MYEP.htm
Mission	The mission of the Mayor's Youth Employment Program (MYEP) is to introduce young people to career opportunities and internships in Charlotte's growing industries.
Goals	The goal of the program is to get young people trained and placed in internships in growing industries like government and banking.
Area Served	MYEP serves the Charlotte Business Corridor. The program focuses on inner city, lower income neighborhoods but takes students from anywhere Goodwill, Right Moves for Youth, and Communities In Schools recruits.
Target Population	MYEP focuses on 16 to 18 year old, low-income, in-school youth living in the city of Charlotte. The program is interested in workforce development because it wants to introduce young people to growing industries to serve as a future workforce. The city is interested in meeting community demand as well as employing at-risk youth.
Number of Youth Served	Including work with the Youth Job Connection, MYEP served 337 young people in the summer of 2009. This was more than normal due to stimulus funding. On average, the program serves 150 youth in a summer.
Waiting List	There is no waiting list.
Selection Process	Youth are referred to MYEP by Goodwill, Right Moves for Youth, and Communities In Schools.

Programs and Services	MYEP offers the following youth services: **Résumé Development** **Job Readiness Training:** MYEP offers job readiness training including instruction in workplace etiquette and punctuality. **Financial Education:** Financial education covers personal budgeting, banking instruction, and teaching the importance of savings. **Job Referral/Placement:** The program offers job placement rather than referral, placing young people with host employers. MYEP is primarily concerned with providing internships to interested youth. **Other:** MYEP provides youth with professional clothing for the workplace.
Program Length	The program lasts for 8 weeks in the summer.
Symbol of Completion	The completion of MYEP is marked with a celebration lunch at which the Mayor generally appears, gives a speech, and thanks the youth for completing the program.
Follow-up	There is no follow-up.
Success Indicators	MYEP looks at the number of youth who finish training and the number of youth who are placed in internships.
Fee	There is no fee for this program.
Collaborative Partners	MYEP collaborates with Goodwill, Right Moves for Youth, and Communities In Schools.
Best Practices Networks	MYEP looks at other programs in other cities, such as the Atlanta youth jobs program, but has no formal benchmark. Each city seems to approach the issue of youth employment differently, making direct comparisons difficult.

PARTNERS IN OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME (POST)

Address	1609 E. 5th St. Charlotte, NC 28204
Contact Person	Kate Shem, Project Director kshem@postcarolinas.org 704-376-1845 ⬧ **www.postcarolinas.org**
Mission	The mission of Partners in Out-of-School Time (POST) is to ensure that all school-age children and youth (K–12) in Mecklenburg County have access to high-quality programs, activities, and opportunities when school is closed.
Goals	The goals of POST are to expand the number of opportunities that youth have to participate in after-school and summer programs and to improve the quality of after-school and summer programs.
Area Served	POST serves all of Mecklenburg County.
Target Population	POST largely serves as an intermediary and does not run programs directly. POST funds middle school after-school programs that serve youth from 11 to 14 years old. There are no other eligibility requirements. For middle school programs, students do have to attend the middle school where the program is offered. Other services are open to everyone within that age range in Mecklenburg County.
Number of Youth Served	Three-hundred and fifty youth participate in the middle school programs. Each school serves 100, except for Coulwood Middle School, which serves 50.
Waiting List	There is a waiting list for services and high turnover. It is required that each program maintains 80% attendance over the year.
Selection Process	Anyone in a selected middle school is eligible for the program, but the school principal identifies priority students. Different principals have different ways of choosing students. Some are interested in focusing on younger or more at-risk students, while others operate on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Programs and Services	POST offers the following youth services: **Financial Education** **Other:** POST offers Middle School Matters, which funds 4 middle school after-school programs at Albemarle Road Middle School and Coulwood Middle School (both offered by Building Educated Leaders for Life), Quail Hollow Middle School (offered by Kennedy Academic Learning Center), and James Martin Middle School (offered by the YMCA of University City). Middle School Matters provides 21st-century skill training to youth. This includes training in presentation skills, group work, life skills, information technology, and creative critical thinking. There is an emphasis on teaching higher-level skills not taught in school. These after-school programs can include a wide variety of sponsored activities, including a Starbucks apprenticeship program and financial literacy training, as well as activities in art, music, journalism, sports and fitness, community service, and college and career connections. This program also offers individual homework assistance, nutritious snacks, and healthy decision-making opportunities. Other programs POST administers include the Summer Camp Fund, which works with the Charlotte Observer to establish scholarships at area summer camps; Leaf and STEM, which creates opportunities for youth to use the outdoors to explore science, technology, engineering and math; and POST Partners, a network of 60 youth-serving agencies that convene quarterly to discuss youth issues. POST works with the Metrolina Alliance of School-Age Professionals (MASAP) to provide monthly training and technical assistance for after-school providers.
Program Length	There is no available average for how long youth remain in the program. Some youth drop out after a week and others stay for all 3 years.
Symbol of Completion	There is no graduation ceremony. The end of the school year marks the end of the program.
Follow-up	There is no follow-up.
Success Indicators	POST measures student outcomes using a variety of data, including gang data, arrest data, and assessments made by teachers, school principals, site coordinators, and staff members. POST makes fall and spring

	assessments, which gather data with a focus on dropout prevention and gang prevention. POST also conducts student and parent surveys. These data are collected primarily to report back to foundations and to improve the program.
Fee	There is a $10 fee for the entire year. This serves as a parent buy-in. More involved programs may also require a service or materials fee of some sort.
Collaborative Partners	POST collaborates with the YMCA, Building Educated Leaders for Life (BELL), the Charlotte Observer for the Summer Camp Fund, Mecklenburg County 4-H for Leaf and STEM, CMS after-school programs, and Discovery Place. Middle School Matters has a board of trustees with representatives from Mecklenburg County, the Foundation for the Carolinas, the City of Charlotte, CMS, and the Latin American Chamber of Commerce. POST Partners also brings together 60 different agencies, though POST collaborates most closely with the organizations above.
Best Practices Networks	POST Partners is one of the largest area networks for exchanging information among youth-serving organizations. POST also belongs to the Childcare Commission to exchange information at the state level, the North Carolina After School Coalition (NCASC), the Youth Violence Prevention Network, Mayor's Mentoring Alliance, Women's Summit, and Bully-Free Charlotte.

Q FOUNDATION

Address	5633 Monroe Rd. Charlotte, NC 28212
Contact Person	Marc Brooks, Program Director mbrooks@qfoundation.com 704-566-4969 ◆ **www.qfoundation.com/programs.html**
Mission	The Q Foundation's mission is assisting youth and youth-based organizations by providing programs and services that promote self-sufficiency through Education, Occupation, Athletics and Behavior Health Services.
Goals	The goals of the Q Foundation are removing barriers to allow youth to achieve a living wage through continued education and employment.
Area Served	The Q Foundation serves Mecklenburg County.
Target Population	The Q Foundation has a youth sports program that serves ages 4–24. The workforce development component serves youth 14 to 18 under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), but the foundation generally works with youth ages 16–18. To be eligible, a young person must be a resident of Mecklenburg County, be considered low income, test below grade level, and be out of school. Youth who live outside of Mecklenburg County or are still attending school are not eligible for services. Services generally apply to youth who have dropped out, but some work readiness and work experience instruction is offered to high school graduates.
Number of Youth Served	One hundred eighty youth participate in the program.
Waiting List	There is no waiting list for this program.

Selection Process	Schools generally bring at-risk youth to the program. The Q Foundation also advertises through Job Finder and recruits youth through its sports programs. Youth have to attend an orientation and undergo an assessment to see if they fit the program requirements. Each potential client undergoes the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). If the young person is identified as below the 6th grade level in reading and math, he is not accepted into the program. At any time, 5% of the youth member population may be above WIA qualifications.
Programs and Services	The Q Foundation offers the following youth services: **Vocational Assessment** **Résumé Development** **Customer Service Training:** The Q Foundation offers national professional certification for customer service. **Job Readiness Training** **Financial Education:** Volunteers from 1st Legacy Bank come to the Foundation headquarters to offer youth financial instruction. Financial education includes opening checking accounts with each student. **Mentoring:** Volunteers offer daily mentoring. **Job Referral/Placement:** The Q Foundation has a special program for job referral and placement. The Foundation agrees to pay the first 90 days of wages for any youth that an employer hires. After the 90 days, the employer can then hire and pay the youth, or the young person can leave with work experience on his résumé. This program has gotten young people jobs with Cricket, Time Warner Arena, and the Employment Security Commission. **Other:** The Q Foundation is interested in removing any barriers youth may have to employment. This includes buying bus passes and formal clothing. The Foundation has also started offering psychological assessments.
Program Length	Youth are expected to spend 14 weeks in the program.

Symbol of Completion	Each youth is given a certificate of completion of the program. The Q Foundation also holds an end-of-year recognition for graduates, and most youth eventually participate in CPCC's GED or adult high school graduation in May.
Follow-up	The Workforce Development Board keeps files on each student and follows up through the Employment Security Board to see if each youth earns wages in the first quarter after they leave. Q will call to see if youth are still in school or, for those youth who received a job, are still employed. Some youth will return to help at the center. The Foundation keeps each student's files for 5 years.
Success Indicators	The major indicators for youth in the Q Foundation between 16 and 18 include reaching a certain level of literacy and numeracy (9.0 on TABE), receiving a GED, receiving another major certificate like customer service certification, and employment the first quarter after leaving the program. For older youth, ages 19– 21, the desired end credential is employment in the first quarter after leaving or any post-secondary path, including trade school, college, or military service.
Fee	There is no fee for this program.
Collaborative Partners	The Q Foundation works with the Workforce Development Board, Arbor Education and Training, Cricket Communications, the Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreations Committee, and the Employment Security Commission/JobLinks program.
Best Practices Networks	The Q Foundation takes part in conferences held by the Southeastern Employment and Training Association (SETA), the North Carolina Workforce Development Board, and the National Council of Continuing Education and Training (NCCET).

THE RELATIVES

Address	1100 East Blvd. Charlotte, NC 28203
Contact Person	Brennon Graham, Executive Director bgraham@therelatives.org 704-377-0602 ◆ www.therelatives.org
Mission	The mission of The Relatives is to keep kids safe, families together, and reduce the incidence of juvenile crime in the community.
Goals	The primary goal of The Relatives is to keep young people safe.
Area Served	The Relatives primarily serves Mecklenburg County, but youth from other counties are also served. For youth outside of Mecklenburg County, case managers coordinate services with agencies in youth's home counties.
Target Population	The Relatives serves youth ages 7–17 who have run away from home, who are homeless, or who have suffered some crisis that jeopardizes their ability to stay at home. Young people are not eligible for services if they are outside the age group or if they attempt to check themselves in while under the influence.
Number of Youth Served	There are 290 youth who have been in the residential program over the last year. One hundred ten youth have received walk-in services. The Relatives has taken over 1,500 crisis calls. Fifty parents have taken parenting classes. The program has served 306 youth in after-care programs following a residential stay.
Waiting List	There is no waiting list. Even if the shelter is full when a youth arrives, the staff will take care of the young person until a bed opens up.
Selection Process	Youth who come to the shelter are self-selected or referred by family and friends. The Relatives is the local affiliate for the national Safe Place program, and youth who go to other affiliated places are taken to The Relatives shelter.

Programs and Services	The Relatives offers the following youth services: **Vocational Assessment** **Résumé Development** **Customer Service Training** **Job Readiness Training** **Financial Education** **Mentoring:** The Relatives currently provides mentoring directly out of the shelter. **Job Referral/Placement** **Other:** The Relatives runs a residential youth shelter with 9 beds for young people who have run away from home, who are homeless, or who have suffered some crisis that jeopardizes their ability to stay at home. The program also offers free parenting classes for parents using the Cline Fay Love and Logic model, life skills training, and an array of mental health services with the help of the Alexander Youth Network. The Relatives is in partnership with the Mecklenburg County Department of Health to start a program for youth ages 16–24 transitioning out of youth programs into adulthood. This program will likely include the above elements with an emphasis on educational components, career development, health, and safety.
Program Length	The average length of a residential stay is 8 days. The maximum stay at the residential centers is 14 days. After care is offered for 6 months on average.
Symbol of Completion	There is none for this program.
Follow-up	The Relatives follows up with youth through phone calls, e-mails, and letters. Youth are also invited back to events based on need. The program also invites families back for meetings and counseling sessions.

Success Indicators	The Relatives tracks safety for youth and families through surveys. The Relatives conducts safety surveys while youth and families are receiving services. The safety standard for this survey differs, for example, when applied to a young person experiencing a personal crisis versus homeless families. Parents are also given a parenting skills survey prior to and after taking classes to measure an increase in knowledge of parenting.
Fee	There is no fee for this program.
Collaborative Partners	The Relatives works with Alexander Youth Network, the Salvation Army and Community Link. In providing services for youth, The Relatives works with hundreds of programs in the area.
Best Practices Networks	The Relatives exchanges information and best practices as part of the Children and Family Services Center, which is a collaboration of 9 agencies working for youth and families. Relatives also partners with national Safe Place, the Homeless Services Network, and the Gang Prevention Coalition.

RIGHT MOVES FOR YOUTH

Address	2211 W. Morehead St. Charlotte, NC 28208
Contact Person	Tayuanee Dewberry, Executive Director tdewberry@rightmovesforyouth.org 704-377-4425 ◆ **www.rightmovesforyouth.org**
Mission	The mission of Right Moves for Youth is to provide the motivation and resources for students in grades 4-12 to succeed in school, improve their quality of life and become responsible members of society.
Goals	Right Moves for Youth collaborates with public schools, local law enforcement agencies, and other community partners to help students improve their school attendance, behavior, and academic performance.
Area Served	Right Moves for Youth serves all of Mecklenburg County.
Target Population	Right Moves for Youth serves youth in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) in grades 4 through 12. Youth have to be attending school to participate in this program. Target students may have excessive absences, excessive tardiness, show behavioral issues in the classroom, have failed the year before, have scored below a certain level on the North Carolina End-of-Grade tests, have problems adapting socially in a school setting, or have an unstable home environment. These youth are at risk of dropping out of school, and Right Moves hopes to engage them as they are in the process of disengaging from school.
Number of Youth Served	Right Moves for Youth serves 2,500 students a year at 68 school-based sites.
Waiting List	There is a waiting list for this program.
Selection Process	Youth are selected based on referrals by school administrators, school counselors, and social workers.

Programs and Services	Right Moves for Youth offers the following youth services: **Vocational Assessment:** Right Moves offers some vocational assessment to high school students. These assessments include the Meyers-Brigg test and interest inventories, which are used to identify careers that students are interested in and suited for. **Résumé Development** **Job Readiness Training** **Financial Education:** Financial professionals administer financial education on-site. **Mentoring:** Right Moves offers group mentoring, where three to five adults will engage with a group of youth. This mentoring occurs from one to three times a week and is offered on school premises as an extracurricular activity to increase student ties to the school. The program also offers positive peer mentoring.
Program Length	On average, each student is in the program for 2– 3 years. Some youth remain in the program from middle school through the end of high school.
Symbol of Completion	High school graduation is the mark of completion for each student. Right Moves also has its own end-of-year ceremony, where youth are given cords that they can wear at their official graduation ceremony.
Follow-up	Recently, Right Moves has begun keeping a database of youth with whom to follow up. Youth are reached through surveys and calls as well as Facebook.
Success Indicators	Right Moves for Youth looks at absences, suspensions, referrals, graduation, and promotion rates from year to year. As a partner with CMS, Right Moves can also look at student grade and test data.
Fee	There is no fee for this program.
Collaborative Partners	Right Moves for Youth's main partners are CMS, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD), and the Sheriff's office. The program also collaborates with A Child's Place and Communities In Schools .

Best Practices Networks	Right Moves exchanges information with the Children's Alliance, the North Carolina Center for Non-Profits, the American Counseling Association, and the North Carolina Counselor's Association.

SEIGLE AVENUE TEEN CENTER

Address	600 Seigle Ave. Charlotte, NC 28204
Contact Person	Martine Wurst martine@carolina.rr.com 704-661-1848 www.seigleavenue.org/SAPCTeenCenter/tabid/1704/Default.aspx
Mission	The Seigle Avenue Teen Center 's mission is to inspire, move and touch young people so they know there is a bright future ahead of them and to empower them to believe that anything is possible. The Seigle Avenue Teen Center works with youth to build character, responsibility, and leadership and to help them become citizens of the world.
Goals	The goals of the Seigle Avenue Teen Center are to provide programs to keep kids safe over the weekend and provide job skills training over the summer.
Area Served	The Teen Center serves the nearby neighborhoods of Belmont, Villa Heights, and Optimist Park.
Target Population	The Seigle Avenue Teen Center serves youth ages 8 to 18 (mostly 13 to 17), nearly all of whom are still in school. There are no eligibility requirements. This population was selected because middle and high-school aged youth are generally underserved.
Number of Youth Served	The summer job readiness program serves 30 youth.
Waiting List	There is a waiting list for this program.
Selection Process	There is no formal selection process.

Programs and Services	Seigle Avenue Teen Center offers the following youth services: **Résumé Development** **Customer Service Training** **Job Readiness Training** **Financial Education** **Other:** The Teen Center offers tutoring and maintains a separate safe house for gang prevention. This facility is run in cooperation with Best Buy and offers games on Saturday evening as an alternative for at-risk youth. Résumé development, customer service training, job readiness training, and financial education are offered in the summer job skill training sessions. Volunteers from Wells-Fargo come in and talk to youth about how to be businessmen and salespeople. The program serves as workforce preparation, and youth receive a stipend and risk being "fired" for being disruptive or failing to attend classes.
Program Length	Youth generally stay in the program until they reach the age of 18.
Symbol of Completion	There is a graduation ceremony every August. Parents are invited to attend.
Follow-up	There is no formal follow-up; the staff track youth through word-of-mouth.
Success Indicators	The Center monitors attendance and administers surveys at the end of the summer program.
Fee	There is no fee for this program.
Collaborative Partners	The Center collaborates closely with Ray of Hope and the Belmont Boys and Girls Club under the North Charlotte Youth Network. The Center has been working with a police officer and the Steele Creek Youth Network for the last 4 years. It also collaborates with Goodwill's Youth Job Connection and the Mayor's Youth Employment Program.

Best Practices Networks	Staff generally exchange information informally with other local organizations.

STEELE CREEK YOUTH NETWORK (SCYN)

Address	2211 W. Morehead St. Charlotte, NC 28208
Contact Person	Officer Lisa K. Speas Lspeas@cmpd.org 704-575-3191 www.seigleavenue.org/SAPCTeenCenter/tabid/1704/Default.aspx
Mission	The mission of SCYN is to prevent and reduce youth violence in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.
Goals	The goals of SCYN are to address and eradicate negative risk factors, educate about and increase protective factors, and increase awareness and knowledge of youth violence prevention and intervention strategies for youth and adults.
Area Served	Steele Creek was initially set up to target the Steele Creek area in southwestern Charlotte. The program is open to all youth but still focuses on that area.
Target Population	SCYN serves middle and high school youth, ages 11– 18. The majority of the youth are low-income African-Americans and Latinos. Youth do not have to be in school. Although age is the only requirement, the program is interested in targeting youth who do not participate in after-school activities or have disposable income.
Number of Youth Served	In a year, 4,000–6,000 youth participate in some way. This number includes youth who attend summer camp, weekend programs, gang prevention classes, and the Mayors Youth Employment Program.
Waiting List	There is a waiting list for the summer camps but no waiting list for weekend programs.
Selection Process	Youth are selected based on age and whether or not they show up for events. There is no marketing; youth are drawn to the programs based on word of mouth.

Programs and Services	Steele Creek Youth Network offers the following youth services: **Mentoring:** SCYN supports mentoring by building relationships. Adults in local congregations, other volunteers (largely from Davidson College, Queens College, and UNC Charlotte), and at-risk youth come together to form lasting relationships and learn about the importance of staying in school and pursuing higher education. Meetings emphasize the value of athletics and academics. **Other:** SCYN offers gang prevention and youth violence alternatives. These alternatives include sports, outdoor wilderness programs, and safe weekend alternatives. The Network also offers courses in gang violence awareness and prevention. Much of this work is done through churches. Churches provide the facilities for weekend programs and the respect accorded to faith-based institutions helps to keep these activities orderly. SCYN refers youth to the Mayor's Youth Employment Program (MYEP) and Goodwill Youth Job Connection to receive vocational assessment, résumé development, customer service training, job readiness training, financial education and job referral and placement.
Program Length	Youth stay in the program for varying periods of time. Some have been attending program activities for the 5 years that SCYN has been in existence. Some have attended a couple of events and never returned. Youth can continue in the program as long as they remain in the age range.
Symbol of Completion	There is a graduation ceremony for the summer camp, to which parents are invited to attend. There is no celebration for youth attending weekend programs.
Follow-up	There is a follow-up phone call with youth who attend the summer camps several months after their graduation.
Success Indicators	Students from Queens College and UNC Charlotte conduct yearly assessments of the program, which involve face-to-face interviews with everyone who attends the summer camps and a random sampling of weekend program participants. These surveys measure the youth's self efficacy (confidence in attaining education and career goals), hope for the future, importance of a caring adult, perceived likelihood of engaging in violence and high-risk behavior, and positive outlook (one's motivation to achieve future outcomes associated with family, job, and community).

	These indicators are based on the resiliency theory of Martin Krovetz and examine protective factors and risk factors in youth's lives.
Fee	There is a $25 fee for the summer camps, primarily charged for accountability. There is no fee for weekend programs.
Collaborative Partners	SCYN collaborates with neighborhood houses of faith, Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation, Goodwill Industries, MYEP, BRIDGE Job Program, CPCC, Crisis Assistance Ministry, Gang of One (a Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department gang prevention program), Mi Casa Su Casa, the Latin American Coalition, the Relatives Crisis Shelter, Salvation Army, Teen Health Connection, the Urban League, Workforce Development Board, the YWCA, and Youth Development Initiatives.
Best Practices Networks	SCYN is a member of the Mayor's Mentoring Alliance and shares information with POST (Partners in Out-of-School Time). The organization also meets with collaborators to compare information and best practices.

UNITED WAY OF CENTRAL CAROLINAS

Address	301 S. Brevard St. Charlotte, NC 28202
Contact Person	Jane McIntyre, Executive Director 704-371-6226 ◆ www.uwcentralcarolinas.org
Mission	United Way's mission is to change people's lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities. The mission of the early childhood/youth education council is to address the broad continuum of needs that exist throughout the developmental years of a child's life, including services to children 0-5, before- and after-school child care, other out-of-school activities, supporting mentoring relationships, tools for academic success, and strategies to reduce risk behaviors.
Goals	The United Way provides program funding for many youth service programs. Within Mecklenburg County, there are 7 councils, at least 3 of which fund youth service programs. The Early Childhood and Youth Education Council focuses on youth issues and funds. Programs supported by the Council include Right Moves for Youth, Boy Scouts, Mecklenburg County Council, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Charlotte, Girl Scouts, Hornets' Nest Council, Communities In Schools, Child Care Resources, Florence Crittenton Services, Seigle Avenue Preschool Cooperative, and Summit House.
Area Served	United Way of Central Carolinas serves Anson, Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, and Union counties, as well as the Mooresville/Lake Norman area in Iredell County.
Target Population	The volunteers who make funding decisions seek to fund those organizations that are filling service gaps in communities. As a result, funding often goes to organizations serving at-risk and disconnected youth in underserved communities, often in African American and Latino neighborhoods. There are no eligibility requirements for funding.
Number of Youth Served	Youth participation is based on the programs being funded.

Programs and Services	The United Way is a funding organization and does not provide direct services. It funds organizations that provide a range of services related to workforce development.
Program Length	The length of youth enrollment depends on the organization being funded and the contents of that organization's proposal.
Follow-up	The organization making the proposal is responsible for follow-up. The heart of any proposal is its outcomes. Proposals may lay out short, mid-range, and long-term outcomes. Long-term outcomes generally involve follow-up. Communities In Schools, for example, may have its outcomes tied to graduation. A youth shelter may require follow-up to see if youth that leave the shelter develop healthier relationships.
Success Indicators	All of United Way's data is collected by county. Every volunteer receives a list of funding priorities based on the needs of the community, as determined using needs assessment surveys and reviews of community information. The list for Charlotte is called Mecklenburg County priorities and currently places high priority on meeting youth education and childhood success needs.
Collaborative Partners	United Way collaborates with schools, Mecklenburg Citizens for Education, and DSS on youth questions. The primary collaboration is with funded agencies.
Best Practices Networks	United Way of Central Carolinas collaborates with United Way Worldwide. The organization also belongs to a large network of funders and endowments and works with Healthy Mecklenburg on health issues. The staff belong to several workgroups in the city and have developed personal relationships with counterparts at other funding organizations. United Way exchanges information with POST and is working on a youth leadership and development program with Leading to Change.

URBAN LEAGUE OF CENTRAL CAROLINAS

Address	740 W. 5th St. Charlotte, NC 28202
Contact Person	Diane McClinton, Urban Youth Empowerment Program Director dmcclinton@urbanleaguecc.org 704-373-2256 ◆ www.urbanleaguecc.org
Mission	Urban League's mission is to empower the community to attain financial stability and social justice in a Global Economy through education, training, and placement.
Area Served	These programs serve Mecklenburg County.
Target Population	The League is concerned with the working poor and low-income populations in keeping with the historic function of the Urban League and the requirements of the grants the League receives. Since the organization's founding in 1910, the Urban League has been involved in workforce development and training to create economic self-sufficiency in poor neighborhoods. These programs have evolved in response to problems observed in communities with poor, largely black, youth who are academically low-achieving and remain unemployed or minimally employed. Most youth come from a single-parent household. About 40% have some kind of criminal record. Youth often come from neighborhoods with crime, drug activity, and domestic abuse problems. LYTE generally serves younger populations, often youth under age 14. The target population for UYEP and PEP are unemployed and underemployed people. UYEP focuses on youth between 18 and 24, while PEP focuses on individuals 18 years old and above. Those who can afford the cost of training are ineligible, though the League will refer them to more appropriate programs.
Number of Youth Served	In 2009, the Urban League served approximately 650 youth.
Waiting List	There is a waiting list for these programs. Thirty days is the longest wait for youth to receive service.

Programs and Services

The Urban League has three programs that serve disconnected youth: the Urban Youth Empowerment Program (UYEP), which provides at-risk youth with GED attainment and employment; Linking Youth to Technology through Training (LYTE), which provides training in the high-growth field of computer technology; and the Professional Empowerment Program (PEP), which also provides employment training and opportunities.

Urban League of Central Carolinas offers the following youth services:

Vocational Assessment

Résumé Development

Customer Service Training

Job Readiness Training: The program provides job readiness workshops that include interviewing, résumé preparation, dress for success, instruction in filling out an application, and instruction in how to keep a job.

Financial Education

Mentoring

Job Referral/Placement: UYEP also assists in job placement.

Other: UYEP and PEP offer classes in life skills, business English, typing, and credit repair. UYEP also connects youth to services for GED completion. UYEP also includes larger life skills instruction on how to handle toxic relationships, conflict management, peer pressure, and other skills to help remove barriers to consistent employment. UYEP also deals with adjudicated youth, and includes instruction in how to seek employment and interview with a criminal record. The program maps out a career plan with every student. The desired outcomes are education, employment, or military service.

In 2009, the Urban League received stimulus funding to provide fiber optics training for 80 youth. Each student graduated receiving 2 national certifications. The program offered young people an edge in getting work that pays well and can develop into a career. For this program, the League worked with Alliance Personnel Solutions, Inc. (APSI). The program offered 3 weeks of broadband fiber optics training and 2 weeks of life skills and work preparation.

Program Length	Youth are generally in UYEP or PEP for a 4 to 6 month time frame.
Symbol of Completion	The young person's completion of the program is generally marked with the GED or the acquisition of appropriate vocational certification. UYEP and PEP have graduation ceremonies every 8 weeks.
Follow-up	Participants are generally followed for 6 months after they leave the program. They are reached through phone calls, postcards, or word of mouth.
Success Indicators	SCYN has partnerships with undergraduates from Queens College and UNC Charlotte who do yearly assessments of the program, which involve face-to-face interviews with everyone who attends the summer camps and a random sampling of weekend program participants. These surveys measure the youth's self efficacy (confidence in attaining education and career goals), hope for the future, importance of a caring adult, perceived likelihood of engaging in violence and high-risk behavior, and positive outlook (one's motivation to achieve future outcomes associated with family, job, and community). These indicators are based on the resiliency theory of Martin Krovetz and examine protective factors and risk factors in youth's lives.
Fee	There is no fee for participants.
Collaborative Partners	The League works with a large number of different organizations, including the YMCA, YWCA, Lowes Corporation, Coca-Cola, CMS, Crisis Assistance Ministry, and the Department of Social Services (DSS). The organization also directs youth to Goodwill for job training and placement.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Address	700 Parkwood Ave. Charlotte, NC 28205
Contact Person	Deborah Gibson, Executive Director dgibson@ci.charlotte.nc.us 704-336-3952 ◆ **www.joblinkcenter.org** ◆ **www.charlotteworks.org**
Mission	The Workforce Development Board (WDB) Mission Statement – To ensure that Charlotte-Mecklenburg's Workforce Development System is effectively meeting the current and future needs of local employers and job seekers. The Workforce Development Board Vision: The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Workforce Development Board will be recognized throughout the region as a vital business partner in developing and retaining a diverse, high performance workforce. The Youth Council Vision: Charlotte-Mecklenburg youth will be prepared to compete in the workforce now and in the future. The Youth Council Mission: Act as a catalyst to build a comprehensive youth training, education, and job placement system for 14-21 year old at-risk youth in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.
Goals	The goals of the WDB are determined by the state of North Carolina and the Department of Labor. Those goals include youth being placed in employment and demonstrable improvements in reading and math skills.
Area Served	The Board serves Mecklenburg County.
Target Population	The Board serves "at-risk youth" as defined by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Currently, the organization contracts to associations that serve out-of-school youth seeking GEDs and vocational training. Youth who exhibit two or more of the following barriers to employment are eligible for the program: deficiency in reading or math, pregnant or parenting, in foster care, juvenile delinquent, and runaway.

Number of Youth Served	Eight hundred youth in all were served in Board programs over the last year. Three hundred to three hundred fifty youth participated in the year-round program, while the rest participated in the summer program. The number is erratic because youth are constantly dropping out and being replaced.
Waiting List	There is no waiting list.
Selection Process	A case worker determines who is eligible for the program. Program directors also do outreach in low-income neighborhoods, and the WDB advertises in Job Finder. Youth also come to the program after being informed through word of mouth, community contacts, or referrals from other agencies. Youth are recruited through radio advertising, flyers, and other methods determined by subcontractors.
Programs and Services	The Workforce Development Board offers the following youth services: **Vocational Assessment** **Résumé Development** **Customer Service Training** **Job Readiness Training** **Financial Education:** The Q Foundation has a uniquely intense financial training program. **Mentoring:** Mentoring is mandatory to any organization the Board hires. **Other:** WDB contracts for dressing for success and general life skills instruction. The WDB has contracts with Arbor Education and Training, and the Q Foundation, which offer all of the above services. The WDB did offer job placement with stimulus funds. Over the past summer, the Board placed 382 youth in jobs, but this service is generally not offered.

Program Length	Youth remain in the program for one full year or the summer depending on the program. Over 80% of youth stay in the program for the full length. After completion, the length of time it takes to get the GED or vocational training varies between students.
Symbol of Completion	The contractors offer graduation ceremonies. There is also a ceremony for youth who earn the GED.
Follow-up	There is a one-year follow-up for out-of-school youth. If the Board expands programs to serve in-school youth, then follow-up would be for four years after program completion.
Success Indicators	The Board receives performance standards from the federal government and reports numbers to the state. The primary indicators are based on obtaining a GED or similar certification, demonstrating an increase in literacy or numeracy, and securing and retaining employment.
Fee	There is no fee for services.
Collaborative Partners	The Board most often collaborates with its contractors (Arbor Education and the Q Foundation), juvenile justice, probation officers, and foster care. WDB also collaborates with Goodwill of the Southern Piedmont, the Mayor's Mentoring Alliance, and Drop-out Prevention of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. The organization's Youth Council includes representatives from Vocational Rehabilitation, DSS, Charlotte Housing Authority, Mayor's Youth Employment Program, CMS, Goodwill, the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Office, the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department, Right Moves for Youth, and Steele Creek Youth Network.
Best Practices Networks	The WDB is part of Youth Leads, a network of youth coordinators from all over the state. The Board is frequently receiving e-mail from and invited to conferences by different best practices networks. Some of the conferences WDB staff attend are sponsored by the Department of Labor, National Association of Workforce Boards, the NC Division of Workforce Development.

YMCA OF GREATER CHARLOTTE

Address	500 E. Morehead St., Suite 300 Charlotte, NC 28202
Contact Person	Andy C. Calhoun, President and CEO 704-716-6200 ◆ **www.ymcacharlotte.org**
Mission	The YMCA's mission is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.
Goals	The YMCA of Greater Charlotte tries to connect and engage people to enhance lives and build community. The YMCA has 6 areas of impact: health, families, relationships, bridge building, and servant leadership. The YMCA is primarily about self-empowerment, helping kids find themselves. The Y is interested in building life skills, literacy, and emotional intelligence for youth.
Area Served	The YMCA serves an area of 900 square miles, which includes Mecklenburg County, Union County, Lincoln County, and the southern part of Iredell County. It has 21 locations in this area.
Target Population	The Y serves youth from birth up to high school graduation. Everyone is eligible for Y services. Though the association charges some for services, it gives out 1.5 million dollars in financial assistance, and approximately 16% of those who use the Y receive financial assistance of some kind. This is a part of the YMCA's history, as the program was originally founded in 1844 to serve impoverished teenage boys. The fitness activities and facilities the Y offers are intended to raise funds for youth services.
Number of Youth Served	Around 8,000 youth participate in the program.
Waiting List	There is sometimes a waiting list for job readiness services.

Selection Process	Youth are referred by the Achievement Zone superintendent for CMS, and the local schools. The goal is to have classes in which one-third of the participants are excelling students, one-third are failing students, and one-third are youth on the edge of failing.
Programs and Services	YMCA of Greater Charlotte offers the following youth services: **Vocational Assessment** **Job Readiness Training** **Financial Education** **Mentoring** **Job Referral/Placement:** The Y offers job referral and placement on a small scale. **Other:** YMCA offers wrap around support services for at-risk youth. The Y has an arm called Community Development that works with families or individuals in crisis. There is a small department concerned with offering transitional housing or emergency aid. Vocational Assessment, Job Readiness Training, Financial Education, and Mentoring are offered out of the branches where the need is greatest, primarily in West Charlotte.
Program Length	Youth generally remain in the program for 4 to 5 years.
Symbol of Completion	One program working with challenging teens has a graduation and offers an incentive on completion of the program, like an additional year of membership.
Follow-up	There is minimal follow-up.
Success Indicators	The YMCA looks at grades and school attendance of participants. The Y has found that attendance problems begin to emerge with youth in 7th grade.
Fee	There is a fee charged on a sliding scale based on a participant's ability to pay.

Collaborative Partners	The YMCA collaborates with different partners in different parts of the city. The Y works with 254 different organizations, including Carolina's Healthcare System, which offer free nurses in every YMCA building, Crisis Assistance Ministry, Goodwill, Mecklenburg County, and the Latin American Coalition.
Best Practices Networks	The Y exchanges information and best practices with the National Y, Illinois Rights for Children, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg African American Agenda Group, and through meetings with faith-based organizations and meetings about wrap-around services.

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FIGURE A-1. YOUTH SERVICE AGENCIES IN CHARLOTTE, NC

Youth Service Agencies in Charlotte, NC

Legend

● Youth Service Agency

⌂ Communities In Schools Location

▣ Charlotte City Limits

— Major Road

Davidson

Cornelius

Huntersville

77

Workforce Development Board

85

United Way

Genesis Project

Urban League

Communities in Schools

BRIDGE

85

277

Goodwill YJC

Seigle Ave. Teen Center

485

Arbor E&T

Right Moves for Youth

YMCA

POST

Mint Hill

77

MYEP

Q Foundation

The Relatives

Matthews

Elon Homes & Schools for Children

Pineville

485

N
W — E
S

0   1.25 2.5   5 Miles

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Data Source: Organizations' websites, 2010

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Program/ Organization	Geographic Area	Specific Youth Population	Programs/Services Provided							Programs/ Services Provided cont.	Number of Participants	Participant Follow-up	Marks of Program Completion	Success Indicators	Length of Time of Program	Fee for Services	Sources of Financial Support
			Vocational Assessment	Resume Development	Customer Service Training	Job Readiness	Financial Education	Mentoring	Job Referral/Placement	Other							
Arbor Education and Training	Mecklenburg County	16-21 yrs old; low-income, out-of-school youth (HS grads and dropouts, foster children, teen parents, criminal offenders	x	x	x	x		x	x	Assistance in obtaining a GED; CNA, Fork Lifting License, assistance finding job	75 - 160 annually	1 year of follow up services for all youth		Federal Benchmarks use for all WIA youth programs	4 months up to 1 year	No	Workforce Development Board
BRIDGE Jobs Program	Mecklenburg County	16-24 yrs old; anyone needing job assistance or dropouts needing to get GED. The primary target for the majority of the program is 14-18 yrs	x	x	x	x	x	x		BRIDGE emphasizes two goals: GED preparation classes and helping clients find employment. Various classes on finances, customer service, resume development and other skill development courses are provided in support of the two main goals.	650	Yes	GED portion when proficient above 9th grade level; Job skills when employed 8 hr/wk; cap and gown ceremony	Attendance, academic skills, time until GED is passed	3 months	$20.00	The United Way, Christ Episcopal Church, annual fundraiser, grants

Program/ Organization	Geographic Area	Specific Youth Population	Vocational Assessment	Resume Development	Customer Service Training	Job Readiness	Financial Education	Mentoring	Job Referral/Placement	Other	Number of Participants	Participant Follow-up	Marks of Program Completion	Success Indicators	Length of Time of Program	Fee for Services	Sources of Financial Support
Communities in Schools	CMS School District	Economically disadvantaged, TANF, and foster care students	x	x				x	x	In-school service provider, primary goal is dropout prevention. Helps young people stay in school, and prepare for life by connecting needed community resources with schools. Job Shadowing, College Readiness/College Access Development, and Life Skills Coaching	5,203 students served in 2009-2010 school year	None to very limited with certain CIS college scholarship recipients	Graduation, certificate or diploma	Attendance, graduation, promotion and stay-in-school rates	Varies by student but CIS offers a K-12 continuum of services	No	The United Way - Mecklenburg County, Merchant's Foundation, CMS, federal & state entities, corporations, and individual donors
Elon Homes and Schools for Children	Mecklenburg, Alamance, Guilford Counties	0-21 yrs old focusing on under 14 yrs	x	x		x		x	x	Core curriculum through the charter school, on-site psychological counseling	1,200	Through DSS/ self-reports	High school graduation	Foster care or placement; school graduation & tests data	2-3 years, foster care 6-12 months	No	State and federal funding including Medicaid & Health Choice, Foundation For The Carolinas, the Duke Endowment

Program/ Organization	Geographic Area	Specific Youth Population	Programs/Services Provided							Programs/ Services Provided cont.	Number of Participants	Participant Follow-up	Marks of Program Completion	Success Indicators	Length of Time of Program	Fee for Services	Sources of Financial Support
			Vocational Assessment	Resume Development	Customer Service Training	Job Readiness	Financial Education	Mentoring	Job Referral/Placement	Other							
Genesis Project	Mecklenburg	All youth, however, emphasis is on those aged 3 and above. Programming is family oriented rather than just youth specific.	x	x		x	x	x		Youth counseling, community advocacy, advocacy at schools, and self-esteem programs. Programming is built on five pillars- mental, financial, spiritual, social and physical- with the goal of empowering the youth and adults it serves.	250	Yes	Graduation party & certificate	Quality of relationship, level of communicatio n, identity development of family members	12-18 months, some longer	No	Insurance reimbursement
Goodwill Industries of Southern Piedmont- Youth Job Connection	Focusing on Mecklenburg but open to youth from outside Charlotte	12-21 yrs old	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Primary goal is to prepare youth for employment. Tools include: mentoring, vocational assessment and skills training , career exploration, and specialty classes such as resumes, customer services and job readiness. Goodwill also makes job referrals internally and to other agencies and businesses and serves as a source of job-ready young adults for area employers.	1,400	Yes	Certificate & letter of recommenda tion for job interviews	Caseloads, total people served, the number of people who gain employment after using their services, and program retention	Varies from a few weeks to 6 months depending on goals of each individual	No	City of Charlotte, Goodwill retail stores; stimulus funding, WIA

Program/Organization	Geographic Area	Specific Youth Population	Vocational Assessment	Resume Development	Customer Service Training	Job Readiness	Financial Education	Mentoring	Job Referral/Placement	Programs/ Services Provided cont. (Other)	Number of Participants	Participant Follow-up	Marks of Program Completion	Success Indicators	Length of Time of Program	Fee for Services	Sources of Financial Support
Mayor's Youth Employment Program	The City of Charlotte with priority given to Neighborhood/Business Revitalization Geography	16-18 yrs old; referred through program partners such as Communities in Schools and Right Moves for Youth		x		x	x		x	This program was originally a summer employment program for youth still in school. This continues to be the goal, although employment opportunities are difficult to obtain. The program has become more oriented toward training for eventual employment.	150 on average; 45 in summer 2009	No	Celebration luncheon with Mayor	Youth who finish training completion, internship placement	8 weeks	No	Municipal tax money
Partners in Out-of-School Time (POST)	Mecklenburg County	11-14 yrs old				x				Middle school after-school programs, includes training in presentation skills, group work, life skills, information technology, and creative critical thinking, homework assistance, healthy decision making opportunities	350	No	No	Improvements in student outcome data including gang and arrest data, assessments made by school personnel & staff members	Varies; some participants up to 3 years	$10.00	City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, private foundations

Program/ Organization	Geographic Area	Specific Youth Population	Programs/Services Provided							Programs/ Services Provided cont.	Number of Participants	Participant Follow-up	Marks of Program Completion	Success Indicators	Length of Time of Program	Fee for Services	Sources of Financial Support
			Vocational Assessment	Resume Development	Customer Service Training	Job Readiness	Financial Education	Mentoring	Job Referral/Placement	Other							
Right Moves for Youth	Mecklenburg County	Grades 4-12 at risk of dropping out	x	x		x	x	x		This program is directed toward the in-school youth population which is at risk of dropping out before receiving a high school graduation diploma. Programs are varied but in general are directed toward reversing the indicators suggesting dropping out, such as absences, excessive tardiness, behavioral issues, failing grades, etc.	3,000	Yes	High school graduation, program ceremony	Improvements in absences, suspensions, referrals, graduation, & promotion rates, grades & test data	4 - 5 years	No	The United Way, corporate & individual contributions
The Relatives	Mecklenburg County, other counties also served	7-17 yrs old who have run away, are homeless or have suffered a crisis that jeopardizes their ability to stay home	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Offers life skills training and, with Alexander Youth Network, provides an array of mental health services.	290 in residential program, 1,500 crisis calls, 50 parents, 306 youth in after care	Yes	None	youth and families. Parenting skills survey prior to and after taking classes to illustrate an increase in knowledge of parenting.	8 day Average, 14 day Maximum; after care offered for 6 months on average	No	County & Federal grants; United way and individual donors

Program/ Organization	Geographic Area	Specific Youth Population	Programs/Services Provided							Programs/ Services Provided cont.	Number of Participants	Participant Follow-up	Marks of Program Completion	Success Indicators	Length of Time of Program	Fee for Services	Sources of Financial Support
			Vocational Assessment	Resume Development	Customer Service Training	Job Readiness	Financial Education	Mentoring	Job Referral/Placement	Other							
Siegle Avenue Teen Center (North Charlotte Youth Network)	Belmont, Villa Heights, Optimist Park neighborhoods in Charlotte	8-18 yrs old		x	x	x	x			Associated with Siegle Avenue Presbyterian Church. Helps students with their school work (tutoring), reduction of the influence of gangs (character, leadership, and responsibility training) employment potential (summer jobs and skill development), and having a safe place to be.	30 for summer program; 65-70 for weekend gang prevention; 40 use Teen Center on Weekdays	No	Graduation ceremony	Attendance and surveys	Until age 18	No	Presbytery grants, corporate grants, private donations, and youth-led fundraisers
Steele Creek Youth Network	Steele Creek area in Southwestern Charlotte	11-18 yrs old low income African Americans & Latinos							x	This is a program directed toward in-school youth with the intention of providing positive activities in a safe environment of ten churches, The primary programming approaches are summer camps and weekend activities.	4,000-6,000	Yes	Graduation ceremony for summer, not for weekend programs	Interviews measuring self-efficacy, hope for the future, caring adult, likelihood of violent behavior, positive outlook	varies; as long as they are in age range	$25/summer, $0 for weekend	Private donations
United Way of Central Carolinas	Anson, Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, and Union counties, Mooresville/ Lake Norman area	At-risk and disconnected youth								Funds organizations, does not provide direct services	Varies by program	Varies	N/A	Surveys & reviews of community needs used to determine needs and priority funding	N/A	N/A	United Way Campaign, small grants

Program/ Organization	Geographic Area	Specific Youth Population	Programs/Services Provided							Programs/ Services Provided cont.	Number of Participants	Participant Follow-up	Marks of Program Completion	Success Indicators	Length of Time of Program	Fee for Services	Sources of Financial Support
			Vocational Assessment	Resume Development	Customer Service Training	Job Readiness	Financial Education	Mentoring	Job Referral/Placement	Other							
Urban League of Central Carolinas, Inc.	Mecklenburg County	Linking Youth To Technology through Training serves under 14; Urban Youth Empowerment Program serves18-24; Professional Empowerment Program serves 18+; unemployed/ under employed, low-income	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	The LYTE program is for a younger population, often below 14 and emphasizes the field of computer technology. Both UYEP and PEP are for persons 18 and above and emphasize GED preparation; basic skills needed to graduate high school, passing the computer competency test, and assisting in gaining employment; and teaching soft skills in support of developing employability.	650	Yes	Graduation ceremony, GED, vocational certification	Employment, GED reception and continued education, or military 4-6 months	4-6 months	No	Foundational grants; stimulus funding

Program/ Organization	Geographic Area	Specific Youth Population	Programs/Services Provided							Programs/ Services Provided cont.	Number of Participants	Participant Follow-up	Marks of Program Completion	Success Indicators	Length of Time of Program	Fee for Services	Sources of Financial Support
			Vocational Assessment	Resume Development	Customer Service Training	Job Readiness	Financial Education	Mentoring	Job Referral/Placement	Other							
Workforce Development Board	Mecklenburg County	Out-of-school population from 16-21. Clients are dropouts or graduates of high school, offenders, homeless, in foster care, low income, and have a literacy deficiency	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Implements a federal program funded by the Workforce Investment Act. That funding passes through the state to the local agency. The Board uses two primary contractors to implement its program: Arbor Education and Training and The Q Foundation. The curricula for both these emphasize hard and soft skills.	800	Yes	Graduation ceremony	Improvement in literacy and numeracy skill levels, Success of youth obtaining jobs, GEDs or getting into vocational training programs	1 year or 1 summer	No	Workforce Investment Act, grants
YMCA of Greater Charlotte	Mecklenburg County, Union County, Lincoln County, and the southern part of Iredell County	0-18 yrs	x			x	x	x	x	Wrap Around support services for at-risk youth, Community Development that works with families or individuals in crisis, transitional housing or emergency aid, Starfish Academy literacy program for early elementary students in out-of-school time; Parents as Teachers works with young, primarily Latino parents	8,000	Minimal	No	Grades and school attendance	4-5 years	Sliding scale	Fee-paying clients, United Way, Mecklenburg County, the City of Charlotte, the State of North Carolina, private contributions

YOUTH COUNCIL MANUAL

A youth council is a formal body made up of youth, typically ages 14 to18, who advise decision makers, give youth a meaningful role in planning, and engage with the organization's staff in the decision-making process and larger community concerns. This manual is intended to serve as a guide for non-profit organizations on how to establish and support a youth council.

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Industries of the Southern Piedmont

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Appendix B

YOUTH COUNCIL MANUAL

MISSION AND PURPOSE

A youth council is a formal body made up of youth, typically ages 14 to18, who advise decision makers, give youth a meaningful role in planning, and engage with program staff in the decision-making process and larger community concerns.

The purpose of the Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont Youth Council is to provide Goodwill youth participants with leadership experience, serve as a resource for Goodwill in getting feedback regarding its practices and impact, and engage youth in outreach to the community. The goals of a successful council will include:

- Leadership and Life Skills Development
- Program Planning and Evaluation
- Outreach
- Advocacy
- Community Service

BEST PRACTICES

Determine Sustainable Council Membership

Youth councils generally have between 10 and 20 members. Youth council members tend to serve two-year terms. Youth Council members' terms should be staggered to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of youth who remain from one year to the next. Groups generally involve members from ages 14 to 18.

A set of expectations needs to be developed so that council member applicants are clear about the commitment. These expectations should be included in the membership application. The expectations of memberships should include the date and time of youth council meetings, youth council coordinator contact information, attendance expectations, and the process for excused absences. To establish regular attendance, it is best to establish an attendance requirement.

A monetary stipend or scholarship should be considered to reward youth council participants for regular participation. They should be encouraged to look at this experience as a "job". Some youth councils require that youth participants pay small "dues" from the stipends they receive as a way of learning about income, expenses, and budgets.

As the council develops, the group will create their own charter, code of conduct, budget, and membership handbook with a defined youth leadership structure. It is important that youth work on

the "business" of running the council at every session. A typical monthly meeting might include the first 20 to 30 minutes of the meeting to be dedicated to the business of organizing and developing the youth council.

Creating a sub-group within the council to complete certain work may be an efficient and meaningful strategy for quickly getting jobs done. The sub-groups could be committees, leadership teams, or work groups.

Ensuring a Sound Infrastructure

The primary costs for youth councils are staffing, transportation, and meeting expenses. Youth councils that receive pro-bono staff time and cover a small geographic area, limiting transportation costs, can function effectively with relatively small budgets, around $1,000. This $1,000 does not include stipends paid to participants.

Consistency and long-term commitment is key. In the start-up phase of the youth council, youth participation may be erratic. It is important that the organizational commitment to the council be long-term. Youth councils should also be institutionalized so that they exist beyond a change in administration. Many youth have experienced "here today, gone tomorrow" programs. It may take up to a year to have an established program with regular attendance. Persistence is key.

Providing a Supportive Work Environment

Staff support is one of the most important determinations in establishing a successful youth council. Staff should be experienced youth workers with time dedicated to supporting the work of the youth council. Staff should be committed to the 10 Principles of Positive Youth Development as they relate to youth councils:

1. The constant presence of caring, knowledgeable adults.

2. The presentation of challenging and clear goals and activities.

3. Community involvement in the youth council.

4. Engaging and meaningful community service activities.

5. The integration of life and leadership skills into the program.

6. Long-term relationship and support.

7. Access to other support services.

8. Work-based, hands-on, or experiential learning.

9. Youth leading youth.

10. Continuous feedback and evaluation from youth and other participants.

Experienced and knowledgeable staff with a long-term commitment to make the youth council work is fundamental. A well thought out staffing plan can elevate the youth council from "just another agency" to a meaningful, life-changing organization for youth. Positive youth development training

and other professional development opportunties for staff who support the youth council are worthwhile investments.

The location and place for youth council gatherings is also important. Successful youth councils provide a dedicated space where members can do their work. The space should be inviting to youth with some comfortable group seating and access to technology like a computer and music player docking station. Many organizations provide an exclusive space for youth that is secured and off-limits to participants outside of the council. Access and use of the space becomes a benefit of youth council participation.

Plan and budget for face-to-face meetings. Text messages are a prefered method to contact youth. Conference calls, emails, dedicated web sites, and social networking sites like Facebook are also effective ways to keep members connected between face-to-face meetings. Multiple and frequent messages, at least twice a week, should be used.

Building Youth Capacity

Youth council coordinators should provide skill-building, leadership, advocacy, and volunteer training for youth members. Each meeting should include an activity that builds youth capacity, even if the activity is primarily social. Examples of these activities from successful youth councils are provided below.

Skill Building: Development and pilot programs to be used in the Youth Job Connection include job application proficiencies, resumé writing, interview skills, customer service training, habits of highly successful employees, job shadowing, career assessment, career exploration, career counseling, job market assessments, career fairs, networking events, entrepreneurial classes, and technology classes.

Leadership: Organizational development skills should include creating leadership roles and job descriptions, managing a successful meeting, communication skills, professional dress, table etiquette, technology etiquette, leadership styles, team building, mentoring, recruiting council membership, public speaking, managing organizational budgets, managing personal budgets, personal finance, and problem solving.

Advocacy: Advocacy activities include agency education, issues education, critical thinking, grass roots movements, civics education, lobbying strategies, tours of government buildings, attending government and public meetings, giving presentations at civic organizations, letter writing to newspapers and leaders, and giving presentations to agency volunteers and Boards are elements of advocacy.

Volunteerism: Volunteerism includes required community service hours or activities, volunteer training, reflections or discussions about the volunteer experience, pairing or mentoring by other Goodwill volunteers.

Deepening Youth Motivation

The members of the youth council should be selected because they have skills and commitment. Young people should be afforded the opportunity to tackle the issues that they identify as most pressing in their families, schools, neighborhoods and broader communities. Connecting immediate issues to root causes is a critical process for adults and young people engaged in community change. Research also helps youth and adults deepen their knowledge about issues, understand root causes, appreciate alternative perspectives, and develop effective arguments and responses. Surveys are a popular

method of collecting youth voices and can be a quick way to garner the opinions of young people. Young people should help design the survey instrument and think through where, when, and how the survey will be administered.

Giving youth the space to create, coordinate, implement, measure, and evaluate their own work and the work of their peers will deepen commitment and motivation. The Positive Youth Development framework encourages working "with" youth, not "for" youth. This approach can often be frustrating for staff charged with accomplishing certain tasks or work. While the positive youth development approach may take longer to accomplish work, research indicates that youth leading youth is a strong predictor of success for youth organizations.

Negotiating Opportunities for Access

The program should cultivate ownership and accountability in the council by creating shared leadership opportunities between youth council members and Goodwill leadership and community policy makers. In addition to allowing youth to be heard by leaders, youth councils can play an important role by helping ensure youth voices are heard by the public at large. To reach the general public, youth councils use typical media outreach strategies: writing letters to newspaper editors, holding press conferences, producing press releases, and using web sites to publicize their work.

STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- Make personal and written contact with potentially interested youth. These teens and young adults can serve as a core team to organize the council.

- Hold an organizing event or information session.

- At this event, distribute applications to gather personal information and assess interest.

- Hold an organizing meeting within a month of the information session, using a core team to attract a larger, monthly youth council.

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Appendix C
THEMATIC MAPS

FIGURE C-1. HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS IN CHARLOTTE, NC
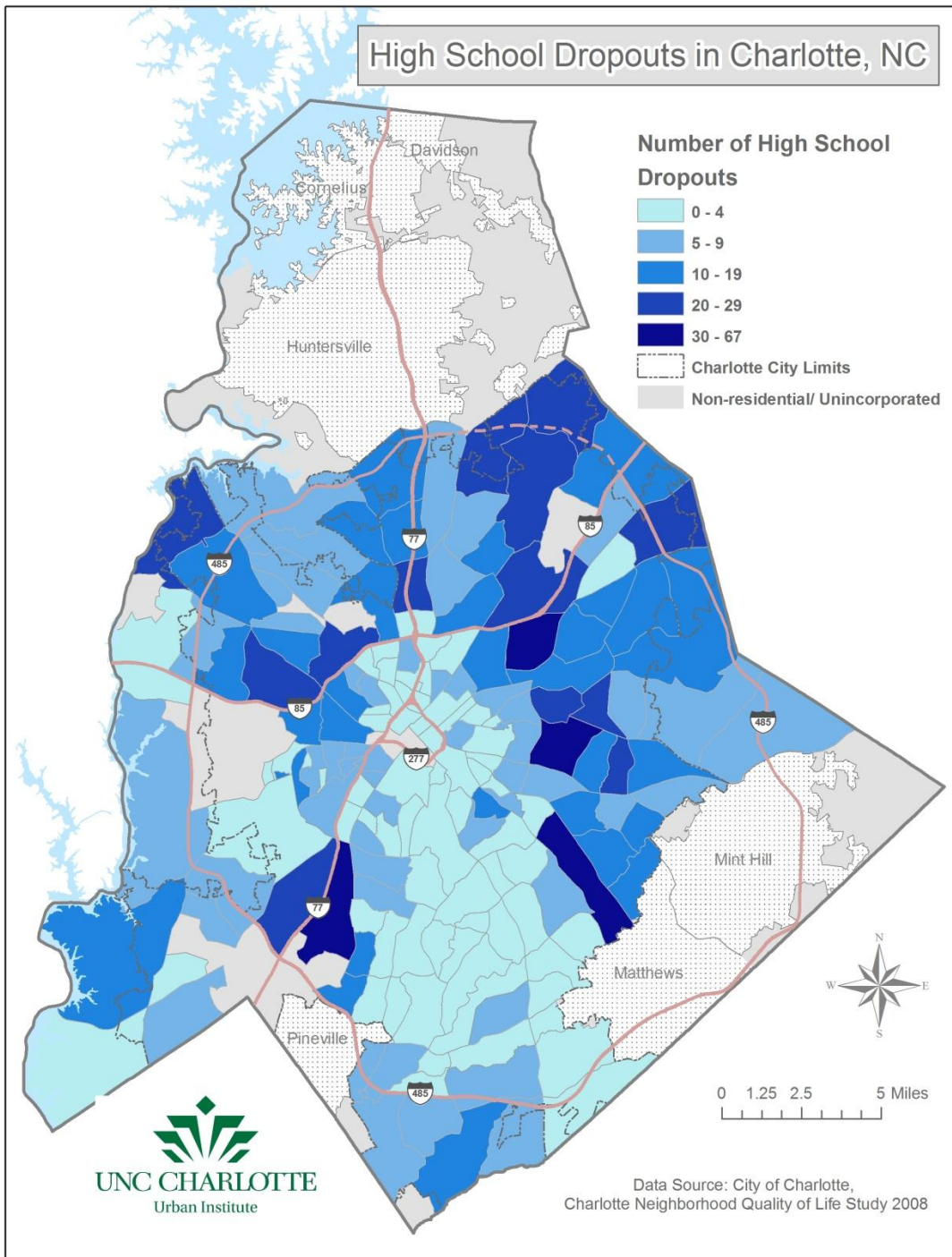
FIGURE C-2. TEEN BIRTHS IN CHARLOTTE, NC

Teen Births in Charlotte, NC

Number of Births to Women 18 and Under

- 0 - 4
- 5 - 9
- 10 - 14
- 15 - 19
- 20 - 41

Charlotte City Limits

Non-residential/ Unincorporated

Data Source: City of Charlotte,
Charlotte Neighborhood Quality of Life Study 2008

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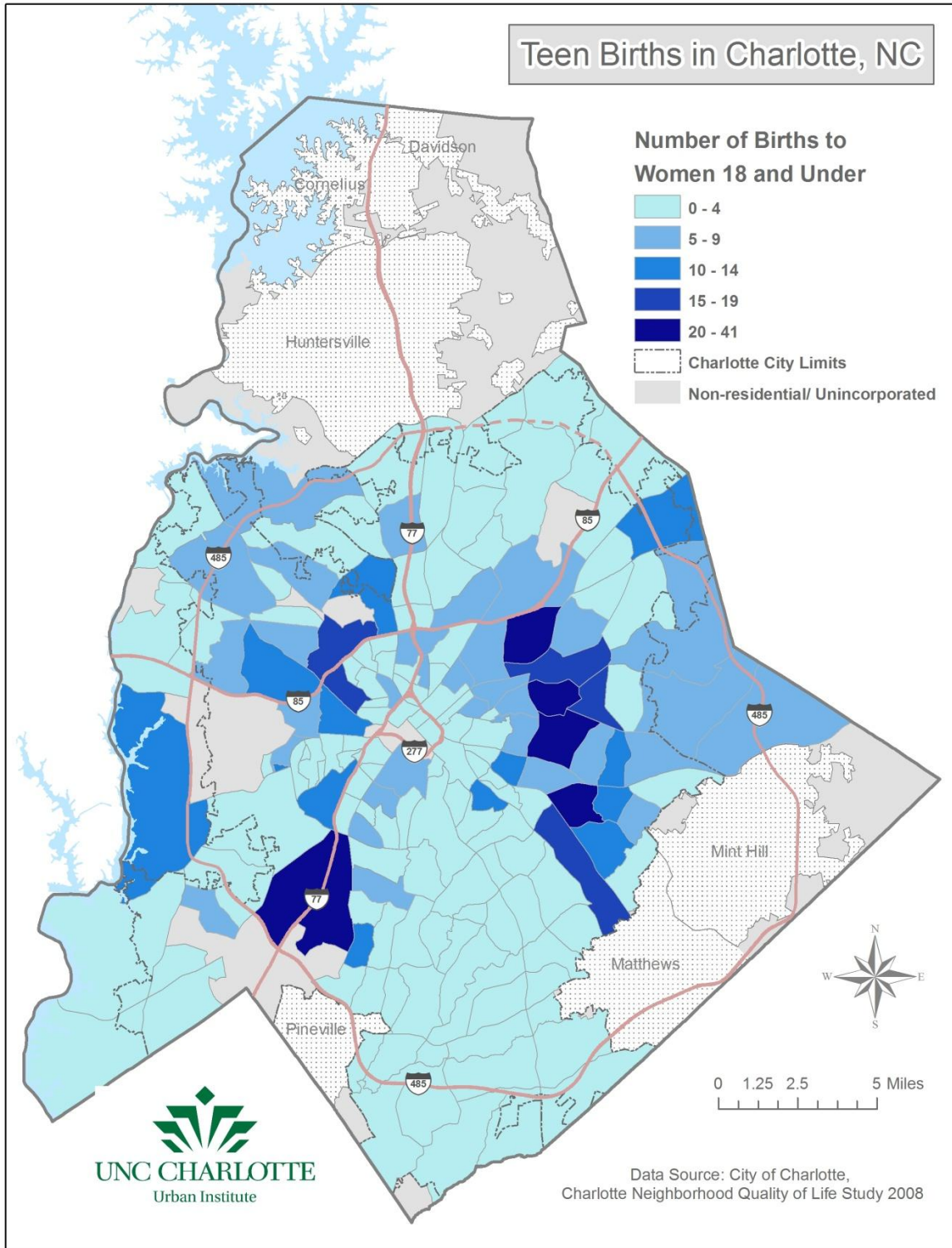
FIGURE C-3. JUVENILE ARRESTS IN CHARLOTTE, NC
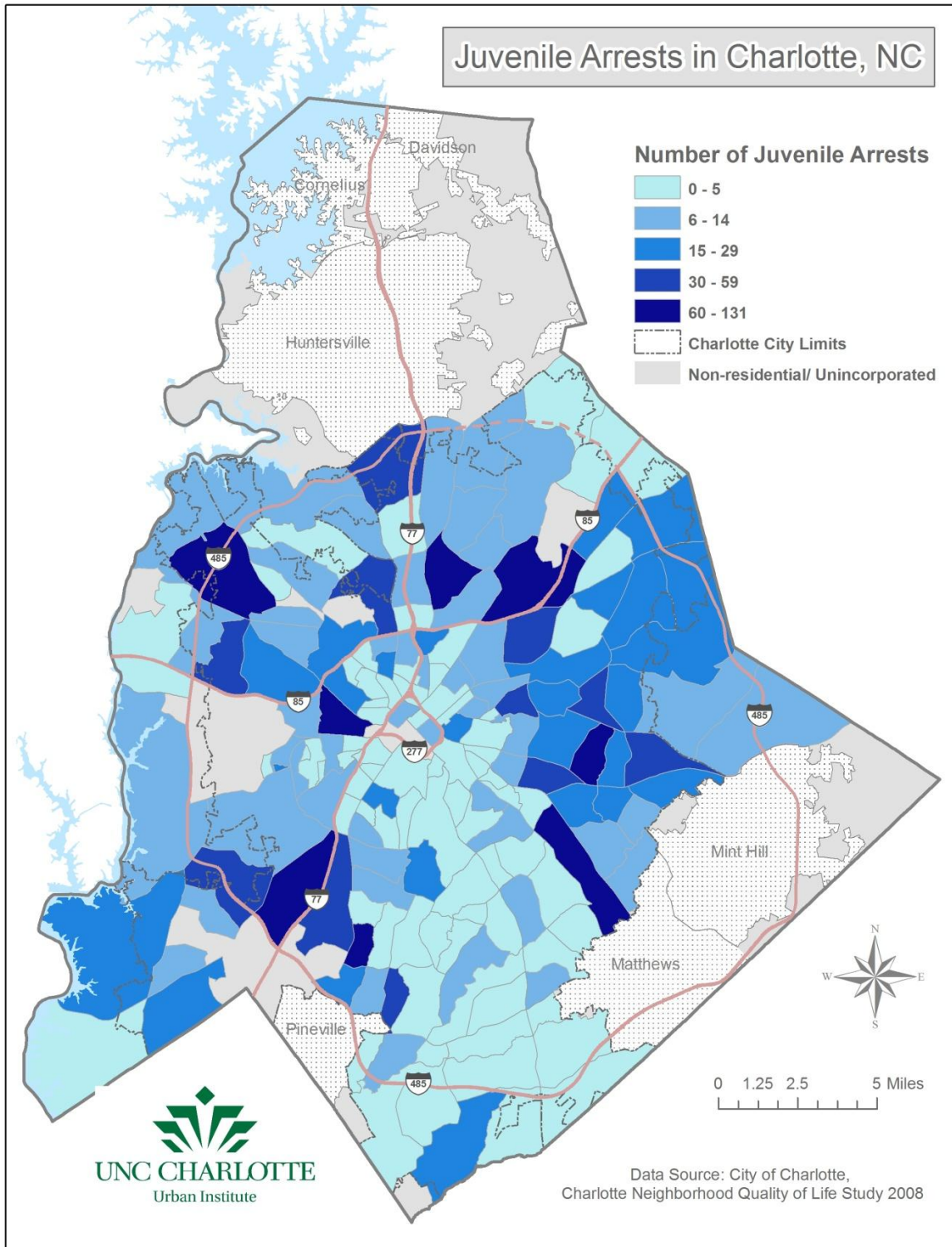
FIGURE C-4. DISCONNECTED YOUTH POPULATION IN CHARLOTTE, NC

Disconnected Youth Population in Charlotte, NC

Number of Disconnected Youth
- 0 - 9
- 10 - 24
- 25 - 49
- 50 - 99
- 100 - 177
- Charlotte City Limits
- Non-residential/ Unincorporated

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Data Source: City of Charlotte, Charlotte Neighborhood Quality of Life Study 2008

Note: The number of disconnected youth was calculated by summing the high school dropouts, teen births, and juvenile arrests in each neighborhood.

FIGURE C-5. RELATIVE CONCENTRATION OF DISCONNECTED YOUTH IN CHARLOTTE, NC.
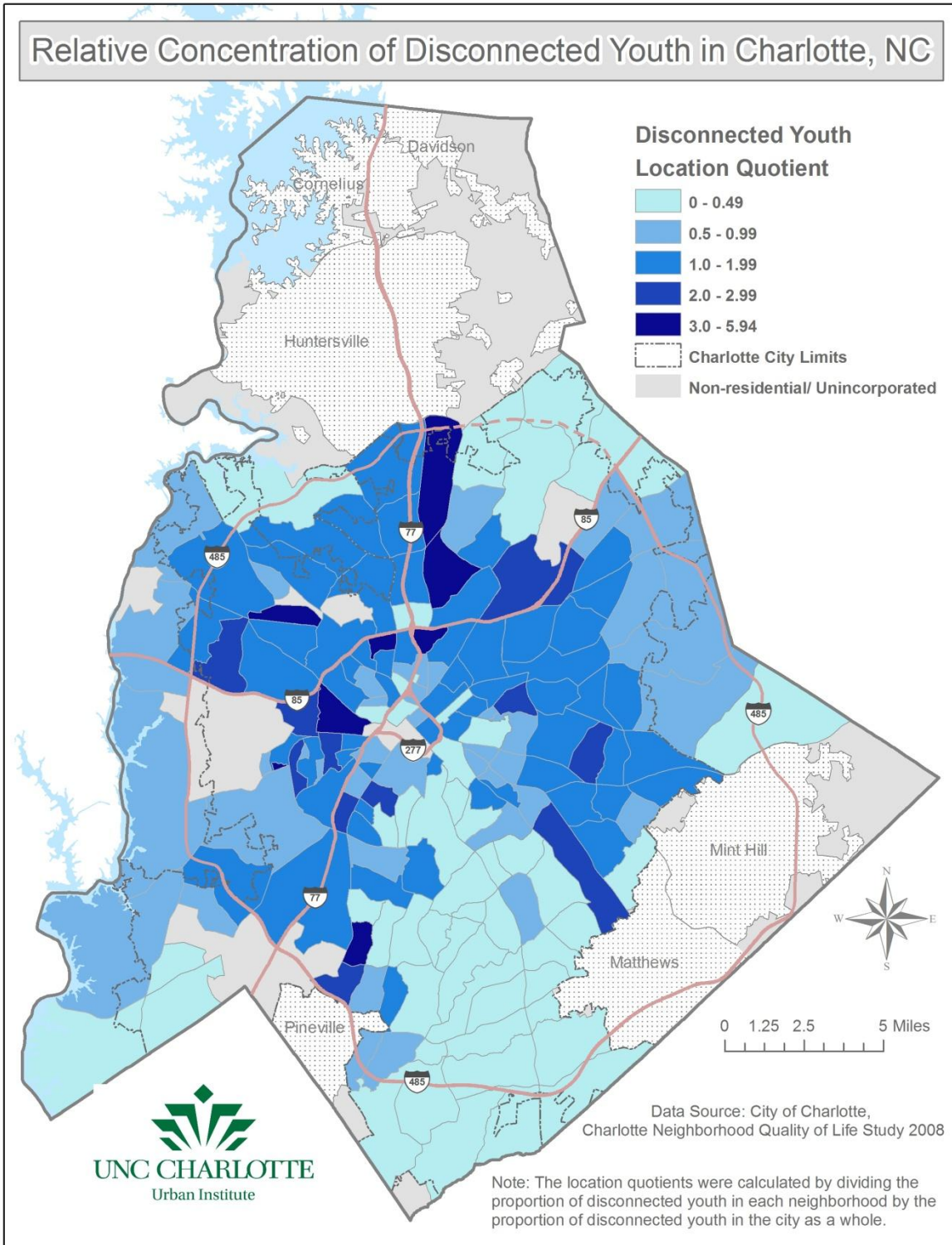
FIGURE C-6. YOUTH SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY NEIGHBORHOOD

Youth Survey Respondents by Neighborhood

Survey Respondents
Living in Neighborhood

0
1 - 2
3 - 5
6 - 14
Charlotte City Limits
Non-residential/ Unincorporated

Data Source: UNC Charlotte Urban Institute
Goodwill Youth Survey 2010

Note: All youth survey respondents were participants
in Goodwill's Youth Job Connection.

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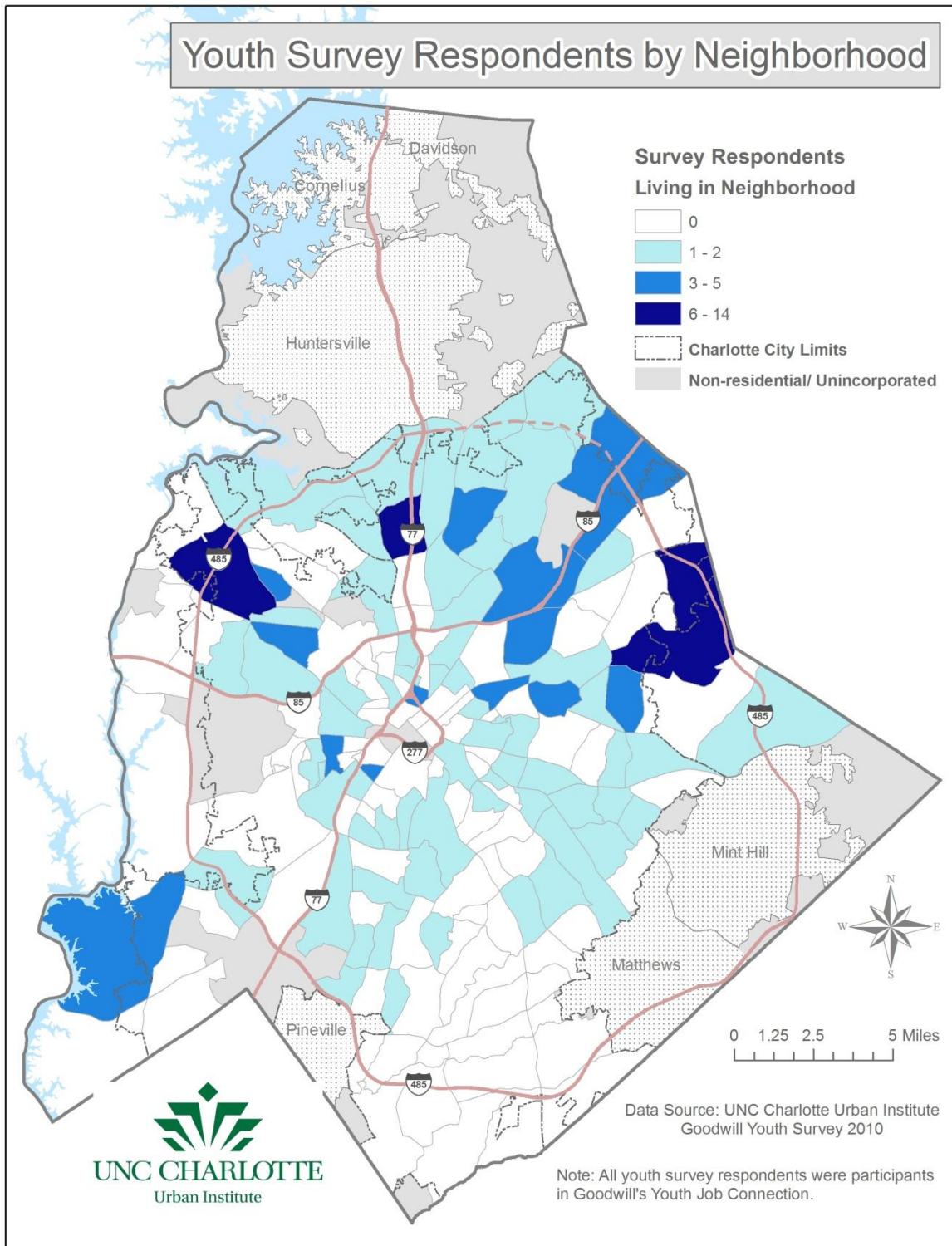
FIGURE C-7. YOUTH SURVEY RESPONDENTS BY SCHOOL
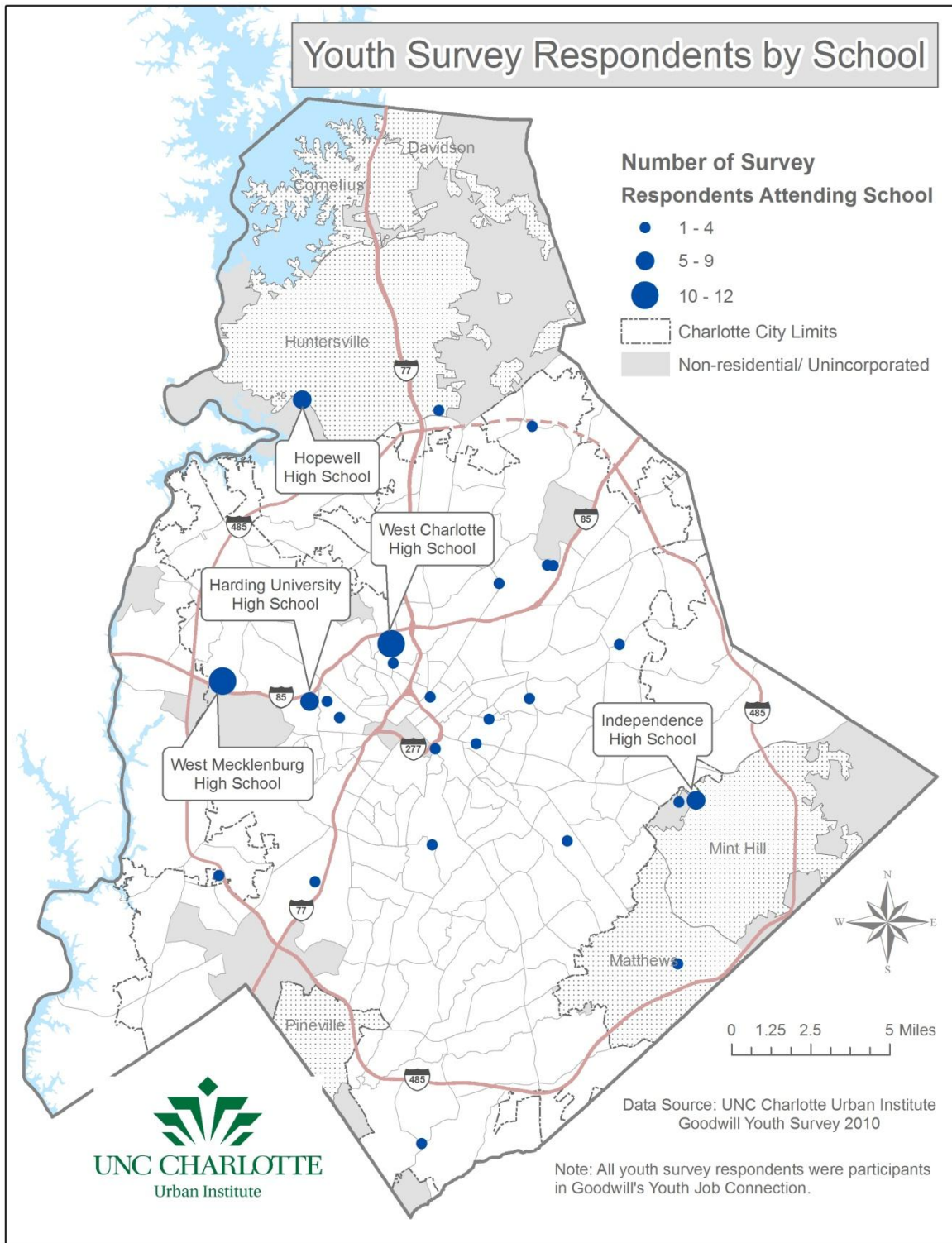
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Appendix D

BEST PRACTICES EXAMPLES

EXAMPLES OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PILLARS

Pillar 1: Passionate Champions within Local Government

Mayoral Leadership:

Mayor Gerald D. Jennings
Albany, New York

Mayor Jennings clearly has positioned himself as a mayor committed to providing services for youth. In his administration, the Department of Youth and Workforce Services coordinates services for youth including an innovative, cross-agency Service Navigation System that serves as a gateway for tutoring, alternative and vocational education, work experience, leadership skills, life skills, and mentoring. The system also provides client tracking, case management, and outcomes measurement. An individualized service strategy is created for every client. The tracking system has indicated that the system has improved graduation rates, raised work-readiness, and improved life skills. In addition to the navigation system, the Department for Youth and Workforce services has developed a truancy abatement program, a gang prevention center, a joint program with the State University of New York at Albany to provide social work students to assist in case management, a Youth Build project, a juvenile justice re-entry program, and Youth Employment program. The Department also houses and works closely with the Workforce Investment Board. All of the programs for disconnected youth are collaborative, integrative, and evaluated through the Service Navigation System. All of the service providers meet bi-weekly to enhance communication.

Beyond City Limits: Cross-system collaboration to reengage disconnected youth. The Institute for Youth, Education, and Families, National League Of Cities. Washington, D.C. ,2007.

Departmental Leadership:

Boston Police Department
Boston, Massachusetts

When the Boston mayor, Thomas Menino, and community leaders looked for a group to be the convener of organizations for an innovative approach for the provision of youth services, the logical choice was the Boston Police Department because the department had earned a reputation as a strong community partner with strong relationships with youth in the community. The group developed the Youth Services Providers Network which involved housing social service providers throughout the community inside police stations. This program has become a model nationwide for co-location, shared staff, and resources.

Beyond City Limits: Cross-system collaboration to reengage disconnected youth. The Institute for Youth, Education, and Families, National League Of Cities. Washington, D.C. ,2007.

Intergovernmental Leadership:

Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board
Minneapolis, Minnesota

The Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board was founded in 1985 by legislative agreement to coordinate a strategic, comprehensive approach toward the provision of youth services. Partners include the City of Minneapolis, Minneapolis Public Schools, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, Minneapolis Public Library Board, and the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners. The thirteen-member Board includes local and state-wide elected officials, judges, and community leaders. The Board develops strategic documents like an organizational overview and policy alignment to help ensure that partners are working together in a collaborative and integrated fashion. The Board also sponsors the Minneapolis Youth Congress, a body of 55 youth between 8th and 12th grade that meet regularly to make recommendations to policy makers regarding issues that impact youth.

City Models For Coordinating Family Strengthening Efforts. National League of Cities' Institute for Youth, Education, and Families, 2008.

Information retrieved from http://www.ycb.org/about_us/

Pillar 2: Effective Workforce Development Boards

Philadelphia WIB and the Philadelphia Youth Network
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

In 2008, Philadelphia's mayor reinvented the Youth Council (the youth services arm of the WIB). Under its new name, The Council for College and Career Success, the mayor appointed a strong leadership team (including decision makers from the school district, the mayor's office, and Temple University) and 43 members of the council from government, non-profit service providers, industry, and foundations. The new Board, which is highly engaged and accountable, has three main focus areas for youth: drop-out prevention, work-readiness, and college access. To measure progress, the council has developed a dashboard of success indicators with annual targets and a supporting measurement system. The pursuit of these goals is directed by one non-profit agency, the Philadelphia Youth Network, which also provides staff and support for the Council for College and Career Success. A sub-committee of the Council for College and Career Success serves as the Board of Directors for the Philadelphia Youth Network. The Philadelphia Youth Network major initiatives include: WorkReady Philadelphia, which coordinates over $12 million in public, private, and foundation investments to provide over 10,000 youth with work experience, academic enrichment, and college exposure; Project U-turn for youth who are struggling academically or have dropped out; Student Success Centers that provide vocational training and support in high schools; E3 Centers, which provide specialized educational and training services for adjudicated and out-of-school youth. The Philadelphia Youth Network reports 33 funders in its annual report including governmental, corporate, and foundation donors. The Network was recognized in 2009 as the Non-Profit of the Year by the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce. Because of the success of the partnership between the WIB and Philadelphia Youth Network and the calls for information, the network has provided consulting and technical support in over 15 cities nationwide.

Starting Fast: The First Annual Progress Report to Mayor Nutter. The Philadelphia Council for College and Career Success, 2009.

On the Map: Annual Report. Philadelphia Youth Network. 2008.

Pillar 3: A Network of Youth Employment Service Providers with Strong Private and Public Partnerships

REACH
Tacoma, Washington

After four years of intensive planning and coordination, REACH opened in Fall 2009 as a one-stop resource for services for youth ages 16-24. The REACH collaboration serves all youth but targets disconnected youth. Thirteen education, social service, employment, community, and government partners are co-located within the new Tacoma Goodwill building. There are two levels of partnership engagement: partners and members. Partners contribute financially to the REACH budget and sign a formal memorandum of understanding with voting rights. Members provide resources to the collaborative but do not contribute directly to the REACH budget. Partners agree to common goals, program integration, shared staff, integrated planning and budgeting, measurement and evaluation, shared client information and case management when possible, and shared technology. The agencies in the REACH program agree to work together as a team and meet bi-weekly to discuss the provision of service and the operation of the partnership. The REACH program is a promising new model to watch for best practices.

REACH Case Statement. REACH Membership Package.

Pillar 4: Education Partners with Innovative Approaches

The Greater San Jose Alternative Education Collaborative
San Jose, California

Coordinated by the United Way of Silicon Valley, the Greater San Jose Alternative Education Collaborative is a multi-agency project serving students who are struggling academically and are at-risk for dropping out. The collaborative has developed a standardized and systematic approach to planning, coordinating, and measuring the effectiveness of alternative schools. The collaborative then works with school districts to advocate for more resources toward effective schools. The network also has a comprehensive referral system to connect disconnected youth to the program that will most likely lead to a successful outcome. The collaborative has relationships with over 40 community organizations including 32 local school districts and other governmental partners. The collaboration was awarded a significant grant from the Youth Transition Funders Group in 2005 to develop this program.

Multiple Pathways to Graduation: A Collaborative Philanthropic Initiative. Youth Transition Funders Group.

http://www.getbacktoschool.org/

Pillar 5: Engaging Social Services and Law Enforcement

Transitional Youth Task Force
San Francisco, California

Under the Mayor's direction, a community-wide task force was created to study and make recommendations regarding transitional youth, specifically youth transitioning out of public services (foster care, juvenile justice, criminal justice, or special education), drop-outs, homeless, youth with a special need or disability, or young parents. The study identified gaps in current programs serving youth and made significant recommendations to improve the delivery of services to transitional youth.

Among the suggestions regarding service delivery was the improvement and integration of services to youth aging out of the foster care system. In response to the data collected in the study and the collective involvement of organizations serving transitional youth, a program was developed to allow emancipated youth to continue their education, find housing and jobs, and attain medical insurance. For example, the Corporation for Supportive Housing set aside space for youth and provided a rent subsidy.

http://dcfy.org

Disconnected Youth in San Francisco: A Roadmap to Improve the Life Chances of San Francisco's Most Vulnerable Young Adults. The Mayor's Transitional Youth Task Force, 2007.

Pillar 6: Personal Development and Faith Based Initiatives for Emotional Maturity

Communities In Schools
Charlotte, North Carolina

There are many programs that excel in helping youth develop personally as they transition to adulthood across the nation. What some of these programs lack is integration with education, government, social service, industry, and work force development partners. However in Charlotte, Communities In Schools (CIS) does an excellent job of working with all of the partners engaged in serving disconnected youth and has a strong record of meaningful outcomes indicating that youth are on a positive pathway toward transitioning to adulthood. CIS characterizes itself as a dropout prevention program but clearly states that it takes a comprehensive, youth development approach toward relationships with clients. Services provided by CIS include tutoring and mentoring; cultural, leadership, and character building activities; health care and health education; education for parents; college access and career counseling. CIS reports extraordinarily high rates of academic retention for participants. These remarkable results are largely accomplished via a system of integrated programs: co-location of staff and other shared resources (like technology and client information) in schools and programmatic partnerships. CIS also provides an alternative education model in Charlotte that has been proven successful nationwide. Because of their commitment to youth development, the comprehensive and integrated approach, and the outstanding results, CIS is a model of best practices in Charlotte.

http://www.cischarlotte.org/

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

PEPNet (www.nyec.org/pepnet)

The Promising and Effective Practices Network, PEPNet, gives examples of quality youth employment programs and a self-assessment process that can help programs make continuous improvement in their services. PEPNet criteria for effective practices include specific examples of strategies, techniques, methods and approaches used by PEPNet awardees (exemplary youth employment programs).

PEPNet has distilled the results of its assessments into specific quality practices identified from 66 nationally recognized youth programs. These practices are stored in a database searchable by practice, youth population served, program funding stream, organization, and keyword. The information provided by the PEPNet website is realistic and specific. Along with the self-assessment, profile and published information on effective practices, PEPNet sponsors the annual PEPNet Institute to enable youth employment professionals, state and local policymakers, and employers to learn directly from the experience of PEPNet's Awardees.

National Youth Employment Coalition
1836 Jefferson Place, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 659-1064

American Youth Policy Forum (www.aypf.org)

The American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF) is a non-profit, non-partisan professional development organization based in Washington, DC that provides learning opportunities for policy makers, practitioners, and researchers working on youth and education issues at the national, state, and local levels. AYPF's goal is to enable participants to become more effective in the development, enactment, and implementation of sound policies affecting the nation's young people by providing information, insights, and networks to better understand the development of healthy and successful young people, productive workers, and participating citizens in a democratic society. AYPF focuses on three overlapping themes: Education, Youth Development and Community Involvement, and Preparation for Careers and Workforce Development. The results of the Forum's work are published in a variety of nationally disseminated youth policy reports and materials available on their website.

1836 Jefferson Place, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 775-9731

PROGRAM EXAMPLES

Strengthening Youth Partnership Initiative (www.myfloridayouth.com)

Florida's Strengthening Youth Partnership (SYP) initiative focuses attention on ensuring that every young person in Florida is ready and able to pursue a meaningful job path upon exiting secondary education. The initiative was designed to strengthen youth partnerships by organizing a state effort for sustained dialogue to improve programs, services, and outcomes for youth by thinking long-term, integrating complementary services, identifying duplicative efforts, gaps in services, and resource alignment. This interagency collaboration currently includes representatives from over 10 agencies and programs such as Workforce Florida, Inc., the Youth Development Council, The Able Trust, a High School/High Tech program, the Department of Education, and the Department of Juvenile Justice.

SYP promotes its agenda by educating local agency staff about business expectations and the critical importance of youth occupational training, redefining each agency's role to contribute most to value-added services, supporting a state policy framework for reaching the most at-risk youth, untangling agency policies that work at cross-purposes, and accruing federal funds through joint efforts. SYP has led to the creation of 16 CHOICES Career Academy Demonstration Projects; Project Connect, a workforce program focusing on juvenile offenders; and Florida High School/High Tech, a transition program for students with disabilities. Due to the success of the initiative, SYP was chosen as one of 16 states by the Federal Shared Youth Vision to participate in the Advanced Youth Forums and to receive funding for two pilot sites to replicate the Strategic Youth Vision with targeted services for at-risk youth.

ACS In-School Youth Powers Program (www.helpingyouththrive.com)

The ACS In-School Youth Powers Program provides at-risk youth ages 14-21 with certified teachers (called Advocates) to provide in-school curricula and mentoring. The ACS Power Program offers 5 phases to each of its students including youth and parent orientation, intensive academic instruction concerning a curriculum developed collaboratively by the Advocate and his students, an intensive 75-hour business simulation to teach professional skills, placement at a summer internship, and one year of follow-up and support services.

According to PEPNet, ACS excels in incorporating youth into curriculum development and leadership positions. Youth Power Program participants engage in a "youth-selected" community service project. Youth teams research community-based organizations and different types of service requirements prior to committing to one organization. Additionally, each 25-member youth team elects four officers who have responsibilities including coordinating team functions and approving incentive reports.

The Power Program also emphasizes parental involvement. A student's individual plan is reviewed in a conference setting among the Associate, parent, and the Advocate at the completion of each phase of the Power Program, occurring five times per calendar year. As a required component of the Power Program, parents commit to providing on-going support to their child. This may include speaking at events, chaperoning field trips, and supporting the Advocate. The Advocate makes bi-weekly contact with the parent to discuss youth performance issues and progress.

Terri Leisten, Director of WIA Youth Initiatives
ACS Youth Services
520 W. Lake Mary Blvd., Suite 301
Sanford, FL 32773
(407) 321-05627 x127
terrileisten@acs-inc.com

Urban Alliance Foundation, Inc. (http://www.theurbanalliance.org)

The Urban Alliance Foundation, Inc. (UA) was founded in 1996 and serves Washington DC Public Schools (DCPS) high school students (mostly juniors and seniors) by providing them with year-round internship opportunities through the High School Internships Program. Students also receive a professional mentor, skill-building opportunities, college/career planning, and a 3:1 matched savings account through Capital Area Asset Building, a financial education community based-organization (CBO). Additionally, UA provides job opportunities in the health field for high school graduates through their Health Alliance Program, and they provide a Graduate Services Program.

UA is able to maintain a large number of opportunities by partnering with local employers, having employers take on costs, and remaining flexible on the nature of the internship. UA has 80 employment partners, and UA mandates that at least 75 percent of student internships be paid for by donations from these partners (partners pay UA and funds go to the student's salary, job training by UA, and overhead costs). Internships include part-time paid work during the school year and full-time paid work during the summer. Life-skills and job readiness workshops on program topics like conflict resolution interview skills, professional writing, and work etiquette are taught once a week.

Sean Segal
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Urban Alliance
1327 14th St. NW
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Washington, DC 20005
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Appendix E
COMMUNITY LEADER INTERVIEWS

As part of the various strategies employed by the Institute to gather primary data, a series of personal interviews was arranged to gather input from business and civic leaders and elected officials. Selected by Goodwill and the Institute, the ten key informants were asked questions regarding their opinions on the issues surrounding employability of disconnected and at-risk youth. A list of topics/questions that the project team wanted to cover in each interview was presented. However, the interviews were semi-structured and conducted in a face-to-face setting, which permitted an open discussion. This report contains a summary of selected responses from Dr. Bill McCoy's personal interviews with the following leaders:

1. Anthony Foxx, Mayor, City of Charlotte
2. Barbara Pellin, Assistant Superintendent for Pre-K–12, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
3. Bob Morgan, President & CEO, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce
4. Brian Collier, Senior Vice President, Foundation For The Carolinas
5. Eric Davis, Chair, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Board of Education
6. Jennifer Roberts, Mecklenburg County Commissioner (Chairman At-Large)
7. Reggie Isaac, Senior Director, Microsoft Corporation and Goodwill Board member
8. Ron Carter, President, Johnson C. Smith University
9. Ronnie Bryant, President & CEO, Charlotte Regional Partnership
10. Sandy Cranford, Director of Human Resources, Carowinds Amusement Park

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

Question 1

The population that is being studied in this research is the 14 to 24 year old disconnected and at-risk population. Essentially, this is the population of dropouts, people who are at-risk of dropping out, youth with high school diplomas who are unable to find work, and youth who are not looking for work. The intent of a training program for these youth would be to prepare them for the work force and to give them the tools to be successful both in entering the work force and in continuing as a productive and contributing citizen. **What is your assessment of the size and importance of this problem in our county?**

- All ten of the interviewees saw this as an issue in the broader context, and several respondents said it is the most important issue we face.

- Four respondents thought the age of 14 was too late to begin working with at-risk youth. One respondent mentioned that support should start as early as pre-kindergarten while another suggested exposing youth to programs and work experiences as early as elementary or middle school.

- Two interviewees were concerned with the effect that being at-risk, unskilled and unemployed has on youth. They thought it made their lives difficult and without hope and left many youth without positive things to do or positive places to go.

- Interviewees also thought that this issue affects some areas more than others and the size of the problem varies at different points in time.

- One interviewee thought it was not an issue for employers because in today's economy there are fewer turnovers so employers are not complaining about not being able to find workers.

Question 2

One partial solution to this problem would be that no one drops out of school before graduating. We know that will not happen. However, **what do you think the school system needs to do to really reduce the dropout rate substantially?**

- All respondents emphasized the importance of education and staying in school through graduation.

- Even as the interviewees recognized the importance of education, they also realized that some youth may have trouble and may not make it to graduation. One respondent commented that there is still debate about whether every child should go to college or that some should enter into vocational training—at what point that decision should be made and who should make that decision.

- They all agreed that dropping out of school and the lack of employment opportunities for at-risk youth is a problem, and someone must fix it.

- All ten interviewees had different suggestions of what CMS could do to reduce the dropout rate, but they all agreed that the lack of consensus on the solution was also an issue. Several interviewees believed that the current school system needed to be reformed which would help to alleviate high dropout rates. Interviewees suggested instituting year-round schooling, having alternative measures of performance, highlighting teamwork rather than individual success, emphasizing creative thinking, technology integration, and recognizing each student's inherent worth and success.

- Several interviewees thought programming and program development were essential to lowering the dropout rate. Two interviewees suggested getting more creative with programming including providing mentorship and bringing back more arts programs in schools. They also suggested bringing various alternative programs within the communities and within schools together and tailoring them to better suit the learning styles, lifestyles and needs of these children. Other suggestions included requiring students to graduate from high school before obtaining a driver's license, letting districts set their own standards (raising them as appropriate), and addressing factors that place teens at-risk in the first place rather than continuing to deal with the issues "after the fact."

- Each interviewee mentioned the importance of the total environment or a holistic approach for youth.

- All interviewees emphasized the importance of having a caring adult, guardian, parent or mentor in the lives of at-risk youth within and outside the school system. As one interviewee stated, "Youth cannot learn if they go home to a dangerous neighborhood if they do not have food, or if they do not have parents." This was a recurring theme throughout all of the interviews.

- Two interviewees thought the current system of programs is very fragmented and suggested that everyone work together (i.e. the City, the school system, the community, agencies, businesses, etc.). One interviewee recognized the need to respond to negative environments from a societal approach rather than just relying on the school system.

- Two interviewees suggested that more communication and unification are needed between the City, the communities, the programs, and the school system. As one respondent commented, "It's not just a teacher that can make a difference in these youth's lives, but it takes everyone communicating and working together."

Question 3

In an economy that is likely to become more knowledge-based and one where the number of people engaged in "making" something is likely to decline, **what kind of jobs are going to be available for this population group, which is likely to come into the work force with few skills and often with little understanding of what the world of work is like? What kind of employment path do you foresee for people in this population group? Should we have a strategy of recruiting businesses which might employ this group?**

- One interviewee commented that there is no future for high school dropouts. Several interviewees agreed that there is a definite difference between high school graduates and dropouts and that while having a GED is good, possessing a high school diploma is better.

- Each respondent thought there would be jobs in the service industry and even some in the non-service industry for this population group. Examples of fields the respondents highlighted included jobs in the hospitality industry (i.e. positions working at hotels), landscaping, retail, health care, and particularly understaffed vocations such as plumbing, HVAC, brick masons, mechanics, carpenters, and others.

- One respondent thought there should be no stigma attached to "flipping" hamburgers and bagging groceries while another respondent felt that in light of this stigma, youth should realize that these jobs provide work experience that can serve as a stepping stone to more appealing opportunities. Another interviewee believed that youth need to stop "playing the

victim" and went further to say that all youth have the ability to learn but that they are responsible for making their own choices and decisions.

- The issue of entitlement was discussed in several interviews. One interviewee acknowledged that many youth expect success and wealth quickly and believed that youth need to have a plan and stick with it. Another interviewee thought that the willingness to learn a skill was more important than having a skill. Both interviewees concluded that youth needed to exhibit dedication and commitment to school and/or work opportunities.

Question 4

One of the shortcomings of existing programs is that they do not provide any sort of work experience for this youth population. **Do you have any thoughts on how this shortcoming might be alleviated?**

- Interviewees mentioned shadowing, mentoring, having youth interview adults in their field of interest, training, or internship programs as a way to provide opportunities for youth to gain more work experience without this being a major time commitment for the employers or businesses involved. Interviewees commonly said that these types of opportunities would allow youth to learn what jobs they do or do not like, make their school work seem more meaningful, and give youth a realistic idea of what the world of work is like.

- Other suggestions included using a system to match youth's talents and interests with employers, having youth volunteer, helping youth develop their own ideas for entrepreneurship, and encouraging the broader community to connect and commit to providing positions.

- All interviewees agreed that it is important for area businesses, communities and the school system to cooperate. The majority of interviewees suggested that communities and schools should develop stronger partnerships with employers in an effort to guarantee youth as acceptable candidates or provide them with jobs. One interviewee said that although many youth employment organizations express interest in establishing closer partnerships with employers they still have not made them. Several interviewees saw this as a major role that Goodwill can serve.

Question 5

If Goodwill decides to take on the task of youth training, **what would you suggest as the most important elements this training should include?**

- The interviewees saw Goodwill as a respected, well-known organization and were glad that Goodwill was taking the initiative in trying to alleviate the problem by beginning with a needs assessment. One interviewee believed that Goodwill was the "community organization most capable" to handle the issues discussed in the interviews.

- The majority of interviewees thought it was necessary to emphasize teaching soft skills such as how to dress, how to address someone, how to behave in a job interview, work ethic and customer service. Balancing technical skills training and soft skills training is imperative. Interviewees also thought a combination of skill (including math skills) and etiquette training (including accountability) was important. One respondent suggested incorporating elements from the adult program into the youth program.

- One interviewee worked for a firm that looked for youth willing to work and learn and therefore believed that teaching integrity was vital. Another interviewee worked for a firm that looked for individuals who could think positively and suggested that youth learn how to overcome frustration and boredom.

- Many interviewees reiterated that mentoring should be one of the core elements to any program Goodwill develops for youth.

- Another suggestion was that youth should be tracked after they leave the program because, as one respondent suggested, without tracking these youth, you cannot determine if what you are doing is working or helpful.

- One suggestion was for Goodwill to consider becoming a coordinating agency for those already in the business of youth employment services rather than becoming a direct service provider. Goodwill should develop a logic model around all of the existing programs and services to avoid duplicating efforts by existing agencies. One interviewee suggested the work of Geoffrey Canada as a model that Goodwill should study.

- Whether Goodwill develops a youth program or becomes a coordinating agency, interviewees urged Goodwill to establish a strong support network.

- One respondent suggested that Goodwill establish an advisory board comprised of parents, youth, business leaders, community members, etc. Again, several interviewees thought that communication between different sectors was critical as well as re-evaluating how to blend and broaden funding.

CONCLUSION

In sum, these key informant interviews reflect the notion that problems associated with at-risk and disconnected youth are significant. At-risk and disconnected youth are less likely to have access to or have the support they need to succeed in education, training, and employment. In recognition of the respect it receives from the community, Goodwill is seen by most interviewees as an excellent choice for providing additional youth training program options. Any training programs that Goodwill develops should include a significant component on teaching and illustrating the soft skills necessary to obtain and keep a job. Whether Goodwill decides to provide training programs or become a

coordinating agency, Goodwill cannot do so alone. To be successful in its efforts in alleviating the issues that at-risk and disconnected youth face, Goodwill must embrace collaboration with other provider agencies and with the budding community effort to bring maximum resources to this problem. This collaboration process would include joining with other leading community groups that are considering the issue—particularly the Foundation For The Carolinas, CMS, the County, and the City. Finally, leadership is also needed in providing a central agency that would serve as collaborator for all other agencies providing services to this population group. In this respect, Goodwill has the opportunity to take on the role of leading the community's efforts in engaging youth in training as well as providing training services directly.

SELECTED QUOTES

On the nature of the disconnected youth problem:

"The problem of disconnected and at-risk youth is a serious issue. We have a lot of youth trying to find their way and understand their purpose. It affects everyone, whether you are from a corporation trying to hire talented people or a family trying to raise children."
        - Reggie Isaac, Senior Director, Microsoft Corporation Charlotte Campus

"Do I have employers call me and say that I am unable to find the workers that I need because those available are dropouts, young, unskilled workers with no job experience? No. Since the economy is currently weak, employers have much less turnover than they did when the economy was robust. Also, Charlotte continues to be a destination for well-trained workers from other parts of the country and the world."
        -Bob Morgan, President & CEO, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce

"The youth in this age group who are from families in poverty, and many are from families that have experienced intergenerational poverty, are much more likely to have a lack of hope for the present and the future and even a lack of knowing how to go about obtaining skills."
        - Barb Pellin, Assistant Superintendent for Pre-K–12, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

"These young people, 14 to 24, are entering the prime of their life even though they do not realize it. There are a lot of distractions for these kids, and we have to look at partnerships to give young people job experiences. If we do not take care of this problem, the community will suffer."
        - Reggie Isaac, Senior Director, Microsoft Corporation Charlotte Campus

On helping disconnected and at-risk youth:

"We need a more holistic system that addresses the range of issues that can shape a child, such as health including dental services, parental support, lack of self esteem and others."
        - Brian Collier, Senior Vice President, Foundation For The Carolinas

"Increasing/enhancing parental involvement, providing positive activities for after school time, and encouraging churches to become involved in after school programs to get the teens out of a bad environment and provide them food, recreation and help with homework are some ways to help at-risk youth."
        - Ronnie Bryant, President & CEO, Charlotte Regional Partnership

"The supply of kids in need is overwhelming the delivery system. We need to intervene before 14 and probably before 10. You can tell if a child is in trouble in the first grade. The dropout track starts way back."
        -Ronnie Bryant, President & CEO, Charlotte Regional Partnership

"The schedule that is used in schools is still agrarian based – we should base the educational schedule on current reality."
        - Brian Collier, Senior Vice President, Foundation For The Carolinas

"I am not sure that we are improving the outlook for the 14 to 24 at-risk group. It is like trying to fix a flat after you have run through nails. It is too late to try to change behavior at 14."
      - Ronnie Bryant, President & CEO, Charlotte Regional Partnership

On having a caring adult:

"Every kid needs a caring adult. Not necessarily two. We have a lot of kids with guardians because their parents are out of the picture. Kids need a mentor figure, even if that figure is a teacher or employer."
      - Sandy Cranford, Director of Human Resources, Carowinds Amusement Park

"Every youth needs a caring adult and someone in their lives that makes them say, 'I want to be like you.'"
      - Eric Davis, Chair, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Board of Education

On entitlement:

"Young people want success and wealth quickly. They need to understand that slow and steady wins the race. It's about having a plan and sticking to it."
      - Reggie Isaac, Senior Director, Microsoft Corporation Charlotte Campus

" We have this stigma that bagging groceries is beneath all of us, but if a young person is looking for a way to make a little money, what is wrong with washing dishes or mowing grass or bagging groceries or working at the local McDonald's? Kids have been doing these jobs for years. This is how you start in the world or work."
      -Bob Morgan, President & CEO, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce

On reducing the dropout rate/dropout prevention:

"The following are ways to reduce the number of dropouts: longer school years, longer school days, letting local districts set their own standards – raising them as appropriate, more vocational offerings, and a more flexible system that can respond quickly to changes in the local environment."
      - Anthony Foxx, Mayor, City of Charlotte

"We need to change the delivery model. We are using the same framework that my grandparents experienced. We need small groups, self-pacing, with technology integrated to encourage creative thinking."… "Each district should set its own calendar for each student. Some may need to be in school more than the traditional calendar allows and some need less."
      - Eric Davis, Chair, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Board of Education

"I believe that one option is to not allow young people to obtain driver's licenses until they have a high school diploma."
      - Bob Morgan, President & CEO, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce

"I think we have to define 'keep them in school' because you may keep them in school as such, but they may not be as successful as you would want them to be. We need to explore innovating pathways for them."
      - Barb Pellin, Assistant Superintendent for Pre-K–12, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

"No longer can teachers stand in front of kids and lecture and hope to be effective. I think we need to look at the teaching and learning environment in a different way than we have in the past."… "We have a performance learning center, which is an alternative school for kids not succeeding in a regular school setting. These kids are blossoming in this environment. It's a different environment, the classes are different, things are taught in a different way, and expectations are different. We look at the whole child more intently than we do in some of our other settings because students bring much more than their minds to school. They bring their environment, they bring their family setting, they bring the best they have and it's very different for each of our children."

> - Barb Pellin, Assistant Superintendent for Pre-K–12, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

"Parents must get support from birth to ultimately affect the drop-out rate."

> - Eric Davis, Chair, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Board of Education

"Fourteen is too old. Middle schoolers are often left out of programs. It you lose a student in middle school you just keep playing catch up in high school."

> - Brian Collier, Senior Vice President, Foundation For The Carolinas

On extending school days and years: "We need to look at how summer and after school can better serve youth."

> - Brian Collier, Senior Vice President, Foundation For The Carolinas

On the value of high school diploma:

"A high school diploma is not enough to ensure lifelong work. In the fifties, a high school diploma had you set for work."

> - Anthony Foxx, Mayor, City of Charlotte

"There is no real difference between employees with diplomas and GEDs, but there is a definite difference between high school graduates and drop outs. Graduates have a better work ethic and demeanor."

> - Sandy Cranford, Director of Human Resources, Carowinds Amusement Park

On vocational education:

"We need more vocational education, but we must be strategic in the vocations we pick. For example, there are opportunities in the automotive industry with NASCAR and motorsports but not as much with textiles."

> - Anthony Foxx, Mayor, City of Charlotte

"Students need to have exposure in high school that offers a feasible career at a living wage, even though it is more expensive to run a shop class than an English class."

> - Ronnie Bryant, President & CEO, Charlotte Regional Partnership

"Public schools claim that junior/community college has vocational role. We disagree. This role must start in high school. It allows students to find out what they want and to realize how they can use their curricular skills. Summer camps can also serve this function, even before high school."

> - Sandy Cranford, Director of Human Resources, Carowinds Amusement Park

On workforce development program curriculum:

"Young people need life skills and professional skills that go beyond individual job skills. They need to learn accountability, planning, and having a good sense of what they want to accomplish in life."
     - Reggie Isaac, Senior Director, Microsoft Corporation Charlotte Campus

"A lot of a good training program requires giving people a realistic idea of what work is like. It is work. It is not always enjoyable, though it is important people find something they enjoy. Employment allows you to be everything you can be rather than what you let yourself become."
     - Sandy Cranford, Director of Human Resources, Carowinds Amusement Park

"We need to find a way to expose eighth and ninth graders to meaningful work experiences, somehow show them examples or possibilities of careers that will make their school work seem meaningful – a means to an end."
     - Eric Davis, Chair, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Board of Education

"Vocational training needs to be revamped to train students to work in fields that have jobs."… "We need a huge marketing effort to make jobs cool – to create a better understanding of what they are."
     - Brian Collier, Senior Vice President, Foundation For The Carolinas s

On tracking:

"How do they (service providers) know what they have done is working? Often they don't. And I don't mean that in a critical way. I just mean that for any of us, if we do not have the data to support our actions, we are not able to determine what our outcomes are. And if you don't know what your outcomes are you cannot do program planning for sustainability."… "And I think they (provider agencies) may have a concern that if we were actually able to track we would not see the outcomes that we would hope to see. It is a reality check and we all need that."
     - Barb Pellin, Assistant Superintendent for Pre-K–12, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

On collaboration/coordination/decentralization of services:

"We want all children to graduate ready to go for additional education or to work, but this is never a reality. Therefore, we need organizations to help students who don't graduate."… "The school system and the County must work together to address areas that are crucial to the success of any child – health, the neighborhood environment, and human services."
     - Eric Davis, Chair, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Board of Education

"Entry points for services need to be accessible throughout the community. Also, we should consider having services for youth at the Transportation Center."
     - Anthony Foxx, Mayor, City of Charlotte

"There is a lot of fragmentation. These youth are being served by multiple program areas that are not connected. We need to coordinate our work so youth are served with comprehensive programs without duplication of service."
     - Barb Pellin, Assistant Superintendent for Pre-K–12, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

"We have to give serious consideration to looking at the role of the City, the County and the schools in working with young people within the 14 to 24 age group. I do not think we can any longer afford to separate the work and programs of the three entities. I believe that we need to blend funding and blend program component pieces. All three of us have to be at the table and work on this problem in a collaborative fashion. And this is beginning to happen. The opportunity that we currently have to come together on this issue as well as others may be the most positive that I have seen in my career."
- Barb Pellin, Assistant Superintendent for Pre-K–12, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

On jobs and work experience:

"The public sector needs to step up to get them (at-risk youth) jobs—we need job developers to find employers to hire people. We need to offer an incentive, so that it is cheaper to hire workers from this group. We need to show employers that they might save a little if they hire from this group."
- Ronnie Bryant, President, Charlotte Regional Partnership

"We need to begin in the ninth and tenth grade to link students with professionals to talk about various careers."
- Anthony Foxx, Mayor, City of Charlotte

"We need to find better ways to use public and private resources to find work experience for youth."
- Anthony Foxx, Mayor, City of Charlotte

"We need to identify jobs that are options for youth that do not want to attend post-secondary schools – like a massage therapist, for example – recognizing that all jobs might not be knowledge based."
- Brian Collier, Senior Vice President, Foundation For The Carolinas

"Sixty-five percent of the population that works at Carowinds is 18 and under. For a lot of employees, Carowinds is their first job. They do not have the skills that are necessary. Food, merchandise, and games are the most common job. Young employees are often unable to do the math necessary for jobs involving taking cash and making change."
- Sandy Cranford, Director of Human Resources, Carowinds Amusement Park

"In the present economic climate, it seems people are more willing to do what it takes to keep their job. More employees are conforming to grooming standards, which is also often an issue."
- Sandy Cranford, Director of Human Resources, Carowinds Amusement Park

"There were between 5,800 and 6,000 applicants before the economic turn. This year there are already over 15,000 applicants. Last year we took over 18,000 applications. This year 650 people showed up to be re-hired. Last year 350 people showed up."
- Sandy Cranford, Director of Human Resources, Carowinds Amusement Park

On employing youth/soft skills needed:

"Since so many of our applicants have no experience, we are primarily looking for a positive attitude and a willingness to take what is thrown at them."
- Sandy Cranford, Director of Human Resources, Carowinds Amusement Park

"People need to learn how to overcome frustration and boredom."... "They need to learn to think positively when things are tough and how to make their job more enjoyable."... "An important part of training is soft skills: communication, politeness, and attitude."
- Sandy Cranford, Director of Human Resources, Carowinds Amusement Park

On Goodwill doing training/what Goodwill can do:

"Goodwill needs to accept some of the risk associated with hiring youth from their program. This would involve the creation of a support network wherein a young person goes to work while receiving oversight/support from a case manager. The case manager would make sure they receive any services they need to enable them to succeed while at work and in general. They could work with the youth to resolve issues related to the employment situation – issues arising from poor performance as well as from unreasonable expectations on the part of the employer."
- Brian Collier, Senior Vice President, Foundation For The Carolinas

"It would be a natural fit for Goodwill to talk to these kids just about basic workplace soft skills."
- Bob Morgan, President & CEO, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce

Appendix F
YOUTH SERVICE PROVIDER INTERVIEWS

The development of a current, and easily updated, Youth Services Catalog was one of the specific deliverables requested by Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont (GISP). Some of the original discussion about this product revolved around the possibility of obtaining the pertinent information from web sites; however, a cursory review of the sites indicated that, for the most part, they did not contain enough or appropriate information for this purpose. Therefore, the decision was made that agency personnel would need to be interviewed. Goodwill and the Institute identified 17 agencies that were involved in some way with training and/or providing programming for at-risk and disconnected youth between the ages of 14 and 24. A questionnaire protocol was developed, agencies were contacted, and interviews were completed with 16 of the 17 agencies. The agency that declined to be interviewed is included in the catalogue with information that came from its web site.

While the primary reason for conducting the interviews was to collect information to be included in the Youth Services Catalog, the interviews had a richness about them that was difficult to capture in the specific categories included in the catalog. For that reason, this section of the report provides a summary of some of the key findings from the interviews that are not readily apparent in the catalog. Each interview was conducted by a two-person team, with Bill McCoy asking the questions and a research associate taking notes on the responses.

The key findings come from interviews with personnel from the identified agencies but do not include two organizations that are directly involved in providing education and training for at-risk and disconnected youth, the public school system and the community college system. A number of at-risk and disconnected youth do, in fact, stay in school and receive a high school diploma, and some go on for additional training at a community college, a four-year institution of higher learning, specific training programs, or a branch of the armed services. That is, some portion of the targeted population does exactly the same thing as the non-targeted population. Even those youth who drop out of the public high school programs of Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools have the opportunity to enter a high school program that is taught and administered by the local community college, Central Piedmont Community College. For the most part, the youth served by the agencies that were interviewed for this study are not likely to follow routes mentioned above or will need some level of service before they can successfully follow these paths.

Another mitigating circumstance regarding these 17 agencies is that they provide arrays of services that are often difficult to compare from one agency to another. Nevertheless, the following general categorization of the agencies in the catalog attempts to indicate both the types of services provided and how those services are delivered.

ORGANIZATIONS INTERVIEWED

Two agencies that provide education and training for the targeted youth group do so in a residential setting for troubled youth: The Relatives, which is a part of Alexander Youth Network and Elon Homes and Schools. A third agency, the Genesis Project, provides a wide array of services to youth and parents, with a focus on youth with a mental health issue.

Some of the agencies use subcontractors to provide the services. These include:

- The Workforce Development Board
- United Way
- Mayor's Youth Employment Program (This was true at the time the interview was done; it has since been brought back to direct services being provided by the City of Charlotte.)
- YMCA—some programs are subcontracted

For some of the agencies that were interviewed, the primary mission was providing safe places and safe activities for youth. Employment training was provided in support of the primary mission. These include:

- Right Moves for Youth
- Steele Creek Youth Network
- Seigle Avenue Teen Center
- Various YMCA programs

Two additional programs provide services to in-school populations:

- Communities In Schools
- POST (Partners in Out-Of-School Time)

And finally, several programs focus on the provision of training and education for at-risk and disconnected youth between the ages of 14 and 24. These include:

- Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont
- BRIDGE Jobs Program
- Urban League
- The Genesis Project
- Arbor Education and Training (a subcontractor for the Workforce Development Board)
- Q Foundation (a subcontractor for the Workforce Development Board)
- United Way programs
- YMCA programs

KEY QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

Agencies that provide direct education and training services to the targeted population are fairly consistent in the elements that are included in the programs. The primary mission of most of these agencies is to provide training that prepares the client to take and pass the GED test. Hence, the target population consists primarily of dropouts, that is, youth who are not likely to attain a regular high school diploma. Within these programs, there is almost always a "soft skills" component which can run the gamut from general customer service skills to various personal skills like a positive attitude, a strong work ethic, and accountability. The direct service programs are also likely to include skills that might help in finding employment, such as résumé writing, interview skills, and appropriate language usage.

One of the findings is the number of programs doing essentially the same thing. Is this efficient? Is this the best allocation of resources available for these programs? Upon examination, this apparent duplication of services might be a necessary geographic distribution of these programs driven by a

public transportation system that does not provide convenient access to specific program sites. Programs located on the west side of the city, while open to everyone needing the service in Mecklenburg County, primarily attract clients from the west side. The same can be said about program locations in the north and east part of the County. Programs generally are not located in south Charlotte and northern Mecklenburg County because of the low demand in the immediate neighborhoods for the services these agencies provide. Decentralization of services is essential to reach the youth who need these services although this fact is not always recognized in the distribution of funding.

Although some of the agencies included in the catalog have very specific criteria that must be met before a person can take advantage of the offered program (The Relatives and Elon Homes, for example), most of the programs are generally open to anyone in Mecklenburg County needing the provided services. However, significant self-selection is occurring. The clientele for these programs is largely African American youth. Although there are Latino and Caucasian youth needing these services, few are enrolled in these programs. Most of these programs target the 14 (and maybe younger) through 18 year old segment of this population. While individuals that are 18 and above are eligible to enter the adult training programs in the community, many of these providers worry that the 18 to 25 group generally falls through the cracks. Two populations, although relatively few in numbers, come up for discussion and concern: youth aging out of foster care and youth completing incarcerations. Although most programs claim that they are open to anyone needing the provided service, most programs have some criteria for inclusion in the program —some level of academic skills, expression of some desire to do the program, lack of mental health issues, and having no criminal record—for example. Therefore, those who are most in need may not gain entry into these programs.

Other general observations from the agency interviews follow:

- One of the most serious deficits found among these programs is that they generally do not have an effective method for tracking the people who complete their programs. Therefore, when asked about the success of the program, agencies have no way of responding other than to say that x number enrolled in the program and x number completed it. Nothing can be said about whether the program provided anything that enabled the participant to get and keep a job. Some programs attempt tracking, but most are based on self-reporting by those who completed the program. Agencies that contract with the Workforce Development Board are required to do a six-month follow-up because that is required by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the funding mechanism. Failure to track participants is a glaring weakness of these programs in general.

- A second serious weakness is the failure of these programs to provide any sort of work experience for the participants. While agencies recognize this problem, they may also feel unable to do anything about it. Having the opportunity for some sort of work experience is, perhaps, the most important thing that could be provided for the youth in these programs.

- A third weakness we found in these agencies is the lack of comprehensive evaluation of their programs. However, there is probably more effort and consequent success in program evaluation than in tracking participants following program completion.

- A critical issue for these programs is student retention. Many of the youth enrolled in the classes and / or activities did not complete the programs. A fairly common estimate from the agency people who were candid about the retention problem was that about one-third of those who enrolled successfully completed the program, although a few of the program people talked about a questionable completion rate of 80 to 85 percent. The participant retention problem is so significant that many agencies continually feed new students into the slots left by those dropping out, which not only disrupts the progression of the program but also raises questions about the curriculum and expectations about the achievement of the students.

- The dropout problem raises a tangential issue. Do youth "game" the system by continually enrolling, dropping out and re-enrolling to receive stipends and participant incentives? While no direct evidence was presented, more than one service provider believed that this was occurring. Without a central agency or program to track participants and dropouts, the system may be exploited.

- There is no common curriculum for most of the key activities such as vocational assessment, consumer training, job readiness, financial education, and life skills.

- Most agencies claimed to cooperate and collaborate with other agencies providing the same or similar services. However, when asked which agencies they most frequently collaborated with, agency people had a difficult time naming any agencies other than the ones with which they have some sort of contractual relationship, indicating a lack of cross-systems collaboration.

- When asked about the networks they use to exchange information and discover best practices, again few are able to name any, with the exception of those who are in state and federal networks of similar agencies, which suggests that the exchange of best practices and information between organizations is minimal.

- When asked to name other agencies that are doing a good job of providing services to the 14 to 24 at-risk and disconnected age group, the respondents were either reluctant or unable to come up with names readily. Those agencies that were named had some sort of cross-referral system in place or some sort of contractual relationship with the agency in question. Overall, the agency most frequently named as a "good" provider of services was Communities In Schools. However, many large, well-known organizations were never named by another agency as a "good" agency for providing services.

- Although funding is a significant challenge, it was not the initial response given when agencies were asked about the constraints and challenges they faced. Most agency people cited other issues initially: the retention of students, lack of parental support, attitudes of students, the public school system's failure to have a realistic vocational education track for this student demographic, and the poor reading and math proficiency of the students applying for their programs.

KEY QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

The agency respondents were asked to provide estimates of how many people their agency served in 2009. The combined estimate is 26,000. Almost half that number was served by two programs: Communities In Schools and the YMCA (some of the YMCA numbers are outside Mecklenburg County). The highly-targeted programs, such as those engaged in GED preparation, have relatively small classes and hence, collectively serve a relatively small part of the 26,000 total. Other programs geared more toward providing a "safe place" for youth can and do have a much higher client base.

Respondents to the interview were also asked some general budget questions. Since ranges were used, it is not possible to calculate exactly how much money is being spent on an annual basis for this youth group. However, the one estimate that was suggested in the employment services community is about $25 million a year.

CONCLUSION

This community is fortunate to have an array of agencies seeking to provide services and training to at-risk and disconnected youth. Agency respondents list universal comments that have not changed for decades: every child needs at least one caring adult in his/her life, almost every child is capable of learning, the at-risk condition starts before birth, the inability of parents to provide care and support is a serious problem, some households/neighborhoods are toxic, solving this problem will take a holistic approach. The agencies expressed this litany of problems in the interviews and focus groups, and they are clearly trying to intervene to bring hope and expectations of success to young people whose lives have been affected by these issues. However, the problems often seem insurmountable. Considering such challenges, successes should be celebrated. Communities In Schools appears to have a substantial success record in dropout prevention. The school system is continually trying to decrease the dropout rate, knowing that the best thing that can happen for at-risk and disconnected youth is to keep them in school through high school graduation. Many of the GED preparation programs are doing good work as seen in the youth who complete the programs and pass the GED exam. The "safe places" and "safe activities" programs have success and widespread community support. In terms of societal issues, there is even some improvement over the last couple of decades: the teenage pregnancy rate has generally decreased, there are fewer "crack" babies, and crime rates are generally down. But gang activity is on the increase, the poverty rate has ticked upward, jobs for the untrained are very hard to come by, and current economic pressures are hardest on families and neighborhoods that are economically marginal even in the best of times.

Strategic improvements in serving this group of young people can be made by studying the failures and weaknesses in the system. Programs do not track people who complete their curricula and, therefore, have no way of measuring success. Work experience is viewed as one of the most important elements for the potential success of the youth demographic, yet the programs uniformly do not provide that service. Program evaluation is weak. Coordination across programs is not common. No entity effectively provides overall leadership and coordination for those involved in providing services to youth. No system exists to determine if there is duplication of services or to identify individuals that receive the same services from different programs. No overall systemic evaluation process determines if the programs are having any effect on the dire situation of at-risk youth in Mecklenburg.

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

1. Susan Furtney, Director, Career Development Services, Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont
2. Pat Heard, Executive Director, BRIDGE Jobs Program
3. Mike Massey, Director of Research, Communities In Schools
4. Rev. Dr. Frederick Grosse, President & CEO, Elon Homes and Schools for Children
5. Dr. Trasha Black, Clinical Director, Genesis Project
6. Deborah Gibson, Executive Director, Charlotte Mecklenburg Workforce Development Board
7. Brad Richardson, Mayor's Youth Employment Program
8. Kate Shem, Project Director, Partners in Out-of-School Time
9. Marc Brooks, Program Director, The Q Foundation
10. Brennon Graham, Executive Director, The Relatives
11. Tayuanee Dewberry, Executive Director, Right Moves For Youth
12. Martine Wurst, Seigle Avenue Teen Center
13. Officer Lisa Speas, Director, Director, Steele Creek Youth Network
14. Chan-Elle A. Vassell, United Way of Central Carolinas
15. Sheila Funderburke, VP Workforce Development, Urban League of Central Carolinas, Inc.
16. Michael DeVaul, YMCA of Greater Charlotte

QUESTIONNAIRE

Disconnected youth are defined as young people between the ages of 14 and 24 who are not in school or enrolled in further education or not working because of barriers to employability. At risk youth are young people in danger of becoming disconnected.

Contact Information:

Name of organization_____

Contact person and title_____

Address_____

Telephone_____

Email_____

Organization Background

1. What is the mission or purpose of your organization?

2. What are the goals for your youth services?

3. What geographic area do you serve with your program?

4. What specific youth population does your organization serve? Who is and is not eligible for service? Why does your organization choose to focus on this population?

5. What program(s)/services does your organization offer to disconnected or at risk youth?

    ☐ Vocational Assessment

    ☐ Resume Development

    ☐ Customer Service Training

    ☐ Job Readiness Training

    ☐ Financial Education

    ☐ Mentoring

    ☐ Job Referral/ Placement

    ☐ Other- Please describe:

6. Please describe the youth-specific services chosen above. On which services does your program place the most emphasis?

7. How many youth participate in your program(s)? Do you have a waiting list for services?

8. How are youth selected to participate?

9. What data or indicators do you examine to determine whether your program(s) meet their goals?

10. On average, how long do youth remain in the program? Is there a process to follow-up or maintain contact with youth who have left the program?

11. How do you mark the young person's completion of the program (certificate, graduation ceremony, etc.)?

12. Is there a fee for your service?

Organizational Partners

13. With which other organizations or programs do you most often collaborate?

14. What networks are you a part of that exchange information and best practices?

Financing and Budget (Information under this heading will not be included in the catalogue).

15. What is the organizational budget for your program?

    ☐ Under $100,000   ☐ $100,000 - $500,000
    ☐ $500,000 - $1,000,000   ☐ $1 million +

16. What is the annual budget for your youth service programs?

    ☐ Under $100,000   ☐ $100,000 - $500,000
    ☐ $500,000 - $1,000,000   ☐ $1 million +

17. What is/are the source(s) of financial support for your program?

18. Have you experienced a significant increase or decrease in your financial support over the last two years?

Other (Answers to the remaining questions are intended to inform the content of focus groups to be conducted with service providers. They will not be included in the catalogue).

19. Identify some of the greatest challenges to or constraints on your work.

20. If funding were not an issue, what services would you provide for disconnected youth in addition to those already available through your program?

21. What other organizations in the Mecklenburg County area are doing valuable work with Disconnected or at risk youth? *(Please review the attached list to see if there are other programs we should include in the catalog)*

22. What is your organization's strategy to achieve its long-term and short-term goals?

23. What else would you like us to know?

24. Would you be willing to participate in a focus group to discuss approaches to eliminating barriers faced by young people in staying on the path to education, employment and success in life?

Appendix G
YOUTH SERVICE PROVIDERS FOCUS GROUP

This focus group included representatives from the Steele Creek Youth Network, Right Moves for Youth, the Mayor's Youth Employment Program, Genesis Project, United Way, and The Relatives. These organizations were initially interviewed for the service catalog. The purpose of this focus group was to explore certain issues that emerged during the compilation of the catalog and to discuss the issues surrounding disconnected and at-risk youth in the Charlotte area.

The Root of the Disconnected Youth Problem

Large number of high school dropouts. All participants agreed that the primary issue relating to disconnected youth in Charlotte is the high dropout rate. They suggested several factors contributing to this situation. Many suggested that problems within the home environment were a key factor in this high dropout rate. They stated that young people often lack a loving guardian at home who prioritizes education. In these situations, youth are often encouraged by their parents to drop out of school because that is what their parents did. They also suggested that a lack of personal safety and stability at home may prevent young people from receiving an education. In some instances, children in poverty are often more worried about finding a place to live, something to eat, or taking care of other children and /or their parents than focusing on their own educational needs. They suggested that students often find their school unwilling or unable to accommodate their needs, while others drop out of school because they feel unchallenged academically or fail to see how the skills being taught there will help them in life. In their experience, they have observed that some youth feel hopeless and see no point in attending school, while others feel entitled to a degree or job and refuse to do the work necessary to advance in school or in a career.

Mental health issues. One problem cited by the participants was the large number of undiagnosed mental health problems among at-risk youth and their parents. Young people often lack the resources to address deep psychological issues, and schools often lack the resources to diagnose and treat students. These undiagnosed mental health issues make it more difficult for parents to care for and guide their children properly.

Lack of comprehensive support. Participants pointed out that there was a lack of comprehensive support for at-risk youth. To succeed, young people need a network of people, such as family, neighbors, or a faith community, concerned for their well-being. While there are many agencies interested in addressing various needs youth have, these agencies do not form a collective foundation of such services and some young people do not get the support they need. Youth often have difficulty identifying their needs and finding the appropriate support services. Even when they do realize what they need and where to go for that support, there is often a stigma attached to looking for help outside of one's family.

Sense of entitlement restricts youth opportunities. One observation from participants was that youth often have a negative and limited view of the opportunities available in vocational education.

The career paths they are exposed to in vocational education are primarily focused on manual labor jobs, such as plumbing and construction—jobs most youth consider to be below their personal standards. Many young people have a sense of entitlement and feel that they can choose their job and their pay rate. They do not want to start at the lower end of the career path and work their way up or go through the years of schooling necessary to build a lucrative career. Focus group members believed that this sense of entitlement often comes from the family and the overwhelming examples of quick and easy success showcased in popular culture. One focus group member recounted a story in which she went out of her way to obtain interviews at Carowinds for two young people, but they refused the jobs offered to them because these were not supervisory positions and involved working outside in the sun for long hours. Focus group members also believed young people sometimes become convinced by family and friends that they can live comfortably off the welfare system or the hard work of a romantic partner.

Improving Schools' Dropout Prevention

More resources to effective programs. The participants agreed that schools in the community need an increase in staff, funding, number of teachers, and more partnerships to address the high school dropout problem effectively. Schools may also have to review past experiences and reassess their models rather than continuing to fund existing programs that might not have much of an impact.

Get youth help early and involve parents. The participants discussed the need for schools to assess students on an individual basis, taking into consideration differences in students' learning styles. The earlier schools or related programs work with students, the better the result will be. Learning disabilities such as dyslexia can be diagnosed and treated in elementary school. If at-risk students are identified by the 9th grade, it is easier to address their needs. While recognizing at-risk youth at a young age is important, it is also important for schools to focus on involving parents in their children's education.

More vocational and life skills training. Focus group members also agreed that schools should offer more vocational programs and life skills training. This can be difficult due to state and federal testing requirements. However, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) is starting to look into the possibilities of vocational training. They are currently implementing vocational programs at Olympic and Garinger high schools and looking at schools outside of CMS that offer programs such as architecture, culinary arts, and horticulture.

Strategies to Combat the Problem of Disconnection

More comprehensive programs that target younger populations. Organizations should implement comprehensive programs that address individual student needs at multiple levels and begin reaching young people early in their education. Focus group members agreed that an effective program has to take a multi-system approach, touching several aspects of the person's life, including their community, family, and school. This type of work requires commitment and community engagement. The collaboration among organizations needed to accomplish this, however, is difficult due to the narrow requirements of different funding streams.

Increasing interest in certain jobs. Focus group members discussed how they have noticed an increasing interest in law among Latinos, especially immigration law, and politics among African Americans galvanized by the elections of Anthony Foxx and Barack Obama, and how these interests should be reflected in the workforce development opportunities available to youth in the community. This is currently happening with green jobs, where money from the federal stimulus package has funded programs that increase awareness and excitement about jobs in this field.

Importance of work experience. Participants discussed how work experience can teach youth basic life skills such as discipline, accountability, and community. While many young people feel entitled and above the jobs they are being offered, work experience can help them mature and change their attitude. Earning even a small amount of money can also be helpful for the family. Employment can connect young people to the larger community. Members also noted how important stimulus money has been because it has provided work experience opportunities.

Target specific neighborhoods. The participants mentioned that effective programs need to focus on under-served neighborhoods to create high community expectations for the youth living there.

The Non-profit Model in Charlotte

Focus group members agreed that collaboration is more successful in Charlotte when it is organized around some sort of overarching program convening different groups. Collaboration is difficult because organizations have specific requirements tied to their funding streams and are often competing for the same sources of funding.

Focus group members disagreed over the extent to which battles over "turf" limit collaboration. Some felt it was a serious problem, while others had not encountered it. Organizations not only face competition from existing organizations but also from newly-incorporated organizations. New agencies often seek funding for programs that duplicate existing services. However, there are still many important services, like family mentoring, that have not been offered in the area.

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Appendix H

SCHOOL PROFESSIONALS SURVEY ANALYSIS

School professionals are in a unique position to play a strategic role in providing the needed support for at-risk youth. Students typically spend most of their time in school settings and school professionals can provide important perspectives on youth and their ability to complete the most important step in eventually entering the workforce—graduating from high school. This professional group is able to closely monitor student behavior and identify characteristics of at-risk youth. School professionals are often times the only ones who can identify the needs of students and help prevent youth from dropping out of school. For these reasons, the project team surveyed members of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) system and members of Communities In Schools (CIS) to ascertain what services are currently offered to at-risk youth at the school level as well as to identity problems youth face as they seek to continue their education and/or find employment.

A list of school professionals from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools System and members of Communities In School was obtained from both respective organizations. Members from these two organizations were emailed a link to an online survey. Out of ninety-three school professionals that were emailed a survey link, thirty-eight responded resulting in a 41% response rate.

SURVEY POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The majority of the survey respondents work as Communities In Schools (CIS) Site Coordinators (61%). Nearly a quarter of respondents (24%) work as Talent Search Program (TRIO) Assistants/Counselors. The rest of the survey respondents (15%) included a Dropout Prevention Site Coordinator, a Program Director, an Analyst, a Director of Development, Support Staff and a Director of College Access Programs.

Survey respondents are associated with the following schools:

- Albemarle Road Middle School
- Audrey Kell High School
- Bishop Spaugh Middle School
- E.E. Waddell High School
- East Mecklenburg High School
- Independence High School
- James Martin Middle School
- Mallard Creek High School

- Midwood High School
- Performance Learning Center
- Providence High School
- Ranson Middle School
- Sedgefield Middle School
- South Mecklenburg High School
- West Mecklenburg High School
- Other schools not listed

SURVEY FINDINGS

Successes and Failures in Getting At-Risk Youth Ready for the Workforce

When asked about what percentage of youth in their school would be considered "at-risk youth", respondents' answers ranged widely from 0%–100%. It should be noted that out of thirty-eight respondents, thirty-one were from CIS and seven were from CMS. Thus, readers are cautioned when interpreting results due to the small sample size. Survey respondents were asked to respond to a list of issues as to whether they believe schools and local organizations in the community were doing well or needed improvement in terms of getting at-risk youth ready for the workforce (Table H-1). These issues included increasing at-risk youth's chances of graduating, obtaining internships, job shadowing, mentoring, college admittance, entry into other post-secondary training programs, as well as providing support to teen mothers, and providing career exploration assistance. Survey respondents were also given an opportunity to provide their own response.

In terms of getting at-risk youth ready for the workforce, the majority of survey respondents thought public schools in Charlotte were successfully increasing their chances of graduating (45%) and providing support to teen mothers (45%). When asked where public schools were failing in terms of getting at-risk youth ready for the workforce, the majority of survey respondents selected getting them into other post-secondary training programs (55%) followed closely by getting them internships (50%).

In addition to asking survey respondents about areas in which they think public schools in Charlotte are doing well and are not doing well, survey respondents were also asked how they think local organizations are faring in these same areas. The majority of respondents believed that local organizations are doing a great job with mentoring (81%) and career exploration (81%). However, survey respondents believed that local organizations are doing poorly in helping at-risk youth with landing an internship position (41%), followed by job shadowing (29%) and entry into other post-secondary training programs (29%). Table H-1 compares survey respondents' thoughts on the work of public schools and local organizations in getting at-risk youth ready for the workforce.

In summary, most survey respondents believed that local organizations are doing a much better job than public schools in preparing at-risk youth for the workforce. For the eight items listed, respondents indicated that local organizations were "doing well" more often than public schools. However, school professionals who responded to this survey point to the fact that, for both public schools and local organizations, there is still a great deal of work to be done in getting students into other post-secondary training programs as well as getting them internships. Thus, an opportunity exists for these two organizations to collaborate in increasing their success in these two domains.

Table H-1. Schools' and Local Organizations' Successes and Failures in Getting At-Risk Youth Ready for the Workforce (Percent of Cases)

Items	PUBLIC SCHOOLS		LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS	
	Doing Well	Needs Improvement	Doing Well	Needs Improvement
Increasing their chances of graduating	44.7%	34.2%	72.2%	8.8%
Providing support to teen mothers	44.7%	34.2%	61.1%	14.7%
Mentoring	39.5%	36.8%	80.6%	14.7%
Career explorations	39.5%	44.7%	80.6%	11.8%
Job Shadowing	28.9%	34.2%	69.4%	29.4%
Getting them into college	18.4%	47.4%	52.8%	17.6%
Getting them into other post-secondary training programs	18.4%	55.3%	36.1%	29.4%
Getting them internships	13.2%	50.0%	36.1%	41.2%
Other	23.7%	15.8%	2.8%	17.6%

Note 1: Responses categorized as "Other" include various responses such as 'partnering with community resources/agencies,' 'we are failing our students,' 'The students that receive the most are the ones who have made themselves visible,' and 'nothing.'
Note 2: About 3% of cases thought public schools were not failing to get at risk youth ready for the workforce in any way.
Note 3: Roughly 5% of cases thought public schools were not successful in getting at risk youth ready for the workforce in any way

Issues & Barriers in Schools

Survey respondents were asked to rate how they saw the following issues at their school:

- Low student achievement
- Repeating grades
- Students over the normal age
- Absenteeism/truancy
- Dropping out
- Poverty
- Emotional disconnection
- Drugs

- Gangs
- Fights/violence
- Poor student health
- Students disrespecting staff and peers
- Racial and/or gender discrimination/tension
- Teen pregnancy
- Lack of parental involvement

Survey respondents could rate these issues as "Not a problem at all," "A minor problem," "A major problem," or "A crisis."   For ease of reporting, researchers collapsed these responses into two

categories: "A major problem/crisis" and "Not a problem/minor problem." The table below shows that an overwhelming majority of survey respondents (92%) believed that poverty was the biggest issue for youth in their school. Other major problems or crises were lack of parental involvement (82%), low student achievement (79%), absenteeism/truancy (72%), and emotional disconnection (72%). Conversely, racial and/or gender discrimination is a minor or not a problem at all (73%), followed by fights/violence (65%), teen pregnancy (64%), and drugs (63%).

Table H-2. How do you see the following issues at your school? (Percent of Cases)

	A major problem / A crisis	Not a problem / A minor problem
Poverty	92%	8%
Lack of parental involvement	82%	18%
Low Student Achievement	79%	21%
Absenteeism/Truancy	72%	28%
Emotional Disconnection	72%	28%
Students disrespecting staff and peers	66%	34%
Repeating Grades	61%	40%
Poor student health	55%	45%
Dropping out	46%	54%
Gangs	49%	51%
Students over the normal age	43%	57%
Teen pregnancy	36%	64%
Fights/Violence	35%	65%
Drugs	37%	63%
Racial and/or gender discrimination	27%	73%

In addition to asking survey respondents about the issues that at-risk youth face in their school, they were also asked to check from a list which barriers they believe are keeping students at their school from finishing their education or finding a job. The barriers listed include:

- Students don't believe they can do it
- Family responsibilities
- Child-care responsibilities
- Lack of money
- Lack of information
- Lack of support from their family
- Lack of support from their friends
- Lack of motivation

- Lack of job training
- Lack of work experience
- Low grades
- Language
- Discrimination (such as racial, ethnic or gender)
- Transportation

Survey respondents were also given an opportunity to provide their own response or to check a box indicating that their students do not face any barriers.

As Table H-3 shows, the majority of respondents cited lack of motivation (89%) as the greatest barrier that keeps students from finishing their education or finding employment. Other major barriers that survey respondents cited were lack of support from their family (86%), low grades (83%), and transportation (77%). Discrimination (such as racial, ethnic, or gender) was cited least often (31%) as a barrier that keeps students from finishing their education or finding a job.

Table H-3. Which of the following do you feel are barriers that keep students at your school from finishing their education or finding a job? (Percent of Cases)

Barriers	Percent of Cases
Lack of motivation	89%
Lack of support from their family	86%
Low grades	83%
Transportation	77%
Don't believe they can do it	66%
Family responsibilities	63%
Lack of information	63%
Lack of job training	54%
Lack of money	51%
Language	51%
Child-care responsibilities	43%
Lack of work experience	40%
Lack of support from their friends	37%
Discrimination (such as racial, ethnic, or gender)	31%

Where Youth Need Help and the Gaps in Youth Services

A series of questions relating to the views of school professionals on the overall youth employment program needs in the community were included in the survey. Specifically, they were asked how much help (none, some, or a lot) the youth at their schools need with the following:

- Basic educational skills (for example, reading, writing or math)
- Life skills (for example, managing household finances)
- College applications; basic preparation for work (work ethic, work readiness skills)
- Knowing more about their career interests
- Learning about work opportunities (for example, different occupations, industries, employers)
- Looking for work (for example, resume, interviews)

- Help with homework/tutoring
- Parenting skills
- Childcare
- Housing
- Physical health
- Mental health counseling
- Drug or alcohol counseling
- Family or individual counseling
- Personal safety
- Getting out of a gang
- Legal services
- Practicing safe sex

Survey respondents were also given the option to check a box if they feel that their students do not need help in any of the aforementioned skills or areas.

As shown in Table H-4, the skills or areas that survey respondents thought youth in their school needed a great deal of help with were life skills (for example, managing household finances) (84%); help with homework/tutoring (84%); basic preparation for work, work ethic, work readiness skills (70%); learning about work opportunities (for example, different occupations, industries, employers) (69%). The areas that were listed most often as needing "some" help were personal safety (67%) and physical health (63%). Help with homework/tutoring (16%) and life skills (for example, managing household finances) (16%) received the fewest "some" responses.

The areas receiving the highest percent of "none" responses were childcare (31%) and basic educational skills (for example reading, writing or math) (31%). Life skills (for example, managing household finances) and help with homework/tutoring both received the highest average rating with 2.8.

Table H-4. How much help do the youth at your school need with the following skills or areas?

	None (=1)	Some (=2)	A lot (=3)	Avg. Rating
Life skills (for example, managing household finances)	0%	16%	84%	2.8
Help with homework/tutoring	0%	16%	84%	2.8
Basic preparation for work, work ethic, work readiness skills	0%	30%	70%	2.7
Learning about work opportunities (for example, different occupations, industries, employers)	0%	31%	69%	2.6
Basic educational skills (for example, reading, writing or math)	0%	31%	69%	2.6
Knowing more about their career interests	0%	37%	63%	2.6
Looking for work (for example, résumé, interviews)	12%	27%	62%	2.5
College applications	12%	27%	61%	2.4
Practicing safe sex	17%	26%	57%	2.4
Mental health counseling	0%	58%	42%	2.4
Family or individual counseling	0%	59%	41%	2.4
Housing	16%	47%	38%	2.2
Physical health	0%	63%	37%	2.3
Parenting skills	29%	36%	36%	2.0
Personal safety	0%	67%	33%	2.3
Getting out of a gang	13%	53%	33%	2.2
Childcare	31%	38%	31%	2.0
Drug or alcohol counseling	14%	55%	31%	2.1
Legal services	25%	61%	14%	1.8

What is Being Offered and What Should Be Offered

Survey respondents were asked which areas their school addressed through its current array of programs or services. As shown in Table H-5, a high percentage (63%) of survey respondents selected the response "a lot" for how schools addressed homework/tutoring with current services and programs Over half (55%) of respondents selected the response "a lot" for how schools addressed basic educational skills such as reading, writing or math with current programs or services. In regard to how the schools addressed certain areas through current programs or services, the areas with the highest percentage of respondents selecting "none" were childcare (83%) and legal services (78%).

Basic educational skills received the highest average rating (2.6) of all areas while parenting skills received the lowest average rating (1.2).

Table H-5. Which of these areas does your school address through the current array of programs or services?

	None (=1)	Some (=2)	A lot (=3)	Avg. Rating
Help with homework/tutoring	0%	38%	63%	2.6
Basic educational skills (for example, reading, writing or math)	3%	42%	55%	2.5
Knowing more about their career interests	9%	63%	28%	2.1
Physical health	3%	69%	28%	2.2
College applications	42%	32%	26%	1.8
Mental health counseling	6%	69%	25%	2.1
Learning about work opportunities (for example, different occupations, industries, employers)	10%	71%	19%	2.1
Life skills (for example, managing household finances)	24%	62%	14%	1.9
Basic preparation for work, work ethic, work readiness skills	32%	55%	13%	1.8
Family or individual counseling	13%	73%	13%	2.0
Personal safety	14%	79%	7%	1.9
Legal services	78%	17%	4%	1.2
Housing	67%	29%	4%	1.3
Childcare	83%	13%	4%	1.2
Drug or alcohol counseling	25%	71%	4%	1.7
Looking for work (for example, résumé, interviews)	35%	62%	3%	1.6
Getting out of a gang	46%	54%	0%	1.5
Practicing safe sex	54%	46%	0%	1.4
Parenting skills	71%	29%	0%	1.2

When school professionals were asked if there were any groups or types of students at their school whose needs were not currently being met by their organization, school or other programs in the community, a small number of respondents (20%) indicated that the needs of racial and ethnic minority groups (including African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos) are not currently being met. Two respondents (8%) also felt that the needs of students with learning disabilities/ behavioral problems were also not being met.

When asked what gaps they saw in youth services in this community, the highest percentage of survey respondents cited the lack of alternative services/programs (20%). Other gaps that were listed included lack of medical care/health courses (8%), not enough staff support/volunteers (8%), lack of teaching social skills/conflict management/family responsibility (4%), and lack of jobs for students who graduate from high school but are not interested in going to college (4%). A small percentage of respondents (16%) thought there were no such gaps or did not know of any.

Survey respondents were also asked if they had referred students to any youth employment programs in the community. More than half of respondents (54%) indicated that they did not refer their students to any youth employment programs in the community. Of those that did refer students to youth employment programs in the community, 27% of respondents referred their youth to the Goodwill's Youth Job Connection program, 27% of respondents referred them to the Mayor's Youth Employment Program (MYEP), 27% of respondents referred them to multiple programs including both the Youth Job Connection program, and MYEP, 9% of respondents referred them to Job Corp, and 9% of respondents referred them to Communities In Schools (CIS). Additionally, survey respondents were asked if they were familiar with Goodwill's Youth Job Connection program, and just over half of respondents (51%) stated that they were not familiar with the program. When asked if any of the students at their school participates in this program, the majority of respondents did not know/preferred not to answer (68%), and just under a quarter of respondents (24%) said "no" to this question.

To better understand the various programs/services that are available at their schools, survey respondents were asked to check all the services that their schools offer from the following choices:

- Behavioral incentives geared toward increasing attendance
- Tutoring program to help students with basic reading skills
- Tutoring program to help students with general academics
- Program to increase communications between home and school
- Program to help parents with parenting skills

- Vocational assessment
- Résumé development
- Customer service skills
- Job readiness training
- Financial education
- Mentoring
- Job referral/placement

Survey respondents were also given the opportunity to enter their own response. Table H-6 summarizes these responses. When asked which programs their school offers to at-risk youth, the majority of respondents selected tutoring programs to help students with general academics (85%), mentoring (73%), and behavioral incentives geared toward increasing attendance (73%). A low

percentage of respondents indicated their schools offered financial education (15%), job readiness training (9%), and job referral/placement (3%). One respondent said their school offered no programs, and three respondents (9%) gave responses categorized as "other," which includes after school programs, extra-curricular activities, and internships.

Of the programs that they would like to see offered at their school, the highest percentage of respondents selected financial education (45%) and job referral/placement (42%).

Table H-6. Availability of Programs/Services in Schools for At-Risk Youth

Programs/Services	Offered in School	Not offered, but would like to see it offered in school
Tutoring program to help students with general academics	85%	10%
Mentoring	73%	19%
Behavioral incentives geared toward increasing attendance	73%	29%
Tutoring program to help students with basic reading skills	61%	26%
Program to increase communications between home and school	61%	23%
Program to help parents with parenting skills	27%	36%
Résumé Development	24%	29%
Vocational Assessment	18%	39%
Financial Education	15%	45%
Other	9%	3%
Job Readiness Training	9%	39%
Job Referral/Placement	3%	42%
Customer Service Training	0%	29%

CONCLUSION

Overall, public schools and local organizations are doing well in helping at-risk youth with increasing their chances of graduating and providing support to teen mothers. Nonetheless, according to this group of school professionals surveyed, local organizations are outperforming public schools in getting at-risk youth ready for the workforce. This is particularly the case through local organizations' work in mentoring and providing career exploration for at-risk youth. Yet, there are still gaps in helping youth enter other post-secondary training programs and obtain internships. When it comes to issues that at-risk youth face at their school, the greatest (with over two-thirds stating it is a major problem or a crisis) were poverty, lack of parental involvement, low student achievement, absenteeism/truancy, and emotional disconnection. However, racial and/or gender discrimination was only viewed as a major problem or a crisis by just over one-quarter of all survey respondents (27%). In terms of barriers, the three largest barriers mentioned by school professionals surveyed were lack of motivation (89%), lack of support from their family (86%), and low grades (83%). In keeping with their responses on the issues that at-risk youth face, school professionals cited discrimination (such as racial, ethnic or gender) least often as a barrier that kept students at their school from finishing their education or finding a job. The skills or areas that at-risk youth need help with the most are life skills, homework/tutoring, basic preparation for work, learning about work opportunities, and basic educational skills. Although services in the areas of helping with homework/tutoring and in basic education skills are offered in schools, resources are still needed to help students with life skills, basic preparation for work, and learning about work opportunities. Therefore, a more collaborative approach between public schools and local organizations is much needed in our community to ensure at-risk youth's needs in these areas are served.

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Goodwill Youth Needs Assessment Survey- CMS

1. Introduction

The UNC Charlotte Urban Institute would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this online survey about youth needs and services on behalf of Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont. We are doing this survey to see which services schools in Charlotte are offering to at-risk youth and to identify problems youth at your school face as they seek to continue their education and/or find a job. As professionals inside the school system, you have a unique and important perspective on youth and their ability to complete the most important step in eventually entering the workforce- graduating from high school, a perspective which we hope to capture with this survey. Ultimately, your responses will help us evaluate and improve programs and services for youth in our community.

It will take about **15 minutes** to fill out the survey.

Your answers to these questions will be completely anonymous. We will not ask you to write your name or any other information that may identify you.

This is not a test.

Be sure to read the instructions before you mark your answers.

Please DO NOT USE your web browser's back button. If you need to go back a page, use the "PREV" button at the bottom of the page. If you exit the survey, you will not be able to re-enter the survey.

If you agree to take this survey, click "next" and you will begin.

2. General questions about you and your school

* 1. Please select the school that are you associated with (using the list from the drop-down menu).

2. What is your job title?
(Please note that this information won't be used to identify you.)

3. "Disconnected youth" are young people between the ages of 14 and 24 who are not in school or enrolled in further education or are not working because of barriers to employability. "At-risk youth" are young people in danger of becoming disconnected.

About what percentage of the youth in your school would you consider to be "at-risk youth"?

Percentage

Goodwill Youth Needs Assessment Survey- CMS

✱ 4. In terms of getting at-risk youth ready for the workforce, what things do you think public schools in Charlotte are doing well? (Check all that apply)

☐ Increasing their chances of graduating

☐ Getting them internships

☐ Job shadowing

☐ Mentoring

☐ Getting them into college

☐ Getting them into other post-secondary training programs

☐ Providing support to teen mothers

☐ Career exploration

☐ Other (please specify)

✱ 5. Where do you think public schools in Charlotte are failing when it comes to getting at-risk youth ready for the workforce? (Check all that apply)

☐ Increasing their chances of graduating

☐ Getting them internships

☐ Job shadowing

☐ Mentoring

☐ Getting them into college

☐ Getting them into other post-secondary training programs

☐ Providing support to teen mothers

☐ Career exploration

☐ Other (please specify)

Goodwill Youth Needs Assessment Survey- CMS

* 6. In terms of getting at-risk youth ready for the workforce, what do you think organizations that work with youth within public schools in Charlotte are doing well? (Check all that apply)

☐ Increasing their chances of graduating

☐ Getting them internships

☐ Job shadowing

☐ Mentoring

☐ Getting them into college

☐ Getting them into other post-secondary training programs

☐ Providing support to teen mothers

☐ Career exploration

☐ Other (please specify)

[text box]

* 7. What do you think these organizations are doing poorly when it comes to this same goal? (Check all that apply)

☐ Increasing their chances of graduating

☐ Getting them internships

☐ Job shadowing

☐ Mentoring

☐ Getting them into college

☐ Getting them into other post-secondary training programs

☐ Providing support to teen mothers

☐ Career exploration

☐ Other (please specify)

[text box]

Goodwill Youth Needs Assessment Survey- CMS

*8. How do you see the following issues at your school? (Check only one for each item)

	Not a problem at all	A minor problem	A major problem	A crisis	Don't know/I prefer not to answer
Low student achievement	○	○	○	○	○
Repeating grades	○	○	○	○	○
Students over the normal age	○	○	○	○	○
Absenteeism/truancy	○	○	○	○	○
Dropping out	○	○	○	○	○
Poverty	○	○	○	○	○
Emotional disconnection	○	○	○	○	○
Drugs	○	○	○	○	○
Gangs	○	○	○	○	○
Fights/violence	○	○	○	○	○
Poor student health	○	○	○	○	○
Students disrespecting staff and peers	○	○	○	○	○
Racial and/or gender discrimination/tension	○	○	○	○	○
Teen pregnancy	○	○	○	○	○
Lack of parental involvement	○	○	○	○	○

3. Questions about Community Youth Employment Programs

9. Are there any groups or types of students at your school whose needs are not currently being met by your organization, school or other programs in the community? In other words, what gaps in youth services do you see in this community?

*10. Do you refer your students to any youth employment programs in the community?

○ Yes, please list below

○ No

○ Don't know

○ I prefer not to answer

Please list the programs you refer your students to:

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✱ **11. Are you familiar with Goodwill's Youth Job Connection Program?**

◯ Yes

◯ No

◯ I prefer not to answer

✱ **12. Do any of the students at your school participate in this program?**

◯ Yes

◯ No

◯ Don't know

◯ I prefer not to answer

4. Questions about the needs of youth at your school

✱ **13. From the list below, which of the following do you feel are barriers that keep students at your school from finishing their education or finding a job? (Check all that apply. If students don't face any barriers, check the first box only.)**

☐ Don't face any barriers

☐ Don't believe they can do it

☐ Family responsibilities

☐ Child-care responsibilities

☐ Lack of money

☐ Lack of information

☐ Lack of support from their family

☐ Lack of support from their friends

☐ Lack of motivation

☐ Lack of job training

☐ Lack of work experience

☐ Low grades

☐ Language

☐ Discrimination (such as racial, ethnic or gender)

☐ Transportation

☐ Other (please specify)

[   ]

Goodwill Youth Needs Assessment Survey- CMS

14. How much help do the youth at your school need with the following skills or areas? (Check only one for each item)

	None	Some	A lot	Don't know
Basic educational skills (for example, reading, writing or math)	○	○	○	○
Life skills (for example, managing household finances)	○	○	○	○
College applications	○	○	○	○
Basic preparation for work, work ethic, work readiness skills	○	○	○	○
Knowing more about their career interests	○	○	○	○
Learning about work opportunities (for example, different occupations, industries, employers)	○	○	○	○
Looking for work (for example, résumé, interviews)	○	○	○	○
Help with homework, tutoring	○	○	○	○
Parenting skills	○	○	○	○
Childcare	○	○	○	○
Housing	○	○	○	○
Physical health	○	○	○	○
Mental health counseling	○	○	○	○
Drug or alcohol counseling	○	○	○	○
Family or individual counseling	○	○	○	○
Personal safety	○	○	○	○
Getting out of a gang	○	○	○	○
Legal services	○	○	○	○
Practicing safe sex	○	○	○	○

If they don't need help in any skills or areas enter "None" in the box.

5. Questions about programs/services your school currently offers to disconnec...

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15. Which of these areas does your school address through the current array of programs or services? (Check only one for each item)

	None	Some	A lot	Don't know
Basic educational skills (for example, reading, writing or math)	○	○	○	○
Life skills (for example, managing household finances)	○	○	○	○
College applications	○	○	○	○
Basic preparation for work, work ethic, work readiness skills	○	○	○	○
Knowing more about their career interests	○	○	○	○
Learning about work opportunities (for example, different occupations, industries, employers)	○	○	○	○
Looking for work (for example, résumé, interviews)	○	○	○	○
Help with homework, tutoring	○	○	○	○
Parenting skills	○	○	○	○
Childcare	○	○	○	○
Housing	○	○	○	○
Physical health	○	○	○	○
Mental health counseling	○	○	○	○
Drug or alcohol counseling	○	○	○	○
Family or individual counseling	○	○	○	○
Personal safety	○	○	○	○
Getting out of a gang	○	○	○	○
Legal services	○	○	○	○
Practicing safe sex	○	○	○	○

If they don't need help in any skills or areas enter "None" in the box.

Goodwill Youth Needs Assessment Survey- CMS

* 16. What programs/services does your school offer to at-risk youth? ("Disconnected youth" are young people between the ages of 14 and 24 who are not in school or enrolled in further education or are note working because of barriers to employability. "At-risk youth" are young people in danger of becoming disconnected.) (Check all that apply)

☐ Behavioral incentives geared toward increasing attendance

☐ Tutoring program to help students with basic reading skills

☐ Tutoring program to help students with general academics

☐ Program to increase communications between home and school

☐ Program to help parents with parenting skills

☐ Vocational Assessment

☐ Resume Development

☐ Customer Service Training

☐ Job Readiness Training

☐ Financial Education

☐ Mentoring

☐ Job Referral/Placement

☐ Other (please describe)

Goodwill Youth Needs Assessment Survey- CMS

* 17. Of those that your school does not offer, which of the following programs/services would you like to see your school offer in the future? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Behavioral incentives geared toward increasing attendance
- ☐ Tutoring program to help students with basic reading skills
- ☐ Tutoring program to help students with general academics
- ☐ Program to increase communications between home and school
- ☐ Program to help parents with parenting skills
- ☐ Vocational Assessment
- ☐ Resume Development
- ☐ Customer Service Training
- ☐ Job Readiness Training
- ☐ Financial Education
- ☐ Mentoring
- ☐ Job Referral/Placement
- ☐ Other (please describe)

6. END

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US WITH THE SURVEY!

If you have any questions/concerns about this survey, please call the University of North Carolina at Charlotte Urban Institute at 704-687-2307.

(Hit the **"Done"** button to exit the survey)

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Goodwill Youth Needs Assessment Survey- CIS

1. Introduction

The UNC Charlotte Urban Institute would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this online survey about youth needs and services on behalf of Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont. We are doing this survey to see which services schools in Charlotte are offering to at-risk youth and to identify problems youth at your school face as they seek to continue their education and/or find a job. As professionals inside the school system, you have a unique and important perspective on youth and their ability to complete the most important step in eventually entering the workforce- graduating from high school, a perspective which we hope to capture with this survey. Ultimately, your responses will help us evaluate and improve programs and services for youth in our community.

It will take about **15 minutes** to fill out the survey.

Your answers to these questions will be completely anonymous. We will not ask you to write your name or any other information that may identify you.

This is not a test.

Be sure to read the instructions before you mark your answers.

Please DO NOT USE your web browser's back button. If you need to go back a page, use the "PREV" button at the bottom of the page. If you exit the survey, you will not be able to re-enter the survey.

If you agree to take this survey, click "next" and you will begin.

2. General questions about you and your school

* 1. Please select the school that are you associated with (using the list from the drop-down menu).

2. What is your job title?
(Please note that this information won't be used to identify you.)

3. "Disconnected youth" are young people between the ages of 14 and 24 who are not in school or enrolled in further education or are not working because of barriers to employability. "At-risk youth" are young people in danger of becoming disconnected.

About what percentage of the youth in your school would you consider to be "at-risk youth"?

Percentage

Goodwill Youth Needs Assessment Survey- CIS

✱ 4. In terms of getting at-risk youth ready for the workforce, what things do you think public schools in Charlotte are doing well? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Increasing their chances of graduating
- ☐ Getting them internships
- ☐ Job shadowing
- ☐ Mentoring
- ☐ Getting them into college
- ☐ Getting them into other post-secondary training programs
- ☐ Providing support to teen mothers
- ☐ Career exploration
- ☐ Other (please specify)

[text box]

✱ 5. Where do you think public schools in Charlotte are failing when it comes to getting at-risk youth ready for the workforce? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Increasing their chances of graduating
- ☐ Getting them internships
- ☐ Job shadowing
- ☐ Mentoring
- ☐ Getting them into college
- ☐ Getting them into other post-secondary training programs
- ☐ Providing support to teen mothers
- ☐ Career exploration
- ☐ Other (please specify)

[text box]

Goodwill Youth Needs Assessment Survey- CIS

* 6. In terms of getting at-risk youth ready for the workforce, what do you think organizations that work with youth within public schools in Charlotte are doing well? (Check all that apply)

☐ Increasing their chances of graduating

☐ Getting them internships

☐ Job shadowing

☐ Mentoring

☐ Getting them into college

☐ Getting them into other post-secondary training programs

☐ Providing support to teen mothers

☐ Career exploration

☐ Other (please specify)

[text box]

* 7. What do you think these organizations are doing poorly when it comes to this same goal? (Check all that apply)

☐ Increasing their chances of graduating

☐ Getting them internships

☐ Job shadowing

☐ Mentoring

☐ Getting them into college

☐ Getting them into other post-secondary training programs

☐ Providing support to teen mothers

☐ Career exploration

☐ Other (please specify)

[text box]

Goodwill Youth Needs Assessment Survey- CIS

* 8. How do you see the following issues at your school? (Check only one for each item)

	Not a problem at all	A minor problem	A major problem	A crisis	Don't know/I prefer not to answer
Low student achievement	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Repeating grades	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Students over the normal age	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Absenteeism/truancy	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Dropping out	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Poverty	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Emotional disconnection	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Drugs	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Gangs	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Fights/violence	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Poor student health	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Students disrespecting staff and peers	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Racial and/or gender discrimination/tension	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Teen pregnancy	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Lack of parental involvement	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

3. Questions about Community Youth Employment Programs

9. Are there any groups or types of students at your school whose needs are not currently being met by your organization, school or other programs in the community? In other words, what gaps in youth services do you see in this community?

* 10. Do you refer your students to any youth employment programs in the community?

◯ Yes, please list below

◯ No

◯ Don't know

◯ I prefer not to answer

Please list the programs you refer your students to:

Goodwill Youth Needs Assessment Survey- CIS

＊ 11. Are you familiar with Goodwill's Youth Job Connection Program?

○ Yes

○ No

○ I prefer not to answer

＊ 12. Do any of the students at your school participate in this program?

○ Yes

○ No

○ Don't know

○ I prefer not to answer

4. Questions about the needs of youth at your school

＊ 13. From the list below, which of the following do you feel are barriers that keep students at your school from finishing their education or finding a job? (Check all that apply. If students don't face any barriers, check the first box only.)

☐ Don't face any barriers

☐ Don't believe they can do it

☐ Family responsibilities

☐ Child-care responsibilities

☐ Lack of money

☐ Lack of information

☐ Lack of support from their family

☐ Lack of support from their friends

☐ Lack of motivation

☐ Lack of job training

☐ Lack of work experience

☐ Low grades

☐ Language

☐ Discrimination (such as racial, ethnic or gender)

☐ Transportation

☐ Other (please specify)

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[                                    ]
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Goodwill Youth Needs Assessment Survey- CIS

14. How much help do the youth at your school need with the following skills or areas? (Check only one for each item)

	None	Some	A lot	Don't know
Basic educational skills (for example, reading, writing or math)	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Life skills (for example, managing household finances)	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
College applications	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Basic preparation for work, work ethic, work readiness skills	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Knowing more about their career interests	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Learning about work opportunities (for example, different occupations, industries, employers)	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Looking for work (for example, résumé, interviews)	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Help with homework, tutoring	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Parenting skills	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Childcare	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Housing	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Physical health	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Mental health counseling	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Drug or alcohol counseling	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Family or individual counseling	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Personal safety	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Getting out of a gang	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Legal services	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘
Practicing safe sex	⭘	⭘	⭘	⭘

If they don't need help in any skills or areas enter "None" in the box.

5. Questions about programs/services your school currently offers to disconnec...

Goodwill Youth Needs Assessment Survey- CIS

15. Which of these areas does your school address through the current array of programs or services? (Check only one for each item)

	None	Some	A lot	Don't know
Basic educational skills (for example, reading, writing or math)	○	○	○	○
Life skills (for example, managing household finances)	○	○	○	○
College applications	○	○	○	○
Basic preparation for work, work ethic, work readiness skills	○	○	○	○
Knowing more about their career interests	○	○	○	○
Learning about work opportunities (for example, different occupations, industries, employers)	○	○	○	○
Looking for work (for example, résumé, interviews)	○	○	○	○
Help with homework, tutoring	○	○	○	○
Parenting skills	○	○	○	○
Childcare	○	○	○	○
Housing	○	○	○	○
Physical health	○	○	○	○
Mental health counseling	○	○	○	○
Drug or alcohol counseling	○	○	○	○
Family or individual counseling	○	○	○	○
Personal safety	○	○	○	○
Getting out of a gang	○	○	○	○
Legal services	○	○	○	○
Practicing safe sex	○	○	○	○

If they don't need help in any skills or areas enter "None" in the box.

Goodwill Youth Needs Assessment Survey- CIS

* 16. What programs/services does your school offer to at-risk youth? ("Disconnected youth" are young people between the ages of 14 and 24 who are not in school or enrolled in further education or are note working because of barriers to employability. "At-risk youth" are young people in danger of becoming disconnected.) (Check all that apply)

☐ Behavioral incentives geared toward increasing attendance

☐ Tutoring program to help students with basic reading skills

☐ Tutoring program to help students with general academics

☐ Program to increase communications between home and school

☐ Program to help parents with parenting skills

☐ Vocational Assessment

☐ Resume Development

☐ Customer Service Training

☐ Job Readiness Training

☐ Financial Education

☐ Mentoring

☐ Job Referral/Placement

☐ Other (please describe)

Goodwill Youth Needs Assessment Survey- CIS

* 17. Of those that your school does not offer, which of the following programs/services would you like to see your school offer in the future? (Check all that apply)

- [ ] Behavioral incentives geared toward increasing attendance
- [ ] Tutoring program to help students with basic reading skills
- [ ] Tutoring program to help students with general academics
- [ ] Program to increase communications between home and school
- [ ] Program to help parents with parenting skills
- [ ] Vocational Assessment
- [ ] Resume Development
- [ ] Customer Service Training
- [ ] Job Readiness Training
- [ ] Financial Education
- [ ] Mentoring
- [ ] Job Referral/Placement
- [ ] Other (please describe)

6. END

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US WITH THE SURVEY!

If you have any questions/concerns about this survey, please call the University of North Carolina at Charlotte Urban Institute at 704-687-2307.

(Hit the **"Done"** button to exit the survey)

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Appendix I
EMPLOYER SURVEY ANALYSIS

A key component to any assessment of youth job training programs is to gather input from those who make hiring decisions, particularly those who work in firms that offer job opportunities to youth ages 14–24. Two groups of employers were surveyed for this project: previous employers and potential employers. The first group (previous employers) involved employers who previously participated in Goodwill Industries of Southern Piedmont's Youth Job Connection (YJC) program. A list of previous employers was obtained from Goodwill. The initial list contained 36 employers and several attempts were made to contact each employer for their email address. The project team removed those who could not be reached or had no email address as well as duplicate contacts and those who were not eligible to participate in the survey (either because the contact person was no longer employed at the organization that participated or the organization did not employ any youth from the program). After this process, 24 previous employers were provided a survey link and of those, six accessed the survey, resulting in a 25% response rate. It should be noted that one of the six survey respondents of the previous employers only answered the first four questions. Therefore, the analysis of the previous employers' survey results is based mainly on the five respondents.

The second group of employers surveyed is what the project team termed "potential employers" since this group did not participate in the YJC program but are certainly "gatekeepers" of employment opportunities. This group of employers consisted mainly of professionals in the Human Resources field, as well as business managers and executive directors. A web link to the survey was provided to a local employers' organization to be distributed via email to its members. The survey link was distributed to about 620 employers. After a few weeks, the survey link was closed, and 67 members had responded, resulting in an 11% response rate.

Overall, 73 employers were surveyed for this project. Details of the survey findings are presented below. It should be noted that due to the small number of previous employers who completed the entire survey (n=5), results from this group are not presented as percentages. Instead, the actual count of the number of previous employers who provided an answer to a survey question is reported. In addition, percentages that are reported may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

PREVIOUS EMPLOYERS SURVEY

Population Characteristics

The first group surveyed, previous employers, consisted of six respondents who represented firms that participated in the YJC program between one and five months. These firms included the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department, the City of Charlotte, Grier Heights Foundation Center, and Laurance Realty. Two survey respondents worked in government: one had worked in government for two years and the other for twelve years. One survey respondent had worked in law enforcement for 22 years, one survey respondent worked in education for three years, and one worked in property management for two years. One respondent did not provide the industry that he/she worked for.

Survey Findings

The survey respondents' firms employed an average of five youth (one being the fewest number of youth employed and 10 being the most). Cumulatively, this group of previous employers employed 26 youth from GISP's YJC program. Survey respondents were asked, "Why does your firm participate in this program?" and were asked to select one or all of the following answer choices: to help youth, cost advantageous, good public relations, reflective of company values, give back to the community. Respondents were also given the option to write their own response. The most common responses were "To help youth" (five out of six respondents) and "To give back to the community" (four out of six respondents). One respondent replied "It gives kids an opportunity to work in a positive environment, making money and giving them something constructive to do while being out of school over the summer."

To ascertain their overall experience with GISP's YJC program, survey respondents were presented with several groups of statements and were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with them. These statements included their overall satisfaction with the program as well as a series of statements specifically about the program's staff and youth participants.

Overall experience with the program

The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with statements regarding their overall experience with the program. As Figure I-1 illustrates, five respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their *overall experience with this program has been positive,* that they *would recommend this program to other employers,* and that *youth were placed in a job in a timely manner*. In addition, four respondents agreed or strongly agreed that *the program material is relevant and beneficial for the youth, the program staff were successful in finding youth that matched* the firm's *specifications*, and that they *would participate in this program in the future*.

FIGURE I-1. NUMBER OF PREVIOUS EMPLOYERS' LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ON THEIR OVERALL EXPERIENCE WITH THE GISP'S YJC PROGRAM
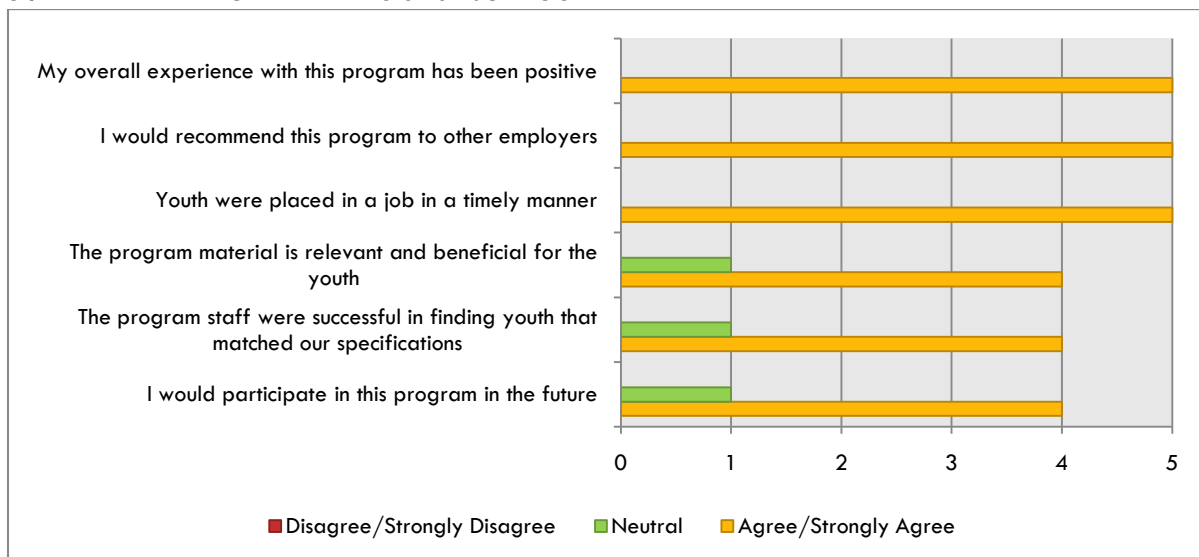
When asked how much they agree or disagree with the statements about the program's staff, respondents were generally satisfied (see Figure I-2). Specifically, four respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Goodwill's YJC program staff were courteous, responsive to their needs, followed up and thanked the respondent for participating in the program.

FIGURE I-2. NUMBER OF PREVIOUS EMPLOYERS' LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ON THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH THE GISP'S YJC PROGRAM'S STAFF
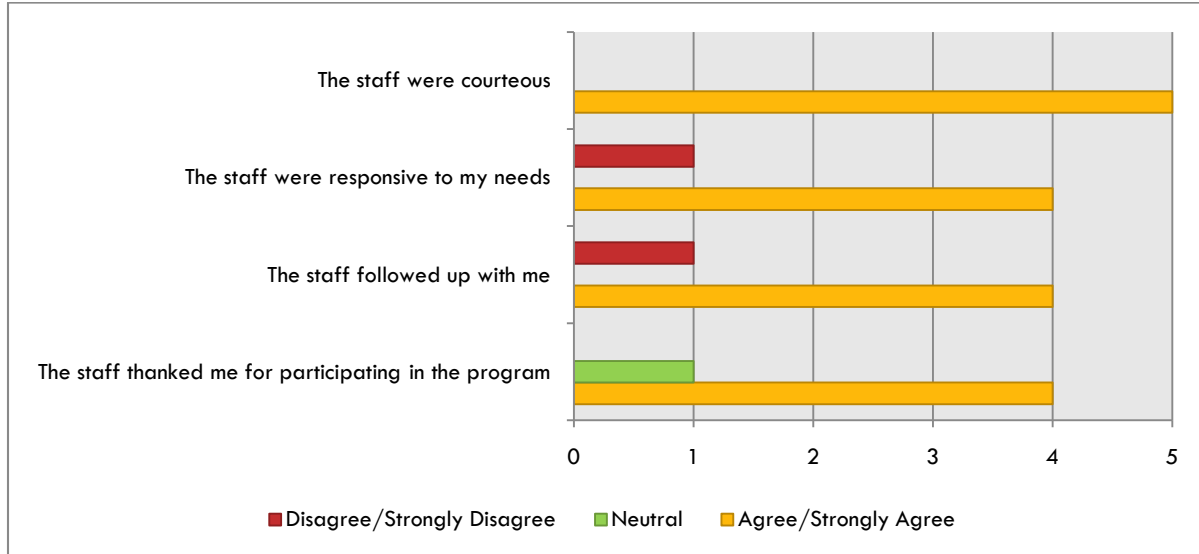
Experience with Youth Employees

When asked about the level of satisfaction regarding their firm's experience with Goodwill's Youth Job Connection program youth employees, survey respondents had mixed opinions (see Figure I-3).

FIGURE I-3. NUMBER OF PREVIOUS EMPLOYERS' LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ON THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH THE GISP'S YJC PROGRAM YOUTH PARTICIPANTS
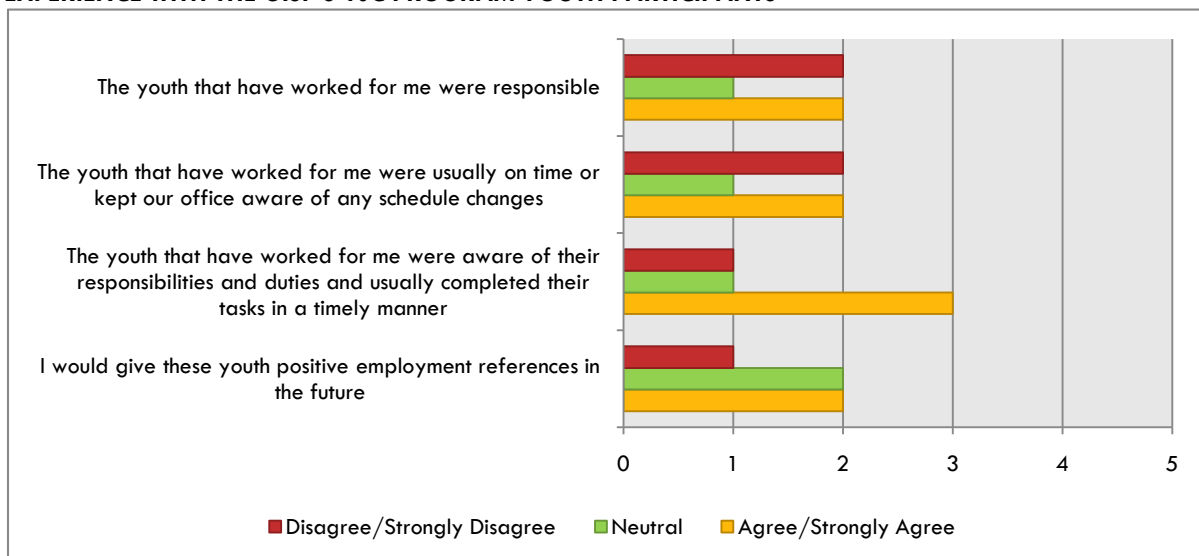
Specifically, two respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the youth employees were responsible, but the same number of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with that statement. Two respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the youth were usually on time and kept the office aware of any schedule changes while another two respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with that statement. The statement that had the most agreement was regarding the youth's work responsibilities and duties. For this statement, three respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the youth were aware of their responsibilities and duties and usually completed their task in a timely manner. Lastly, two respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they would give the youth positive employment references in the future while two of the six respondents were neutral on this statement.

Previous Employers' View of Barriers that Youth Participants Face

In addition to asking previous employers about their overall experience with the program, survey respondents were asked what they believe to be barriers for youth in the program. Survey respondents were provided a list of barriers and were asked to check any barriers they feel youth are facing in getting a job. These barriers included language, child-care responsibilities, lack of money, lack of support from their family, lack of work experience, transportation, lack of believing in themselves, lack of information, lack of support for their friends, family responsibilities, discrimination (such as racial, ethnic, gender, or social class), low grades, and lack of job training. Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide their own response not listed. As Figure I-4 shows, the majority of respondents (with at least four respondents selecting them) felt that family responsibility, lack of money, lack of job training, lack of work experience, and transportation were the major barriers that youth in Goodwill's Youth Job Connection program face in terms of getting a job.

FIGURE I-4. NUMBER OF PREVIOUS EMPLOYERS WHO SELECTED ITEM AS A BARRIER TO YOUTH SEEKING EMPLOYMENT
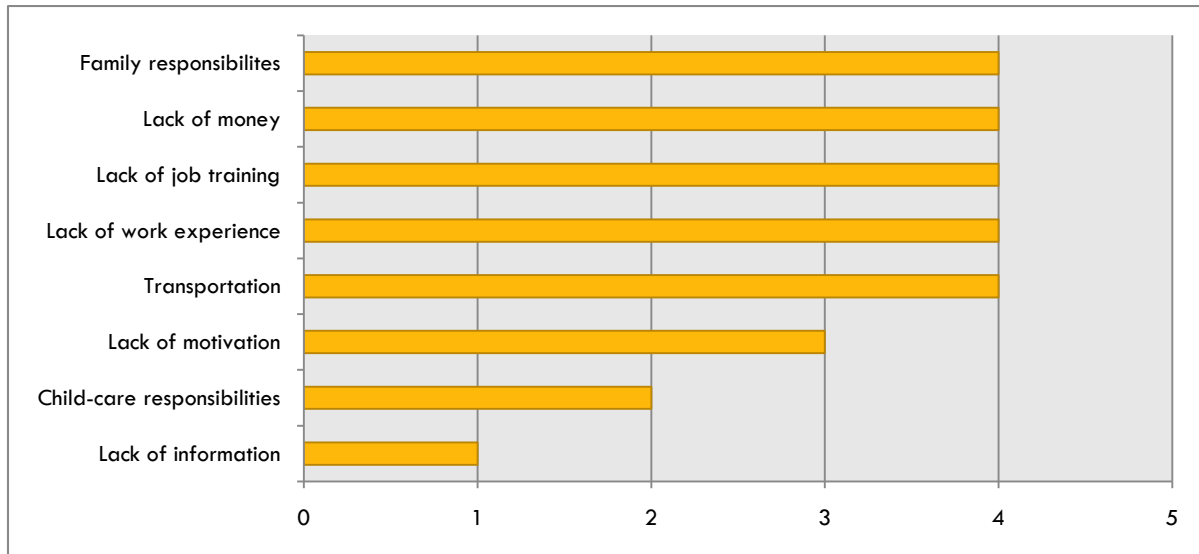
In the open-ended portion of this question, three respondents availed themselves of the option to write their own response. One respondent mentioned "poor attitudes towards work requiring hard physical labor," and another respondent stated that "lack of work ethic or understanding of the responsibilities that come with a job" as other barriers that youth face. Lastly, a third respondent elaborated on the issue of family responsibilities as a barrier by saying, "I know some of the kids were working to help mom pay some of the bills in the household."

What the firms are looking for

Using a list of 71 job positions and the option to write-in their own response, previous employers were asked what types of jobs their firm offered to youth. In total, survey respondents mentioned 14 different positions that they offered to youth. Positions that were mentioned by two of five respondents included customer service representative, groundskeeper, kennel attendant, landscape worker, and maintenance helper. Other positions that were mentioned were administrative assistant, after-school aide, camp counselor, data-entry person, janitor, painter's helper, receptionist, stock room worker, and veterinarian assistant.

When previous employers were asked what qualifications their firm looked for in youth employees, three of the five respondents stated that they wanted youth employees who are enrolled in school, two respondents mentioned a high-school diploma, and another two said a driver's license. Only one respondent mentioned prior work experience as a qualification. In terms of skills, the majority of firms looked for youth employees with customer service skills (four of five respondents) as well as writing and verbal communication skills (three of five respondents). Other skills that previous employers wanted in youth employees were skills in using Microsoft Office software, typing/data entry, and construction (two of five respondents for each skill). Previous employers were also asked what qualities their firm looked for in youth employees. All respondents indicated that their firm wanted youth who are both responsible and mature. Survey respondents also looked for youth employees who were friendly, punctual, and have a clean, respectable personal appearance (four of five respondents). Other qualities mentioned by previous employers were being enthusiastic (three of five respondents) as well as having a sense of humor and creativity (two of five respondents).

Finally, previous employers were asked to select items from a list that would disqualify a potential youth employee from working at their firm. The list included items such as low reading ability, having a child (or children), lack of transportation, high school dropout, criminal background, and low GPA. Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide their own response. From this list, only three items were selected by survey respondents that would disqualify a potential youth employee from working at their firm. These three items were criminal background (four of five respondents), lack of transportation (two of five respondents), and low GPA (one of five respondent). In addition, previous employers were asked if their firms conducted criminal background checks and drug tests on potential youth employees. Three of the five survey respondents said they did conduct criminal background checks, and the other two said, "I don't know." In terms of drug tests, only one respondent stated that their firm conducted drug tests on potential youth employees, two respondents said they did not conduct the test, and the two said they did not know.

Training Programs for Youth Employees

Survey respondents were asked if their firm has any programs to support, train, or develop young employees. Of the five respondents who answered this question, one respondent said no, and three said they did not know. Only one respondent said that his/her firm offered support or training programs. This particular respondent said that the program was through the Mayor's Youth Employment Program and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department internship. When asked how many hours a year the typical teen who came to work at the firm spent in a training, support, or development programs, the respondent said between one to nine hours a year.

How Goodwill Can Help

Lastly, previous employers were asked how Goodwill could help in training youth participants in their Youth Job Connection program. Specifically, survey respondents were asked whether Goodwill should (a) increase the amount of training for youth in this program, (b) keep the amount of training for youth in this program the same, or (c) decrease the amount of training for youth in this program. The most common response provided by survey respondents (three of five respondents) was "increase the amount of training for youth in the program" followed by "keep the amount of training for youth in this program the same" (one of five respondents). One respondent preferred not to answer this question. When asked in which areas would respondents like to see the youth in the program receive more training, the majority of the respondents (five out of five respondents) said communication and customer service skills. Teamwork, professional dress and behavior, and leadership fell close behind (three out of five respondents). Only one respondent mentioned computer skills.

POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS SURVEY

Survey Population Characteristics

The second group surveyed, potential employers, consisted of 67 respondents who represented a variety of firms (such as American Red Cross, Carolina Handling, Strategic Power Systems, Inc., The Charlotte Observer, Web-Don, etc.) in a variety of industries including manufacturing (18%), business services (15%), non-profit organizations (12%), healthcare (9%), construction (8%), distribution/warehouse (8%), legal (5%), hospitality (3%), printing/media communications (3%), religion (3%), technology (3%), real estate (3%), education (2%), entertainment/sports/arts (2%), government (2%), terminal operations (2%), retail (2%), transportation logistics (2%), engineering and remediation (2%), and petroleum products (2%). The majority of respondents (66%) held positions as human resource professionals while 13% worked as managers, 5% as executive/administrative assistants, and 5% as executives. Other positions represented included president (2%), accounting (2%), administrator (2%), benefits specialist (2%), chief financial officer (2%), controller (2%), and director of operations (2%). As a group, respondents had worked an average of eight years at their firm (median = five years).

Survey Findings

The two survey instruments that were used to gather input from the two groups of employers were similar. Several questions were asked of both groups, particularly the series of questions on what qualifications, skills, and qualities employers looked for in youth employees. Questions on what would disqualify a potential youth employee from being hired and if any programs to support, train, or develop young employees were available at their firm were also asked. Survey findings from the potential employer survey are discussed below.

What the firms are looking for in young employees

Using the same list of 71 job positions presented to previous employers, potential employers were also asked to select the types of jobs their firm offered to youth. Of the 67 potential employers who responded to the survey, 34 (or 51%) worked in a firm that offered employment to youth. In total, this group of potential employers mentioned 87 different positions offered to youth at their firms. The majority of these positions are non-office work jobs (55%), including working as a warehouse person (6%), stock room worker (3%), salesperson (3%), maintenance helper (2%), and restaurant server (2%) to name a few. Office work positions comprised about 45 percent of all positions available to youth, and some of these included administrative assistant (12%), data-entry person (7%), and receptionist (7%).

When potential employers were asked what qualifications their firm looked for in youth employees, 32 survey respondents provided at least one response (see Table I-1). A high school diploma comprised 31 percent of all qualifications mentioned by survey respondents, which made it the most common qualification that employees look for in youth employees. This is followed by prior work experience (20%), driver's license (19%), and being enrolled in school (16%). Other responses included age requirement (3%), bachelor's degree (3%), CPR certified (2%), excellent spelling, grammar and punctuation (2%), quick learner (2%), and desire to serve (2%). These findings are summarized in a table shown below.

Table I-1. What qualifications does your firm look for in youth employees? (Percent of Responses from Potential Employers)

Requirements	Percent
High school diploma	31%
Prior work experience	20%
Driver's license	19%
Enrolled in school	16%
Age requirement	3%
Bachelor's degree	3%
CPR certified	2%
Excellent spelling, grammar and punctuation	2%
Quick learner	2%
Desire to serve	2%

When non-office work positions and office work positions are grouped by responses to qualifications that firms looked for in youth employees, the majority of non-office work positions wanted prior work experience (28%) while the majority of office work positions looked for youth to have a high school diploma (29%), see Table I-2. Firms offering youth non-office work positions also looked for youth with a high school diploma (24%), are enrolled in school (17%), had a driver's license (15%), CPR certified (3%), age requirement (3%) and excellent spelling, grammar and punctuation (1%). Firms offering youth office work positions also looked for youth with prior work experience (19%), a driver's license (19%), are enrolled in school (17%), a quick learner (6%), a bachelor's degree (3%), and excellent spelling, grammar and punctuation (2%).

Table I-2. Qualifications firms look for by office or non-office work positions (Percent of Responses from Potential Employers)

Requirements	Non-office work Positions	Office work positions
High school diploma	24%	29%
Prior work experience	28%	19%
Driver's license	15%	19%
Enrolled in school	17%	17%
Age requirement	3%	0%
Bachelor's degree	0%	3%
CPR certified	3%	0%
Excellent spelling, grammar and punctuation	1%	2%
Quick learner	0%	6%
Desire to serve	0%	0%

In terms of skills that firms wanted in youth employees, firms surveyed indicated that they look for writing and verbal communication skills (26%), Microsoft Office software (22%), customer service skills (21%), typing/data entry (19%), ability to operate a cash register and handle money (3%) and construction skills (3%), see Table I-3. Other responses included ability to answer phones (1%), filing (1%), engineering (1%), professional attitude/appearance (1%), self-motivated (1%) and able to lift 50 lbs. (1%).

Table I-3. What skills does your firm look for in youth employees? (Percent of Responses from Potential Employers)

Requirements	Percent
Writing and verbal communication skills	26%
Microsoft Office software	22%
Customer service skills	21%
Typing/data entry	19%
Ability to operate a cash register and handle money	3%
Construction skills	3%
Ability to answer phones	1%
Filing	1%
Engineering	1%
Professional attitude/appearance	1%
Self motivated	1%
Able to lift 50 lbs.	1%

The majority of firms offering both non-office work and office work positions looked for youth with writing and verbal communication skills (30% and 25% respectively), see Table I-4. Firms with non-office work jobs also looked for youth with skills in customer service (24%), Microsoft Office software (14%), typing and data entry (14%), ability to operate a cash register and handle money (14%), construction skills (2%), filing (1%), and the ability to lift 50 lbs. Firms with office work jobs also looked for youth with customer service skills (22%), Microsoft Office software (22%), typing and data entry (22%), ability to operate a cash register and handle money (7%), construction skills (1%), engineering (1%), and professional attitude/appearance (1%).

Table I-4. Skills firms look for by office or non-office work positions (Percent of Responses from Potential Employers)

Requirements	Non-office work Positions	Office work positions
Writing and verbal communication skills	30%	25%
Customer service skills	24%	22%
Microsoft Office software	14%	22%
Typing/data entry	14%	22%
Ability to operate a cash register and handle money	14%	7%
Construction skills	2%	1%
Filing	1%	0%
Able to lift 50 lbs.	1%	0%
Engineering	0%	1%
Professional attitude/appearance	0%	1%

When it comes to qualities, these firms looked for youth employees who are responsible (17%), punctual (15%), have a clean, respectable personal appearance (15%), friendly (15%), mature (14%), enthusiastic (12%), creative (5%), and a sense of humor (4%), see Table I-5. Other responses included good attitude/work ethic (1%), affinity for working with seniors (1%), humble/honest (1%), flexible (1%) and self-motivated (1%).

Table I-5. What qualities does your firm look for in youth employees? (Percent of Responses from Potential Employers)

Requirements	Percent
Responsible	17%
Punctual	15%
Have a clean and respectable personal appearance	15%
Friendly	15%
Mature	14%
Enthusiastic	12%
Creative	5%
Sense of humor	4%
Good attitude/work ethic	1%
Affinity for working with seniors	1%
Humble/honest	1%
Flexible	1%
Self-Motivated	1%

As Table I-6 shows, firms with non-office work positions looked for youth who are responsible (17%), punctual (16%), someone with a clean respectable personal appearance (16%), enthusiastic (15%) mature (13%), friendly (12%), creative (6%), affinity for working with seniors (4%), and has a sense of humor (3%). Firms with office work positions looked for youth who are responsible (15%), punctual (15%), friendly (15%), someone with a clean respectable personal appearance (14%), mature (14%), enthusiastic (12%), creative (8%), has a sense of humor (5), affinity for working with seniors (2%), and flexible (2%).

Table I-6. Qualities firms look for by office or non-office work positions (Percent of Responses from Potential Employers)

Requirements	Non-office work Positions	Office work positions
Responsible	17%	15%
Punctual	16%	15%
Have a clean and respectable personal appearance	16%	14%
Enthusiastic	15%	12%
Mature	13%	14%
Friendly	12%	15%
Creative	6%	8%
Affinity for working with seniors	4%	2%
Sense of humor	3%	5%
Flexible	0%	2%

When asked what would disqualify a potential youth employee from working at their firm respondents cited criminal background (30%), low reading ability (24%), lack of transportation (23%), high school dropout (14%), and low GPA (3%), see Table I-7. Other responses included failing the drug test (3%), having less than a Bachelors/Masters degree (1%), and lack of applicable experience (1%). One respondent wrote in an answer and provided multiple responses: inadequate previous phone experience, low typing speed, poor diction, poor spelling or grammar.

Table I-7. Which of the following would disqualify a potential youth employee from working at your firm? (Percent of Responses from Potential Employers)

Requirements	Percent
Criminal background	30%
Low reading ability	24%
Lack of transportation	23%
High school dropout	14%
Low GPA	3%
Failing the drug test	3%
Having less than a Bachelor's/Master's degree	1%
Lack of applicable experience	1%
Other	1%

Firms with non-office work positions disqualified youth with a criminal background (32%), a lack of transportation (21%), low reading ability (20%), failing the drug test (14%), high school dropout (12%), and low GPA (2%), see Table I-8. Firms with office work positions also disqualified youth with low reading ability (30%), criminal background (29%), lack of transportation (21%), high school dropout (12%), failing the drug test (5%) and low GPA (3%).

Table I-8. Items that would disqualify a potential youth employee by office or non-office work positions (Percent of Responses from Potential Employers)

Requirements	Non-office work Positions	Office work positions
Criminal background	32%	29%
Lack of transportation	21%	21%
Low reading ability	20%	30%
Failing the drug test	14%	5%
High school dropout	12%	12%
Low GPA	2%	3%

Two-thirds of firms surveyed (67%) indicated that they conducted criminal background checks on potential youth employees, and just over half (53%) conducted drug tests on potential youth employees. Of the 38 firms that answered both questions on criminal background checks and drug tests on potential youth employees, 18 firms (47%) stated that they conducted both a criminal background check and a drug test whereas 11 firms (29%) did not conduct either one. Nine respondents (24%) conducted either a criminal background check or a drug test (but not both) on potential youth employees.

In terms of who conducted criminal background checks or drug tests by office or non-office work positions, 76% of all firms with non-office work positions and 70% of firms with office work positions conducted both criminal background checks and drug tests on potential youth employees. Of those firms that offered non-office work positions, 16% conducted either a criminal background check or a drug test, and 8% did not check either one. Of those firms that offered office work positions, 19% conducted a criminal background check or a drug test while 11% did not check either one. The firms that conducted criminal background checks on potential youth employees would also disqualify youth with a criminal background (33%) followed by low reading ability (23%), lack of transportation (21%), and being a high school dropout (14%). The majority of firms that did not conduct criminal background checks were more likely to disqualify a potential youth due to lack of transportation (30%) followed by low reading ability (24%), high school dropout (18%), and criminal background (18%).

When firms surveyed were asked if they have any programs to support, train, or develop young employees, 39 of the 67 firms answered this question, and just over a quarter of them (26%) had a program to support, train or develop young employees. These programs included training (50%), summer internships (20%), pairing the youth with another experienced employee (20%) or multiple programs (10%). Twenty-two firms with non-office work jobs and 19 firms with office work jobs offered programs to support, train or develop young employees. Of the firms with non-office work positions, 68% offered training, 27% offered multiple programs, and 5% offered a summer internship. As for firms with office work positions, 42% offered training, 32% offered pairing the youth with another experienced employee, 21% offered multiple programs, and 5% offered a summer internship. Of the firms that did have such programs, survey respondents reported that the typical teen spent 1-9 (33%) or 10-24 (33%) hours a year in a training, support or development program.

CONCLUSION

The two groups of employers surveyed provided insight into what firms want when hiring a youth employee. The majority of positions available to youth were non-office work positions such as a warehouse person, stock room worker, salesperson, customer service representative, maintenance helper, groundskeeper, kennel attendant, landscape worker, and restaurant server. There were also a number of office work positions including administrative assistant, data-entry person, and receptionist. The most common qualification that firms looked for in youth employees is a high school diploma followed by prior work experience. However, firms with office work positions looked more for youth with a high school diploma, whereas firms with non-office work positions looked more for youth with prior work experience. In terms of skills, the majority of firms (that offered either non-office or office work positions) looked for youth with skills in writing and verbal communication followed by customer service skills. This indicated that firms valued skills that involved interactions with others either through the use of communication or dealing with the public to some degree. For most firms, the most common quality that they looked for in youth employees was someone who was responsible followed closely by someone who was punctual. This finding was consistent regardless of the position involving office or non-office work. In terms of what would disqualify a potential youth employee from being offered employment, the most common reason was having a criminal record. However, when the position involved office work the most common reason for being disqualified for employment was low reading ability followed by criminal background and lack of transportation.

Goodwill should continue to check the criminal background of youth who enter the YJC program, particularly those who want to get a non-office work position. More importantly, Goodwill should also test the reading skills of youth who enter the YJC program so that they can better compete for office work positions. Office environments are the setting that most parents prefer their children to work under. Moreover, since only a small number of firms offered programs to support, train, or develop youth employees, Goodwill should do more work in this area. As the survey findings suggest, both writing and verbal communication skills as well as customer service skills were highly valued by employers. Thus, Goodwill should decide if they want to make this a core foundation of their YJC training program. One final note about the employers' surveys is the low number of respondents from the previous employers group. Given that only a handful of previous employers (n=5) could be contacted and that their contact information was not up to date, this reflects the program's need to improve in this area.

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Goodwill Participating Employer Survey

1. Introduction

The UNC Charlotte Urban Institute would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this online survey regarding youth needs and services on behalf of Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont. We are doing this survey to hear more about your firm's experience with Goodwill's Youth Job Connection program and to ascertain what the strengths and weaknesses of this program are from an employer's perspective. Ultimately, your responses will help us evaluate and improve programs and services for youth in our community.

It will take about **15 minutes** to complete the survey.

Your responses to these questions will be completely anonymous. We will not ask you to write your name or any other information that may identify you.

This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers.

Be sure to read the instructions before you mark your answers.

Please DO NOT USE your web browser's back button. If you need to go back a page, use the "PREV" button at the bottom of the page. If you exit the survey, you will not be able to re-enter the survey.

If you agree to take this survey, click "next" and you will begin.

2. Questions about your experience with Goodwill and Youth Job Connection Prog...

* 1. Is your firm a current participant or previous participant of Goodwill's Youth Job Connection program?

◯ Current participant

◯ Previous participant

◯ I don't know

* 2. How long has/did your firm participated in Goodwill's Youth Job Connection program?

◯ Less than 1 month

◯ 1 to 5 months

◯ 6 months to a year

◯ More than 1 year

◯ I don't know

* 3. About how many youth from this program has your firm employed?
If you don't know or prefer not to answer, please state so in the box.

[   ]

Goodwill Participating Employer Survey

＊4. Why does your firm participate in this program?

If you don't know or prefer not to answer, please state so in the "Other (please specificy)" box.

☐ Good public relations

☐ Give back to the community

☐ Help youth

☐ Reflective of company values

☐ Cost advantageous

☐ Other (please specify)

---

3. Questions about your experience with Goodwill and Youth Job Connection Prog...

＊5. How much do you agree or disagree with each sentence about your firm's experience with Goodwill's Youth Jobs Connections program? (Check only one for each sentence)

	Stongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	I prefer not to answer
I would participate in this program in the future.	○	○	○	○	○	○
The program material is relevant and beneficial for the youth.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I would recommend this program to other employers.	○	○	○	○	○	○
The program staff were successful in finding youth that matched our specifications.	○	○	○	○	○	○
Youth were placed in a job in a timely manner.	○	○	○	○	○	○
My overall experience with this program has been positive.	○	○	○	○	○	○

＊6. How much do you agree or disagree with each sentence about your firm's experience with Goodwill's staff? (Check only one for each sentence)

	Stongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	I prefer not to answer
The staff were responsive to my needs.	○	○	○	○	○	○
The staff were courteous.	○	○	○	○	○	○
The staff thanked me for participating in the program.	○	○	○	○	○	○
The staff followed up with me.	○	○	○	○	○	○

Goodwill Participating Employer Survey

*7. How much do you agree or disagree with each sentence about your firm's experience with the youth employees from Goodwill? (Check only one for each sentence)

	Stongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	I prefer not to answer
I would give these youth positive employment references in the future.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
The youth that have worked for me were aware of their responsibilities and duties and usually completed their tasks in a timely manner.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
The youth that have worked for me were usually on time or kept our office aware of any schedule changes.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
The youth that have worked for me were responsible.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

4. Questions about your experience with Goodwill and Youth Job Connection Prog...

*8. From the list below, which of the following do you feel are barriers that youth in the Youth Job Connection program face in getting a job? (Check all that apply)
If you don't know or prefer not to answer or feel that youth in this program don't face any barriers, please state so in the texbox for "Other (please specify)."

☐ Lack of support from their friends

☐ Lack of job training

☐ Language

☐ Don't believe in themselves

☐ Child-care responsibilities

☐ Lack of motivation

☐ Lack of work experience

☐ Transportation

☐ Family responsibilities

☐ Low grades

☐ Lack of support from their family

☐ Lack of information

☐ Lack of money

☐ Discrimination (such as racial, ethnic, gender, or social class)

☐ Other (please describe)

Goodwill Participating Employer Survey

*9. In your opinion, should Goodwill _____ ?

- ◯ Increase the amount of training for youth in this program
- ◯ Keep the amount of training for youth in this program the same
- ◯ Decrease the amount of training for youth in this program
- ◯ I prefer not to answer

*10. In which areas would you like to see the youth from this program have more training? (Check all that apply)
If you don't know or prefer not to answer or feel that youth in this program do not need more training in any of these areas, please state so in the texbox for "Other (please describe)."

- ☐ Computer skills
- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Professional dress and behavior
- ☐ Leadership
- ☐ None
- ☐ Reading comprehension
- ☐ Writing
- ☐ Customer service skills
- ☐ Teamwork
- ☐ Other (please describe)

*11. Would you be willing to participate in a focus group to discuss approaches to eliminating barriers faced by young people in staying on the path to education, employment and success in life?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

5. Questions about youth employment in your firm.

Goodwill Participating Employer Survey

* 12. What types of jobs does your firm have for youth? (Check all that apply)

☐ Administrative Assistant	☐ Graphic Designer	☐ Photographer's Helper
☐ After-school Aide	☐ Grocery Bagger	☐ Plant Nursery Assistant
☐ Amusement Park Attendant	☐ Grocery Stocker	☐ Plumber's Helper
☐ Baby-sitter/Nanny	☐ Groundskeeper	☐ Receptionist
☐ Bank Teller	☐ Home Companion/Caretaker	☐ Recreation Leader
☐ Camp Counselor	☐ Host/Hostess	☐ Rental Clerk
☐ Cashier	☐ Hotel Bellhop	☐ Restaurant Server
☐ Clerk	☐ Hotel Desk Clerk	☐ Salesperson
☐ Computer Programmer	☐ Janitor	☐ Stock Room Worker
☐ Copy Machine Operator	☐ Kennel Attendant	☐ Swimming Instructor
☐ Customer Service Representative	☐ Kitchen Helper	☐ Technical Support
☐ Data-entry Person	☐ Landscape Worker	☐ Telemarketer
☐ Daycare Assistant	☐ Library Assistant	☐ Ticket Taker
☐ Delivery Person	☐ Lifeguard	☐ Tour Guide
☐ Dispatcher	☐ Maid	☐ Usher
☐ Doctor or Nurse's Aide	☐ Mail Clerk	☐ Vehicle Washer/Detailer
☐ Dog Walker	☐ Maintenance Helper	☐ Veterinarian Assistant
☐ Door-to-door Salesperson	☐ Masonry Helper	☐ Video Game Maintenance
☐ Electrician Helper	☐ Messenger/Courier	☐ Warehouse person
☐ Factory Assembler	☐ Packer/Mover	☐ Web Site Developer
☐ Farm Worker	☐ Painter's Helper	☐ Wildlife Preserve Worker
☐ Fast-food Associate	☐ Parking Lot Attendant	☐ Word Processor
☐ Floral Designer Helper	☐ Personal Shopper	☐ Zookeeper's Helper
☐ Gas Station Attendant	☐ Pet Groomer	

☐ Other (please specify)

6. Questions about youth employment in your firm, cont.

If you don't know an answer or prefer not to answer, please state so in the textbox for "Other (please specify)".

Goodwill Participating Employer Survey

✱ 13. What qualifications does your firm look for in youth employees? (Check all that apply)

☐ Prior work experience

☐ High school diploma

☐ CPR certified

☐ Enrolled in school

☐ Driver's license

☐ Other (please specify)

☐

✱ 14. What skills does your firm look for in youth employees? (Check all that apply)

☐ Writing and verbal communication skills

☐ Customer service skills

☐ Typing/data entry

☐ Construction skills

☐ Microsoft Office software

☐ Ability to operate a cash register and handle money

☐ Other (please specify)

☐

Goodwill Participating Employer Survey

* 15. What qualities does your firm look for in youth employees? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Clean, respectable personal appearance
- ☐ Mature
- ☐ Creative
- ☐ Friendly
- ☐ Enthusiastic
- ☐ Punctual
- ☐ Responsible
- ☐ Sense of humor
- ☐ Other (please specify)

* 16. Which of the following would disqualify a potential youth employee from working at your firm? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Having a child/children
- ☐ Low reading ability
- ☐ Lack of transportation
- ☐ Criminal background
- ☐ High school drop out
- ☐ Low GPA
- ☐ Other (please specify)

7. Questions about youth employment in your firm, cont.

* 17. Does your firm conduct criminal background checks on potential youth employees?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ I don't know

Goodwill Participating Employer Survey

* 18. Does your firm conduct drug tests on potential youth employees?

○ Yes

○ No

○ I don't know

* 19. Does your firm have any programs to support, train, or develop young employees?

○ No

○ I don't know

○ Yes (please describe)

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* 20. About how many hours a year does the typical teen who comes to work for your firm spend in a training, support, or development program?

○ 1-9

○ 10-24

○ 25-49

○ 50-99

○ 100 or more

○ I don't know

○ My firm doesn't have any such programs

8. Questions about you and your firm.

These questions are included solely to ensure that we have a representative sample of employers. This information will not be used to identify you in any way.

* 21. What firm do you work for?

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* 22. What is your current position?

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* 23. How many years have you been working there?

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Goodwill Participating Employer Survey

* 24. What industry is your firm in?

If you don't know or prefer not to answer, please state so in the "Other (please specify)" box.

○ Business Service

○ Construction

○ Distribution/Warehouse

○ Education

○ Entertainment/Sports/Arts

○ Government

○ Healthcare

○ Hospitality

○ Manufacturing Durables

○ Manufacturing Non-durables

○ Personal Services

○ Printing/Media Communications

○ Religion

○ Staffing/Recruiting

○ Technology

○ Utilities

○ Other (please specify)

[   ]

9. END

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US WITH THE SURVEY!

If you have any questions/concerns about this survey, please call the University of North Carolina at Charlotte Urban Institute at 704-687-2307.

(Hit the **"Done"** button to exit the survey)

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Goodwill Employer Survey

1. Introduction

The UNC Charlotte Urban Institute would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this online survey regarding youth needs and services on behalf of Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont. We are doing this survey to determine what opportunities your firm has for youth and what skills and qualities employers look for in youth employee and to identify employers that would be interested in participating in Goodwill's Youth Job Connection Program. Ultimately, your responses will help us evaluate and improve programs and services for youth in our community.

It will take about **15 minutes** to complete the survey.

Your responses to these questions will be completely anonymous. We will not ask you to write your name or any other information that may identify you.

This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers.

Be sure to read the instructions before you mark your answers.

Please DO NOT USE your web browser's back button. If you need to go back a page, use the "PREV" button at the bottom of the page. If you exit the survey, you will not be able to re-enter the survey.

If you agree to take this survey, click "next" and you will begin.

2. Questions about you and your firm.

These questions are included solely to ensure that we have a representative sample of employers. This information will not be used to identify you in any way.

* 1. What firm do you work for?

* 2. What is your current position?

* 3. How many years have you been working there?

Goodwill Employer Survey

✳ 4. What industry is your firm in?

If you don't know or prefer not to answer, please state so in the "Other (please specify)" box.

- ◯ Business Service
- ◯ Construction
- ◯ Distribution/Warehouse
- ◯ Education
- ◯ Entertainment/Sports/Arts
- ◯ Government
- ◯ Healthcare
- ◯ Hospitality
- ◯ Manufacturing Durables
- ◯ Manufacturing Non-durables
- ◯ Personal Services
- ◯ Printing/Media Communications
- ◯ Religion
- ◯ Staffing/Recruiting
- ◯ Technology
- ◯ Utilities
- ◯ Other (please specify)

3. Questions about youth employment in your firm.

Goodwill Employer Survey

* 5. What types of jobs does your firm have for youth? (Check all that apply)

☐ Administrative Assistant	☐ Graphic Designer	☐ Photographer's Helper
☐ After-school Aide	☐ Grocery Bagger	☐ Plant Nursery Assistant
☐ Amusement Park Attendant	☐ Grocery Stocker	☐ Plumber's Helper
☐ Baby-sitter/Nanny	☐ Groundskeeper	☐ Receptionist
☐ Bank Teller	☐ Home Companion/Caretaker	☐ Recreation Leader
☐ Camp Counselor	☐ Host/Hostess	☐ Rental Clerk
☐ Cashier	☐ Hotel Bellhop	☐ Restaurant Server
☐ Clerk	☐ Hotel Desk Clerk	☐ Salesperson
☐ Computer Programmer	☐ Janitor	☐ Stock Room Worker
☐ Copy Machine Operator	☐ Kennel Attendant	☐ Swimming Instructor
☐ Customer Service Representative	☐ Kitchen Helper	☐ Technical Support
☐ Data-entry Person	☐ Landscape Worker	☐ Telemarketer
☐ Daycare Assistant	☐ Library Assistant	☐ Ticket Taker
☐ Delivery Person	☐ Lifeguard	☐ Tour Guide
☐ Dispatcher	☐ Maid	☐ Usher
☐ Doctor or Nurse's Aide	☐ Mail Clerk	☐ Vehicle Washer/Detailer
☐ Dog Walker	☐ Maintenance Helper	☐ Veterinarian Assistant
☐ Door-to-door Salesperson	☐ Masonry Helper	☐ Video Game Maintenance
☐ Electrician Helper	☐ Messenger/Courier	☐ Warehouse person
☐ Factory Assembler	☐ Packer/Mover	☐ Web Site Developer
☐ Farm Worker	☐ Painter's Helper	☐ Wildlife Preserve Worker
☐ Fast-food Associate	☐ Parking Lot Attendant	☐ Word Processor
☐ Floral Designer Helper	☐ Personal Shopper	☐ Zookeeper's Helper
☐ Gas Station Attendant	☐ Pet Groomer	
☐ Other (please specify)		

4. Questions about youth employment in your firm, cont.

If you don't know an answer or prefer not to answer, please state so in the textbox for "Other (please specify)".

Goodwill Employer Survey

* 6. What qualifications does your firm look for in youth employees? (Check all that apply)

☐ CPR certified

☐ Driver's license

☐ High school diploma

☐ Enrolled in school

☐ Prior work experience

☐ Other (please specify)

[text box]

* 7. What skills does your firm look for in youth employees? (Check all that apply)

☐ Writing and verbal communication skills

☐ Construction skills

☐ Microsoft Office software

☐ Typing/data entry

☐ Customer service skills

☐ Ability to operate a cash register and handle money

☐ Other (please specify)

[text box]

Goodwill Employer Survey

* 8. What qualities does your firm look for in youth employees? (Check all that apply)

☐ Mature

☐ Clean, respectable personal appearance

☐ Punctual

☐ Creative

☐ Responsible

☐ Enthusiastic

☐ Sense of humor

☐ Friendly

☐ Other (please specify)

> [text field]

* 9. Which of the following would disqualify a potential youth employee from working at your firm? (Check all that apply)

☐ Criminal background

☐ Low reading ability

☐ Low GPA

☐ High school drop out

☐ Lack of transportation

☐ Having a child/children

☐ Other (please specify)

> [text field]

5. Questions about youth employment in your firm, cont.

* 10. Does your firm conduct criminal background checks on potential youth employees?

○ Yes

○ No

○ I don't know

Goodwill Employer Survey

✱ 11. Does your firm conduct drug tests on potential youth employees?

◯ Yes

◯ No

◯ I don't know

✱ 12. Does your firm have any programs to support, train, or develop young employees?

◯ No

◯ I don't know

◯ Yes (please describe)

<div style="border:1px solid #ccc;height:70px;"></div>

✱ 13. About how many hours a year does the typical teen who comes to work for your firm spend in a training, support, or development program?

◯ 1-9

◯ 10-24

◯ 25-49

◯ 50-99

◯ 100 or more

◯ I don't know

◯ My firm doesn't have any such programs

6. END

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US WITH THE SURVEY!

If you have any questions/concerns about this survey, please call the University of North Carolina at Charlotte Urban Institute at 704-687-2307.

(Hit the **"Done"** button to exit the survey)

Appendix J
YOUTH SURVEY ANALYSIS

Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont (GISP) is a leader in putting people to work. Through donations from the community, Goodwill has a successful model in using revenue from their retail stores to support programs and services that offer job training, education and career services to adults seeking self-sufficiency. To broaden their impact on the community, GISP launched the Youth Job Connection program (YJC). As a workforce development program, the YJC program provides employment and education services to youth ages 14–21.

A main objective of the program is to prevent "at-risk" youth from becoming "disconnected" by providing them with the necessary training, skills and support towards gaining self-sufficiency. Given the infancy of the YJC program and Goodwill's desire to better ascertain the issues surrounding employability of at-risk and disconnected youth ages 14–24, GISP contracted with the University of North Carolina at Charlotte's Urban Institute to conduct a needs assessment of youth in Mecklenburg County and to obtain as much information from their youth participants as possible.

A crucial component to any assessment of youth job training needs is to gather input from those who receive these services. An online survey targeting youth who are participants in the GISP's YJC program was conducted over a four-month period (February—June 2010). The survey included questions that measured youth participants' activity levels, future accomplishments or aspirations, and barriers to success. A series of questions regarding their demographic and household characteristics was also included in the survey. A total of 204 youth participated in this survey. Details of the survey findings are discussed below. Readers should note that percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

SURVEY POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Demographics

The majority of youth surveyed were current participants of GISP's YJC program (98%), and two respondents (2%) were previous participants of the program. The average age of respondents was 16 (the median age was also 16). The age of the youngest respondent was 13 and the oldest was 21.[1] In terms of gender, 56% of survey respondents were female and 44% were male.

Survey respondents were also asked to self-identify their race or ethnicity. When both questions on race and ethnicity are combined, 85% of all survey participants consider themselves to be black, 5% to be Hispanic or Latino, and 4% white (see Figure J-1). The remaining 6% are grouped as "other" and consisted of those who said they were of more than one race/ethnicity (5%) or American Indian or Alaskan Native (1%). It should be noted that one respondent said "other" but did not specify his/her race/ethnicity.

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[1] One respondent stated his/her age was one and another respondent stated 60. Both responses were not included in calculating the average age of youth survey participants.

FIGURE J-1: WHAT IS YOUR RACE/ETHNICITY?
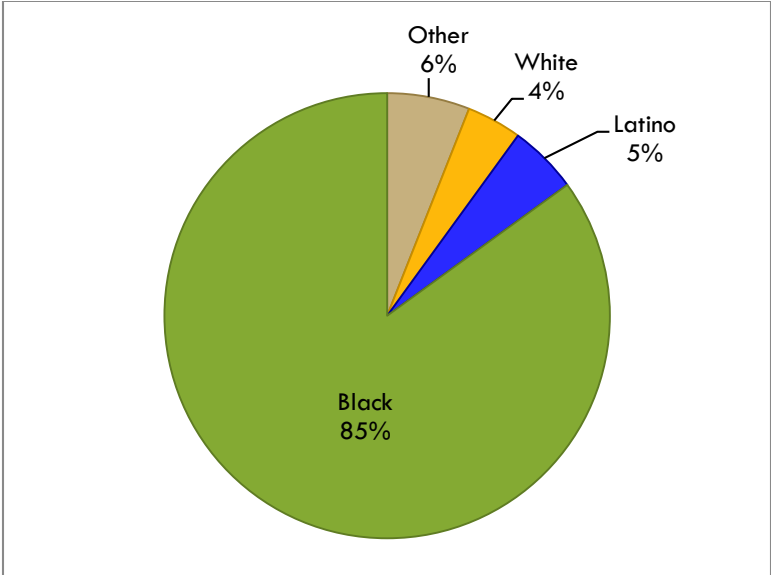
To better understand the demographic composition of youth involved with the YJC program, the Institute research team tallied the number of youth by age, gender, and racial/ethnic identity. Overall, 196 youth provided all three demographic characteristics. Thus, the percents reported are based on the 196 youth survey respondents. Also, readers are reminded that percentages may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. As Figure I-2 displays, black females age 15 comprise the largest group participating in the YJC program followed closely by black females age 13–14 and by black males age 15.

FIGURE J-2: AGE BY RACE/ETHNICITY & GENDER DISTRIBUTION (COUNT AND PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS) [N=196]
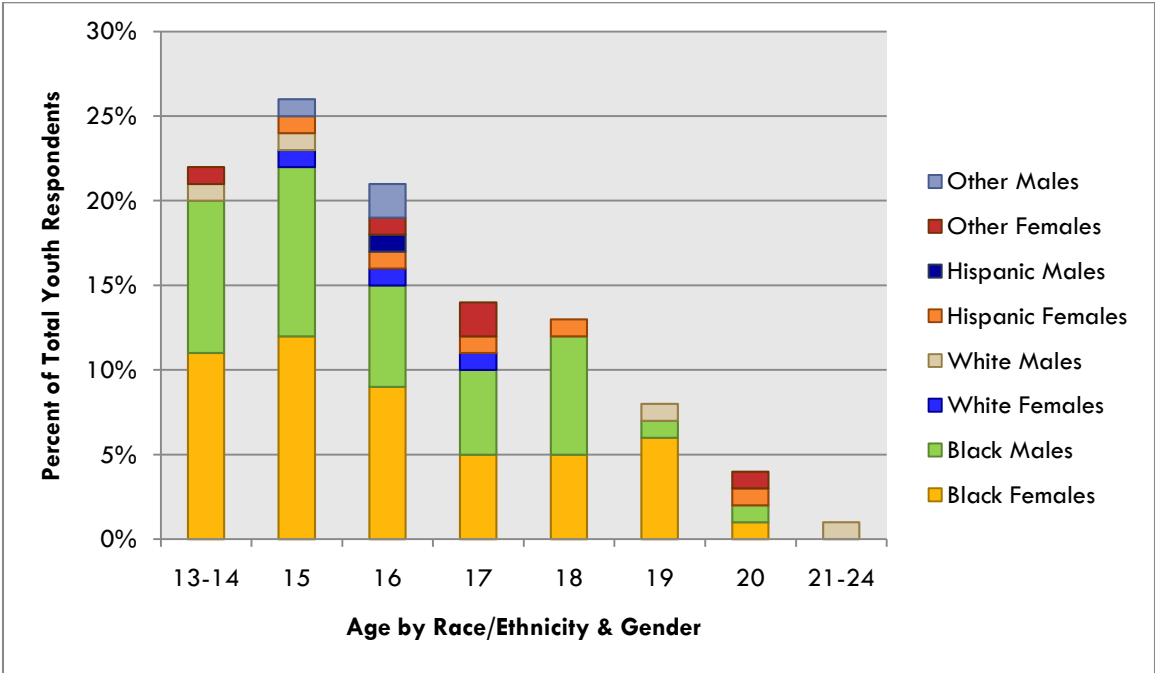
An overwhelming majority of the survey respondents were born in the United States (99%) and have always lived in the United States (93%). Of those who have not always lived in the United States, 7% have lived in the United States for more than four years while less than 1% have lived in the US four years or less. When asked if both of their parents were born in the United States, 93% said yes, and 7% said no. Of all youth surveyed, 99% indicated that they usually speak English at home.

In terms of their current relationship status, the majority of youth survey participants were single (55%). Over a third (39%) stated that they have a boyfriend/girlfriend but were not living together. Other responses included those who are living with a partner (3%), married (1%), and divorced/separated (1%).

Family and Home Setting

A set of questions regarding youth survey participants' family and home arrangements was included in the survey. One of the questions in the survey asked for the zip code and the Institute research team grouped these responses into four geographic areas: north, east, south, and west Mecklenburg. As Figure J-3 demonstrates, the majority of respondents were from north Mecklenburg (42%). Respondents were also from east Mecklenburg (27%), west Mecklenburg (26%) and south Mecklenburg (6%).

FIGURE J-3: GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF YOUTH SURVEY RESPONDENTS (PERCENT OF RESPONSES)
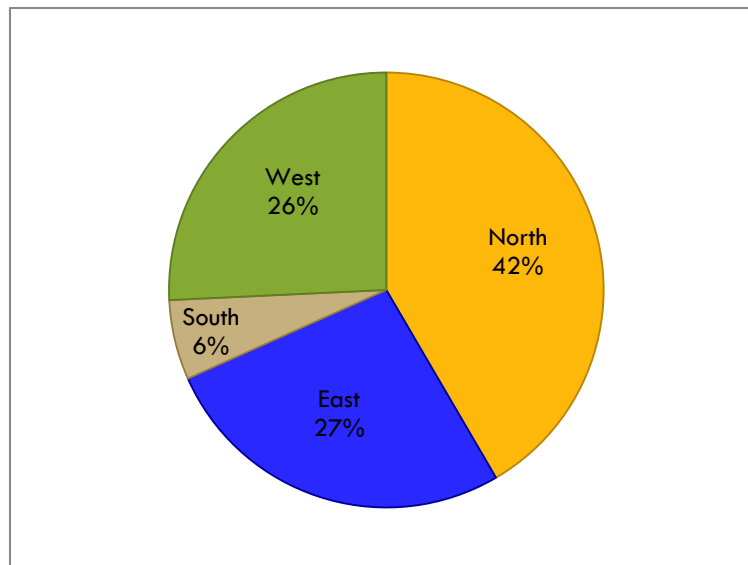
More specifically, another question asked youth to pick their neighborhood from a drop-down list, which included all of the neighborhoods from the City of Charlotte's 2008 Quality of Life Study. One-hundred and sixty one participants picked a neighborhood from this list (not including "other"). Figure J-4 shows the geographic distribution of these responses. The neighborhood with the highest number of responses was the Beatties Ford/Trinity neighborhood in North Charlotte, with 14 respondents living there. All other neighborhoods had fewer than 10 responses, and many had none at all.

FIGURE J-4: GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF YOUTH SURVEY RESPONDENTS (NUMBER OF RESPONSES)
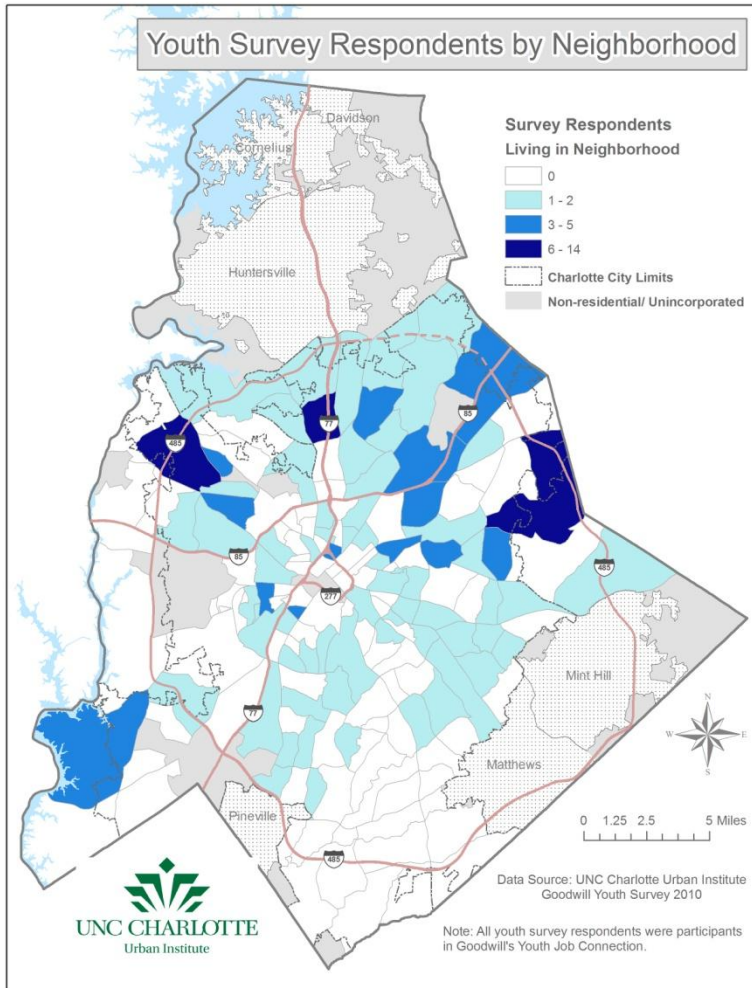
When asked how long they have lived at their current home, 28% of respondents have lived there for one to two years, 23% more than five years, 20% three to five years, 16% less than six months, and 13% more than six months but less than one year. When asked whether within the last year they or their family had to worry about where they would sleep at night, 11% said yes and 89% said no.

Youth that were surveyed for this project lived with an average of four people—including themselves—in their household (one was the fewest and ten was the highest number of people living with the respondent in their household). Specifically, 13% lived with one or two people, 29% lived with three people, and 59% lived with four or more people in the household. It should be noted that 54 respondents (or 27% of all youth who participated in the survey) did not provide an answer to determine the size of their household.

Furthermore, youth survey respondents were asked to list people who lived with them most of the time. Survey findings suggested that respondents were more likely to live with their mother most of the time than to live with their father. Specifically, over three-fourths (76%) of youth surveyed listed living with their mother most of the time while only a quarter (25%) listed living with their father most of the time. Additional people that survey participants live with most of the time included their younger sister(s) or

stepsister(s) (20%), younger brother(s) or stepbrother(s) (19%), older brother(s) or stepbrother(s) (12%), grandmother (11%), stepfather (11%), older sister(s) or stepsister(s) (8%), aunt (6%), grandfather (6%), cousin(s) (5%), stepmother (4%), female legal guardian (4%), boyfriend or girlfriend (3%), parent's boyfriend or girlfriend (3%), male legal guardian (2%), foster family (2%), uncle (2%), and lives alone (2%). Also, two respondents mentioned living with a roommate (1%). The following responses were each mentioned once by a respondent and were grouped as "other" (3% of cases): living with own child/children; living with someone else's child/children; living in a group home; family friend's home; niece; and great grandmother.

To better understand the household type that youth survey respondents were in, the Institute research team examined the distribution of youth survey participants who lived in a household headed by a single-parent and those headed by dual-parents. As the figure below illustrates, the majority of youth surveyed (45%) lived in a single-parent household. Specifically, 42% were living in a single-parent household headed by a mother and 3% by a father. In contrast, those who lived in a dual-parent household comprised 31% of all youth surveyed. It should be noted that the 31% of those who lived in a dual-parent household may be living with both father and mother (19%) or with a father/mother and a stepmother/stepfather (12%). Those who lived in a household headed by someone other than a parent were collapsed as "other" (24%) and these included grandmother, older siblings, aunt, uncle, legal guardians, foster family, parents of boyfriend/girlfriend, or lived alone.

FIGURE J-5: HOUSEHOLD TYPE (PERCENT OF RESPONSES)
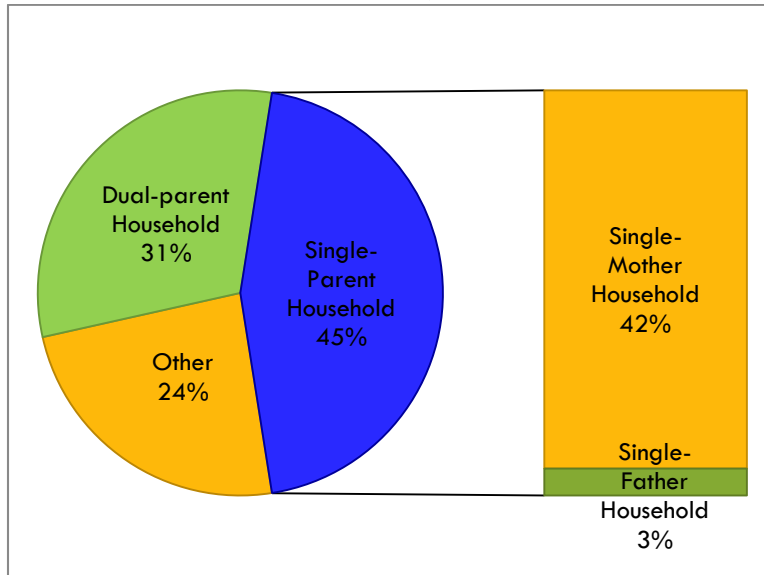
Note 1: Percentages for the figure above were calculated based on the survey question, "Who do you live with most of the time?" Single-parent household (45%) was based on those who marked living most of the time with either a mother or a father and did not mark living with other relatives (except for siblings). It should be noted that ten of the forty-seven households collapsed as "other" are headed by a female (other than the mother).

In addition to asking who they lived with most of the time, youth survey respondents were also asked how many adults aged 21 and over live with them. The majority of respondents (98%) lived with an adult (over 21). Specifically, 48% of respondents have two adults (over 21) living with them, 36% have one adult, 9% have three adults, and 5% have four or more adults living with them. The remaining 2% have no adults living with them. Of those respondents that lived with an adult (over 21), 51% lived with one adult who worked at a job for pay, 37% with two working adults , and 4% with three working adults. Those living with an adult who is not working at a job for pay represented about 8% of all youth surveyed.

Survey respondents were queried as to whether or not they have a legal guardian. About 91% of respondents replied that they have a legal guardian and the other 9% said they do not have one. When respondents who stated they have a legal guardian were asked how this person was related to them, the majority of respondents replied that their legal guardian was their mother (54%). This was followed by parents (28%), father (7%), aunt (2%), grandmother (2%), older brother (less than 1%), uncle (less than 1%), and cousin (less than 1%). Nine survey respondents chose to write their own response and these responses were collapsed as "other" (5%). These "other" responses include foster parent, a family friend, step parent, caregiver, and father's half sister.

Parents'/Legal Guardian's Level of Education

Youth survey participants were asked questions about their parents' or legal guardian's level of education (see Figure J-6). When asked what was the highest level of school their father completed, 62% responded high school diploma or less (30% grade 11 or less, 32% high school diploma or GED) and 38% beyond high school (12% some college, 4% associate degree or specialized technical training, 14% bachelor's degree, 2% some graduate training, and 6% graduate or professional degree). When asked about the mother, 53% responded high school or less (31% less grade 11 or less, 22% high school diploma or GED) and 46% beyond high school (16% some college, 6% associate degree or specialized technical training, 17% bachelor's degree, and 7% some graduate training. Of the thirteen respondents with a legal guardian other than their father/mother, 69% responded high school or less (54% grade 11 or less, 15% high school diploma or GED), and 31% selected categories beyond high school (8% some college, 8% bachelor's degree, and 15% graduate or professional degree). For ease of reporting, the level of education was collapsed into two categories: (1) high school or less and (2) beyond high school (see figure below).

FIGURE J-6: WHAT IS THE HIGHEST GRADE OF SCHOOL OR YEAR OF COLLEGE YOUR FATHER/MOTHER/LEGAL GUARDIAN COMPLETED? (PERCENT OF RESPONSES)
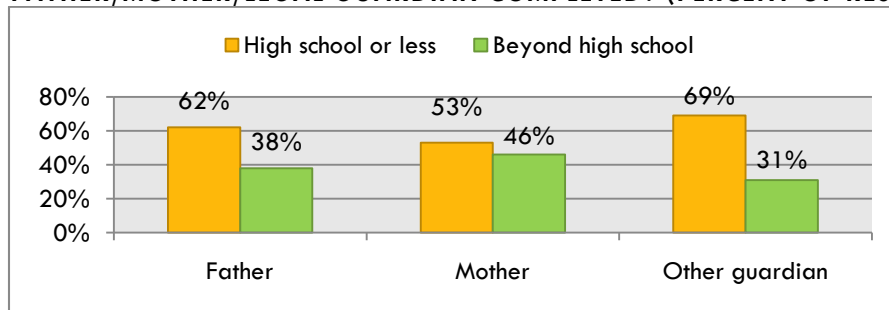
Note 2: These answers reflect the youth's knowledge of their parent's/guardian's educational attainment, which might not be completely accurate in all cases.

Taking Care of Children

The majority of respondents have no children (96%) while ten survey participants (4%) said they have one child. Of those with children, six reported living with their child while four said they did not. Furthermore, eight respondents were the primary person who took care of their child/children most of the time. When asked if any of their children were currently in foster care, none of the respondents said they had children currently in foster care. Respondents were then asked how old they were when their first child was born, and four of the ten youth with a child responded to this question: two respondents replied 17, one replied 18 and one replied 14.

In addition to asking all youth survey respondents if they have any children, they were also asked if they took care of any children who were not their own (for example, their younger brother/sister or their boyfriend's/girlfriend's children). Over two-thirds (68%) of respondents did not take care of any children who were not their own, and nearly one-third (32%) did take care of children not their own. As a follow-up question, respondents who replied that they took care of any children who were not their own were also asked for the number of times in a week that they performed this task. Twenty-seven youth survey participants provided a response, and of those, 26% did so seven times a week, 19% once a week, 15% three times a week, 15% five times a week, 11% as needed, 7% twice a week, 4% once every other week, and 4% every other weekend.

Free or Reduced Lunch

In addition to asking survey participants about their grades and attendance, they were also asked if they received free or reduced lunch while attending school. A total of 189 youth answered this question. Nearly three-fourths of youth who responded said that they received free or reduced lunch (72%) and over a quarter did not (28%).

Education

A series of questions about youth survey respondents' educational background was included in the survey instrument. One of these questions asked survey participants if they were currently attending school. One hundred ninety-nine youth responded to this question, and the majority of respondents (68%) were attending high school at the time of the survey (see Figure J-7). Respondents who were currently attending school included those in middle school (11%), college (7%), or trade/vocational school (2%). Two respondents were in a GED program, and two respondents would be attending school soon, which for ease of reporting are collapsed as "other" (2%). Survey respondents currently not in school indicated that they graduated (5%), quit/dropped out (4%), or have been suspended/expelled (1%).

FIGURE J-7: ARE YOU ATTENDING SCHOOL NOW? (PERCENT OF RESPONSES)
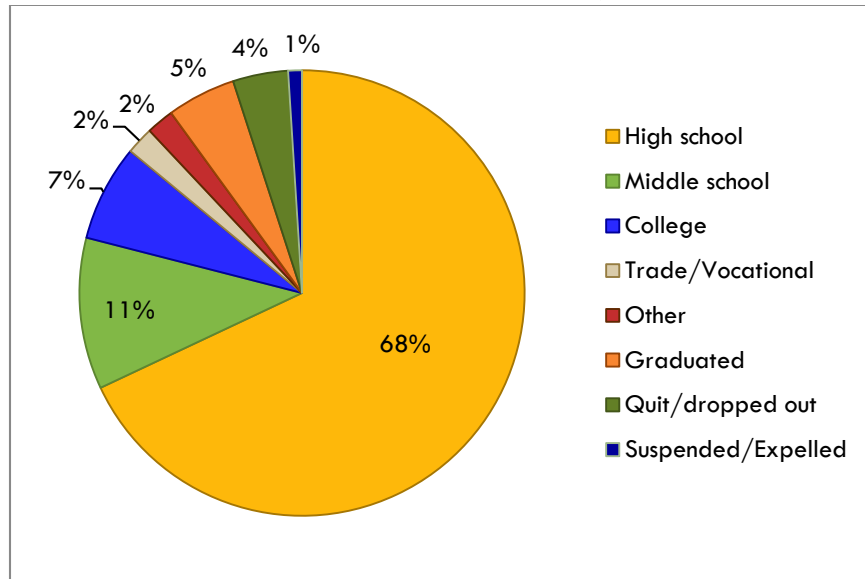
Of those who currently attended high school, 36% were in 9th grade, 28% in 10th grade, 28% in 11th grade and 9% in 12th grade. When asked to name the high school they were currently attending, the majority of respondents stated West Charlotte High School (11%) followed closely by West Mecklenburg High School (10%). Other schools represented were Independence High School (8%), Harding University High School (7%), Hopewell (7%), Mallard Creek High School (4%), North Mecklenburg High School (4%), Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology (4%), Vance High School (4%), East Mecklenburg High School (3%), Turning Point Academy (3%), Butler High School (2%), E. E. Waddell High School (2%), International Studies at Grainger (2%), Myers Park High School (2%), Northwest School of the Arts (2%), Cox Mill High School (2%), Hickory Ridge High School (2%), and East Gaston High School (2%). Moreover, the following schools were mentioned once: Audrey Kill High School; Business and Finance at Grainger High School; Cato Middle College High School; International Business and Communication Studies at Olympic; Leadership and Public Service High School at Grainger; Math and Science High School at Grainger; Math, Engineering, Technology & Science at Olympic High School; Maywood High School; Performance Learning Center; Rocky River High School; CPCC; Northeast Middle School; Clover High School, Kings Academy, Piedmont Community Charter School; Lancaster High School; Student First Academy; Rock Hill High School; and Yule High School. One youth responded that he/she is homeschooled. Figure J-8 gives a geographic representation of these responses.

Of the 199 youth responding to the question whether they were currently attending school, three survey respondents reported that they were currently attending trade/vocational school. When asked to provide the year that they started their program, one responded 2010, and the other two respondents did not provide an answer. In addition, these three survey respondents were also asked to name the trade/vocational school they are currently attending. One respondent was currently attending Central Piedmont Community College, and one respondent stated Goodwill Industries.

FIGURE J-8: WHAT SCHOOL DO YOU CURRENTLY ATTEND? (NUMBER OF RESPONSES)
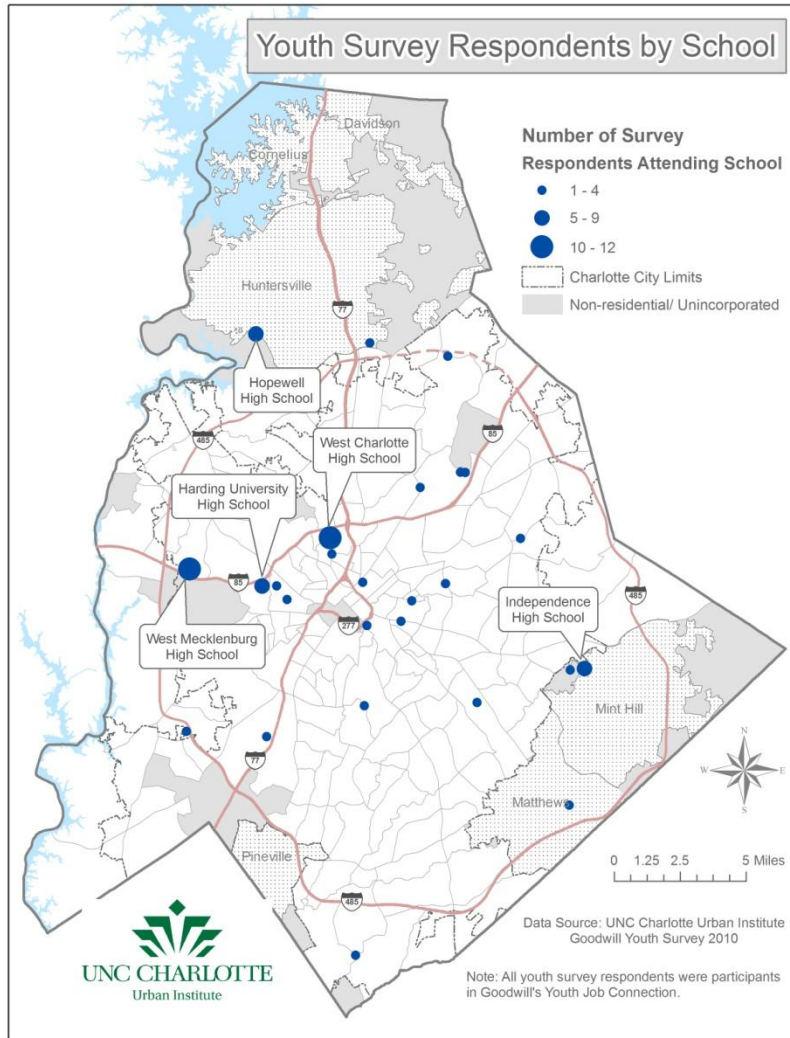
Note: Although the question asked respondents to name the high school they currently attend, several respondents wrote in the middle school they attended; these responses were included in this map. Although 108 answered this question, 8 were removed because the school they wrote in was not in Mecklenburg County.

Fourteen survey respondents reported that they are currently attending college, and this group of respondents was also asked to provide the year that they started their program. Nine respondents provided the year they started; four started in 2008, three in 2009, and two in 2010. Four of the college-age respondents were currently attending Central Piedmont Community College, two were attending North Carolina A&T State University, two others were attending the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and one was at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Other colleges represented include the Art Institute of Charlotte, Elizabeth City State University, Fayetteville State University, Livingstone College, and North Carolina Central University.

Of the 199 youth that provided a response as to whether or not they are currently attending school, nineteen (or 10% of those who responded) indicated that they were not in school. Of those, nine had graduated, seven had quit/dropped out, two were suspended, and one was expelled. A follow-up

question was asked to determine the last grade or year of school they completed. Of the nine respondents who had graduated, eight completed 12th grade and one completed 1–2 years of trade/vocational school. Of the seven youth who quit/dropped out of school, one finished grades 1–8, one finished 9th grade, four finished 10th grade, and one did not provide the last grade or year of school they finished. The sole respondent who reported being expelled from school indicated that he/she completed grades 1–8.

In addition, the nineteen survey respondents who indicated that they are currently not attending school were asked to check the reasons why this was the case. Six respondents said that they received a diploma and completed the course work. Two respondents said they do not like school, and two cited lack of reliable transportation as their reason. Other reasons mentioned include expelled/suspended; just moved to the area; too old for school; had to work; did not get anything out of school; poor grades; laziness; taking care of a sick parent; and joined Job Corp.

Survey respondents who indicated that they were not in middle school or high school were asked if they have any of the following diplomas or degrees: GED, high school diploma, trade/vocational certification, associate's degree, bachelor's degree, and an option to write their own response. A total of 51 youth provided a response, and of those, 26 said they do not have any diplomas or degrees. Survey respondents with a diploma or degree included two with a GED, 24 with a high school diploma, one with a trade/vocational certification, one with an associate's degree, and one with a bachelor's degree.

In terms of their GPA, survey participants were given five levels (A to F) to choose from that would reflect their GPA at the last school they attended. A total of 182 youth were able to provide their average grades. About 48% of respondents had an average GPA that is equivalent to a B letter grade, while 26% had a C letter grade average, 21% had an A letter grade average, 4% had a D letter grade average, and the remaining 1% had an average letter grade of F (see Figure J-9).

FIGURE J-9: WHAT WERE YOUR AVERAGE GRADES LIKE, OR YOUR GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)?
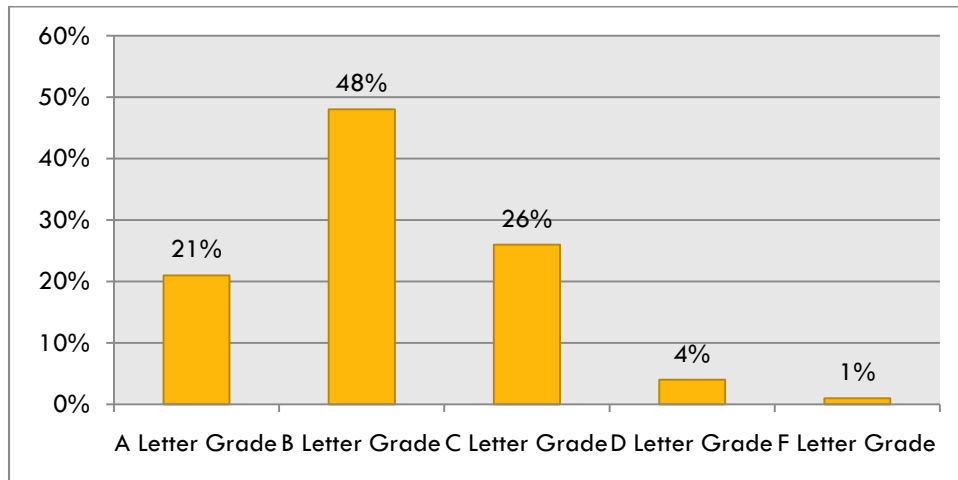
All youth survey participants were asked how many times they missed school in the past year, and 188 provided a response. As the figure below illustrates, the majority of respondents missed school less than once a month (42%), about 22% replied two or three times a month, 13% once a month, 13% none, 7% more than five times a month, and 3% four times a month.

FIGURE J-10: IN THE LAST YEAR YOU WERE IN SCHOOL, APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY TIMES DID YOU MISS SCHOOL?
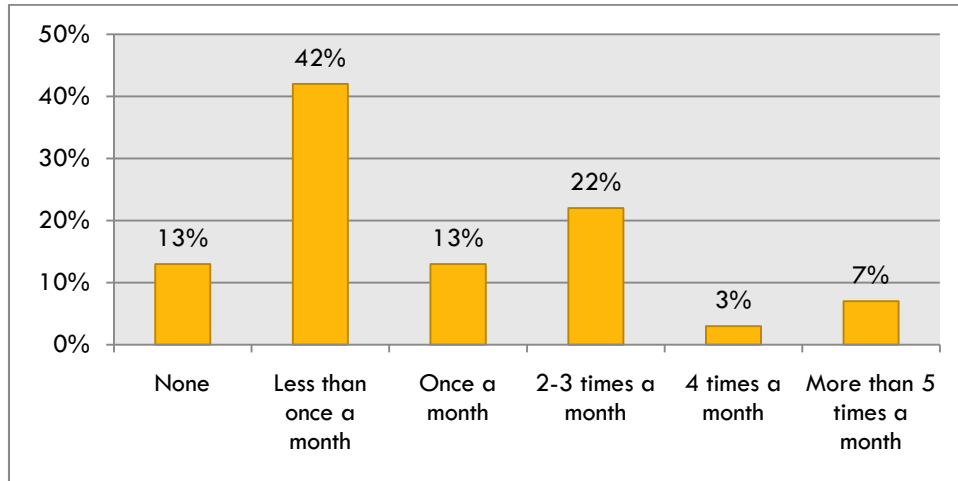
Work Experience

When asked if they ever had a part-time job (working less than 30 hours a week), 197 youth survey participants responded. The majority of respondents (79%) have never worked a part-time job. In contrast, less than a quarter of youth surveyed indicated that they have had a part-time job before. Specifically, 16% have worked one part-time job, 4% have worked two or three part-time jobs and 1% have worked four or more part-time jobs. Survey respondents were also asked if they ever had a full-time job (working 30 or more hours a week). An overwhelming majority of respondents (92%) indicated that they never had a full-time job. Of the small percentage of those who had worked full-time, 5% had one full-time job, 2% had two or three full-time jobs, and 1% had four or more full-time jobs. When both questions are grouped together to determine how many of those who had worked full-time had also worked part-time (and vice versa), the survey results show that 84% of those who never had a full-time job also never worked a part-time job. In comparison, 99% of those who never worked a part-time job also had never worked a full-time job. Eleven respondents (6%) had worked both part-time and full-time jobs before (although not necessarily holding those jobs simultaneously).

When asked if they were now working at a job for pay, 197 of the youth surveyed provided an answer, and of those, 47% did not work at the time of the survey, and 44% never worked at a job for pay (see Figure J-11). The remaining 9% consisted of youth survey respondents who were currently employed to some degree (5% indicated they currently worked part-time for pay [less than 30 hours per week], 2% currently worked full-time [30 or more hours per week], and 2% currently had occasional jobs such as babysitting).

FIGURE J-11: DO YOU NOW WORK AT A JOB FOR PAY?
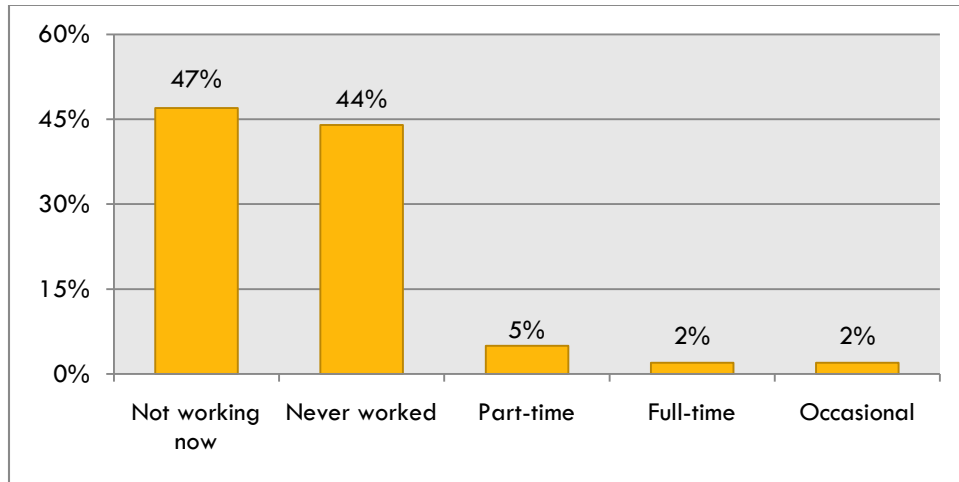
The small number of youth survey respondents (n=17) who indicated that they were currently working at a job for pay were asked a series of questions. One of the questions pertained to the kind of work they do at their job. Ten respondents provided a response which included babysitting, host/server, daycare teacher, international paper, packing, retail, sales representative, teacher assistant and cutting lawns. Another question asked of youth who were currently working at a job for pay was whether they were being paid at an hourly rate on this job. Eight of the seventeen youth respondents said that they were paid an hourly rate at their job which ranged from $7.00 to $7.60.

Legal Background

In order to ascertain if any of the youth survey respondents had ever been convicted of a misdemeanor or a felony, they were asked a yes or no question regarding these two issues. When asked, 10% of respondents had been convicted of a misdemeanor. In terms of felony convictions, 2% of respondents had been convicted of a felony.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Activities

Youth program participants were asked to check from a list the things that they do in a typical week. These included working for pay, working without pay or volunteering, looking for a job, attending classes at high school, trade/vocational school, or college, attending classes at a work readiness or GED preparation program, doing homework, and doing organized activities in the school or community (such as church, sports, art, or music). Survey respondents were also given the option to write their own response. Of all the activities listed, the majority of youth (70%) cited doing homework followed closely by looking for a job (65%), attending classes at high school, trade/vocational school or college (60%), and doing organized activities in the school or community (49%), see Figure J-12. A small number of respondents mentioned working without pay or volunteering (17%), working for pay (14%), and attending classes at a work readiness or GED preparation program (8%) as their typical weekly activities. Other typical weekly activities (with

each one being mentioned by only one respondent) were team sports, care for a sibling/ elderly or sick relative, watch TV, go to the gym, music, attending class at a middle school, work on websites, writing, and reading—this group of responses were collapsed as "other" and comprised 8% of all the cases.

FIGURE J-12: TYPICAL WEEKLY ACTIVITIES BY YOUTH SURVEYED (PERCENT OF CASES)
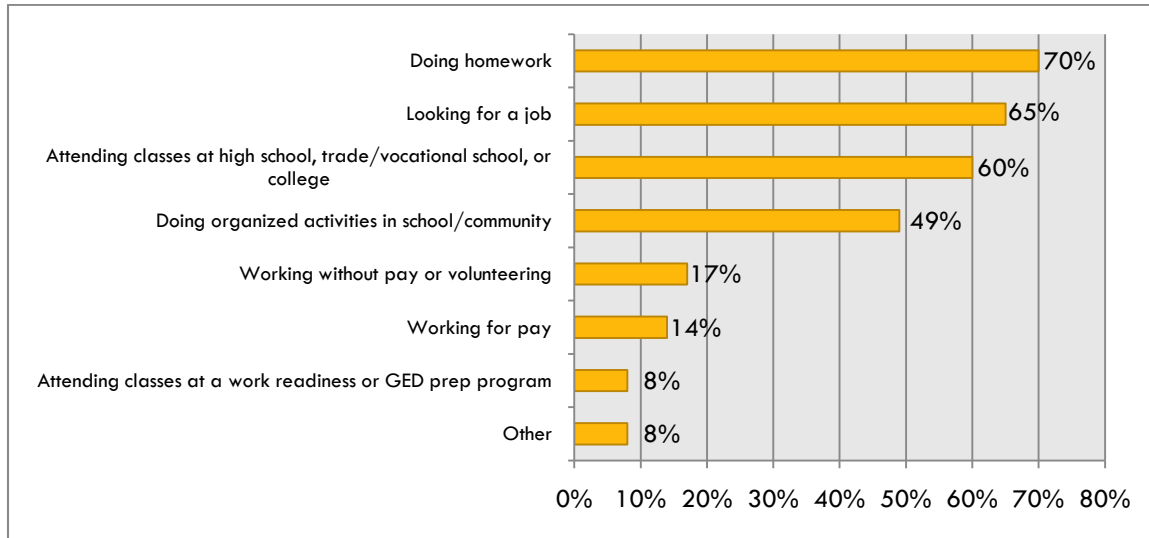
Note 3: "Doing homework" has a higher percentage than "attending classes at high, school, trade/vocational school, or college." It should be noted that "doing homework" may include activities for GED prep program as well as for attending classes at high, school, trade/vocational school, or college. It is also possible that some youth were more likely to do more homework in a typical week than attend classes, particularly those who may only be going to classes less than five days a week. It should also be noted that 141 respondents marked "doing homework" as a typical weekly activity while only 138 marked either "attending classes at high, school, trade/vocational school, or college" or "attending classes at a work readiness or GED prep program."

In addition to asking youth program participants about their typical weekly activities, the survey also asked how many times in the last 30 days they have participated in a variety of activities, ranging from "tests to help them get a job" to "help move out of foster care" (see Table J-1)). Nearly half of all survey respondents (49%) participated in an activity to help them look for a job during the last 30 days followed closely by help with homework/tutoring (44%) and job training (43%). Although the percentage of youth who participate in these three activities are close to one another, the average times that youth participate in getting help with homework/tutoring is roughly six times a month compared to five times a month for help with looking for a job and once a month for job training class.

Not shown in the table below are the three respondents who provided their own response. These were collapsed as "other" and include caring for a sibling/elderly or sick relative, planning for college, and playing sports. The number of times that respondents performed each activity was not provided and thus is not shown in the table below.

Table J-1. During the last 30 days, how many times did you participate in any of the following activities?

Activity	Percent of Youth Respondents Who Participated	Average times Participated in 30 days	Range of times Participated in 30 days
Help with looking for a job	49%	4.80	1–30
Help with homework/tutoring	44%	5.62	1–30
Job training class	43%	1.43	1–8
Volunteering/Community service	34%	5.97	1–35
Résumé help	26%	1.75	1–8
Skills to better manage my money	22%	3.11	1–30
Getting into college	22%	4.36	1–30
Mentoring	19%	3.77	1–30
Safe sex/health education	19%	8.03	1–30
Tests to help you get a job	18%	2.44	1–12
Customer service training	18%	1.58	1–8
Leadership class	16%	7.52	1–34
Entrepreneurship	6%	3.31	1–15
Getting help as a runaway/homeless	5%	3.20	1–7
Help with juvenile justice	4%	3.25	1–15
Help to move out of foster care	3%	7.57	1–30

Future Accomplishments

When asked what they want to accomplish a year from now, the majority of youth surveyed said they want to work or find a job (86%), see Table J-2. Other accomplishments that youth would like to accomplish a year from now included to learn a trade or skill that will help find a job (52%), stay in high school, trade/vocational school or college (50%), finish high school, trade/vocational school or college (49%), get a bachelor's degree at a college or university (30%), get a GED (25%), get an associate's degree at the community college (16%), get married (13%), have a child/children (12%), join the military (7%), find a different job than the one I have now (4%). The following accomplishments were also mentioned, but each one was only cited by 1% or less of all the cases and, therefore, were grouped as "other:" go to high school, improve my grades, make it to the all

American high school football game, start my own corporation/business, play football in college, doing things I love, have my own car, and publish a novel. It should be noted that two of the youth surveyed preferred not to answer this question.

Table J-2. What do you want to accomplish by a year from now? (Percent of Cases)

Future Accomplishment	Percent of Cases
Work or find a job	86%
Learn a trade or skill that will help me find a job	52%
Stay in high school, trade/vocational school or college	50%
Finish high school, trade/vocational school or college	49%
Get a bachelor's degree (4 year degree) at a college or university	30%
Get a GED	25%
Get an associate's degree (2 year degree) at the community college	16%
Get married	13%
Have a child/children	11%
Join the military	7%
Other	7%
Find a different job than the one I have now	4%

As a follow-up question to asking youth what they wanted to accomplish a year from now, they were also asked what stood in their way in accomplishing what they wanted to do. The majority of respondents cited lack of work experience (52%), lack of money (35%), lack of job training (34%), low grades (25%), transportation (24%), lack of information (21%), family responsibilities (17%), lack of motivation to achieve what I checked off (13%), not sure (9%), lack of support from my family (8%), lack of support from my friends (7%), language (6%), discrimination (such as racial, ethnic or gender (6%), don't believe I can achieve what I checked off (5%), and child care responsibilities (3%), see Table J-3. The "other" responses included drug charge on my juvenile record, I'm in a group home, and age (2%). A small percentage of respondents (5%) felt as though they faced no barriers while a smaller percentage (1%) said they have no goals.

Table J-3. Which of the following do you feel stand in your way in accomplishing the things you checked off in the last question? (Percent of Cases)

Barriers	Percent of Cases
Lack of work experience	52%
Lack of money	35%
Lack of job training	34%
Low grades	25%
Transportation	24%
Lack of information	21%
Family responsibilities	17%
Lack of motivation	13%
Not sure	9%
Lack of support from my family	8%
Lack of support from my friends	7%
Language	6%
Discrimination (such as racial, ethnic or gender)	6%
Don't believe I can achieve what I checked off	5%
Don't face any barriers	5%
Child-care responsibilities	3%
Other	2%
Don't have any goals	1%

Career Aspirations

Survey respondents were asked if they knew what kind of job or career they would like to pursue in the future. The majority of respondents (96%) knew what kind of job or career they wanted to pursue in the future while a small percentage (4%) did not. Of those that knew what kind of job or career they wanted to pursue, the majority of respondents wanted to work either in arts/entertainment/sports/media (22%) or in healthcare (22%), see Figure J-13. Other respondents cited the following occupations: law/legal occupation (10%), engineering (8%), retail/sales (5%), education (4%), financial services (4%), hospitality/culinary (4%), information technology (3%), office/personnel administration (2%), public safety (2%), entrepreneurship/small businesses (2%),

automotive (2%), veterinarian (2%), cosmetology (2%), agriculture (1%), military (1%), human services (1%), journalism (1%), and marine life (1%). One respondent provided multiple occupations (1%) as a response.

FIGURE J-13: WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING AREA OF OCCUPATIONS DO YOU SEE YOURSELF WORKING IN THE FUTURE? (PERCENT OF RESPONSES)
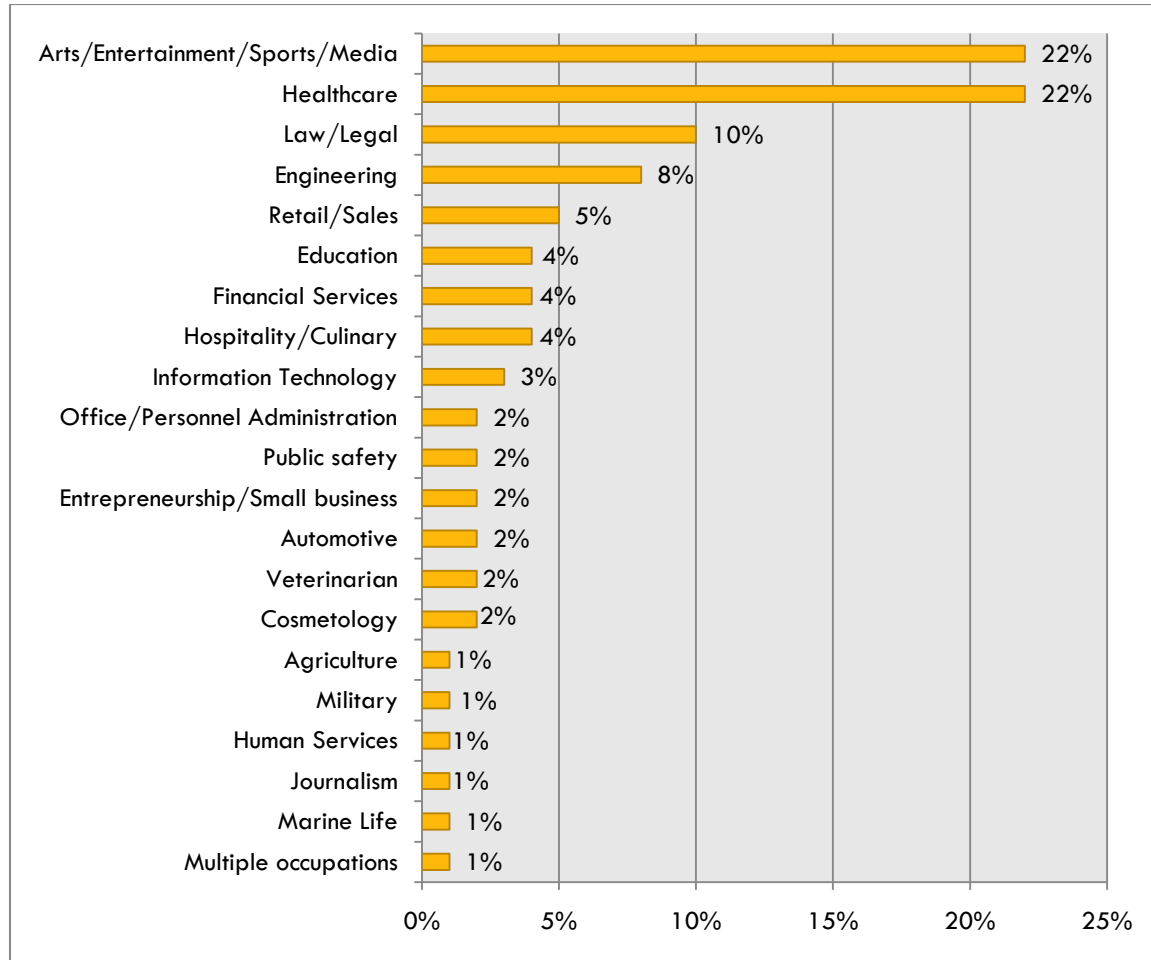
Attitude about Employment

Using a 4-point scale (1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, and 4=Strongly agree), youth survey participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with seven statements pertaining to their attitudes about employment. Table J-4 shows the frequencies of each response and the mean scores for youth surveyed. Based on the scale given to the respondent, a lower mean score indicates greater disagreement with a statement, while a higher mean score shows more agreement.

As the table below indicates, the majority of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statements that they know they can succeed at work (97%), working hard at a job will pay off in the end (93%), they have enough skills to do a job well (87%), and they would take almost any kind of job to get money (55%). Moreover, youth survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the following statements: they are not quite ready to handle a job (88%), the only good job is one that pays a lot of money (82%), and most jobs are dull and boring (82%).

Table J-4. How much do you agree or disagree with each sentence?

Statement	Strongly disagree (=1)	Disagree (=2)	Agree (=3)	Strongly agree (=4)	Avg. Rating
I know I can succeed at work.	1%	2%	26%	**71%**	3.68
Working hard at a job will pay off in the end.	4%	4%	24%	**69%**	3.59
I have enough skills to do a job well.	3%	10%	43%	**44%**	3.28
I would take almost any kind of job to get money.	12%	33%	**38%**	17%	2.59
The only good job is one that pays a lot of money.	31%	**51%**	13%	6%	1.93
Most jobs are dull and boring.	31%	**51%**	13%	6%	1.86
I am not quite ready to handle a job.	**54%**	34%	9%	3%	1.61

Where the Youth Need Help and the Gaps in Youth Services

Using a scale of 1 to 3 (with 1 being "none," 2 being "some," and 3 being "a lot"), youth survey respondents were asked how much help they needed with the following skills or areas: looking for work (for example, résumé, interviews); learning about work opportunities (for example, different occupations, industries, employers); knowing more about their career interests; basic preparation for work (work ethic, work readiness skills); life skills (for example, managing household finances); college applications; help with homework/tutoring; basic educational skills (for example, reading, writing or math); getting a GED; physical health; housing; parenting skills; childcare; personal safety; mental health counseling; family or individual counseling; practicing safe sex; legal services; drug or alcohol counseling; and getting out of a gang. Survey respondents were also given the option to write their own response if they need help in any skills or areas not listed on the survey.

In general, this group of youth survey respondents ranked issues involving employment as an area where they needed some or a lot of assistance. As Table J-5 shows, the area where the majority of respondents needed **a lot** of help was with *looking for work* (56%) followed by *learning about work opportunities* (46%). The two areas where the majority of respondents needed **some** help was with *basic preparation for work, work ethic, and work readiness skills* (58%) and *knowing more about my career interests* (55%). In contrast, the areas where the majority of respondents cited needing **no** help included *getting out of a gang* (91%), *drug or alcohol counseling* (89%), *legal services* (85%), *practicing safe sex* (83%), *family or individual counseling* (77%), *mental health counseling* (77%), *personal safety* (74%), *childcare* (73%), *parenting skills* (68%), *housing* (65%), *getting a GED* (62%), and *physical health* (61%). It should be noted that two respondents wrote their own responses that are not shown in the table below due to their small sample size. One mentioned needing a lot of help

with time management/organization, and the other stated needing some help with strengthening self-confidence level.

Table J-5. How much help do you need with the following skills or areas?

Skills or Areas	None (=1)	Some (=2)	A lot (=3)	Avg. Rating
Looking for work (for example, résumé, interviews)	6%	38%	**56%**	2.51
Learning about work opportunities (for example, different occupations, industries, employers)	9%	**46%**	**46%**	2.37
Knowing more about their career interests	14%	**55%**	31%	2.17
Basic preparation for work, work ethic, work readiness skills	21%	**58%**	22%	2.01
Life skills (for example, managing household finances)	33%	**42%**	26%	1.93
College applications	**39%**	32%	29%	1.90
Help with homework, tutoring	**42%**	**42%**	16%	1.74
Basic educational skills (for example, reading, writing or math)	**48%**	38%	15%	1.67
Getting a GED	**62%**	18%	20%	1.58
Physical health	**61%**	25%	14%	1.53
Housing	**65%**	19%	16%	1.51
Parenting skills	**68%**	19%	13%	1.46
Childcare	**73%**	15%	12%	1.39
Personal safety	**74%**	16%	10%	1.36
Mental health counseling	**77%**	14%	9%	1.33
Family or individual counseling	**77%**	17%	6%	1.30
Practicing safe sex	**83%**	10%	7%	1.24
Legal services	**85%**	11%	5%	1.20
Drug or alcohol counseling	**89%**	5%	6%	1.18
Getting out of a gang	**91%**	4%	5%	1.14

CONCLUSION

A web-based survey of YJC youth participants was conducted as one of the components of the Institute's youth assessment. In general, this group of youth survey participants was not comprised of youth that are considered to be most at-risk of becoming disconnected. For example, over four-fifths of youth surveyed are currently in school with a B letter grade average. Furthermore, only a small percentage of youth (11% or less) reported that they had either been adjudicated, had their own children, lived with a foster family, or that their family had to worry about where they would sleep at night. As a group, youth survey participants generally did not need help in getting out of a gang, receiving drug or alcohol counseling, practicing safe sex, having family or individual counseling, mental health counseling, personal safety, and/or childcare.

Although, as a whole, this group of youth may not fit the definition of "disconnected" youth, they did have some characteristics of youth who are considered to be "at-risk." For example, 45% percent of youth survey respondents lived in a household headed by only one parent (primarily their mother). Also, the high percentage of youth who stated that they received free or reduced lunch (72%) provides some indication that the majority of youth surveyed are in poverty. As youth with some characteristics of being at-risk of becoming disconnected, youth in the YJC program may face barriers in entering the labor force. For instance, it is apparent from this survey that youth need a lot of help with job searching. Youth who participated in this survey indicated their desire for services that provide training to write résumés and cover letters as well as training to improve their interviewing skills. Furthermore, youth survey respondents stated that finding a job was their main goal in the next year or so. This was not surprising given the objective of the program. However, youth survey participants indicated that they saw lack of work experience as their biggest obstacle to accomplishing this goal. As young individuals who wanted to enter the labor force, their biggest predicament was how to land a job without the work experience that employers typically look for when making hiring decisions. This finding calls for programs to provide as much work experience as they can to YJC program participants.

While exposing youth to real work settings is a reoccurring challenge for all those involved in youth employment, it is recommended that the YJC program also help youth research the different work opportunities in various industries. Although most youth survey participants stated that they know the occupations in which they see themselves working in the future, a majority also stated that they would like to learn more about work opportunities and about their career interests. A successful workforce development program that can connect youth to their career/work industry of choice (either through field work or by learning about different careers by researching qualifications/skills needed for them) will enable youth to make better decisions about their career.

Overall, survey findings suggest that youth who are in the program will benefit greatly from the services that the YJC program offers. This is especially true in areas that help youth with job searching and learning more about their career interests. As a leader in putting people to work, Goodwill is one agency that might successfully provide training on workforce readiness followed by a meaningful work-experience placement.

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

Introduction

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey
UNC Charlotte Urban Institute
9201 University City Boulevard
Charlotte, NC 28223-0001
Phone: 704-687-2307
www.ui.uncc.edu

The UNC Charlotte Urban Institute would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this online survey about youth services on behalf of Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont. We are doing this survey to see which youth services you use as well as to identify problems you continue to face as you seek to continue your education and/or find a job. Your responses will help us evaluate and improve programs and services for youths in our community.

The survey asks your opinion about a number of things in life, such as your family, friends, daily activities, education, work and legal background. It will take about 15 minutes to fill out the survey.

Click "Next" to continue to the next page.

Introduction

Your answers to these questions will be anonymous. We will not ask you to write your name or any other information that may identify you.

This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. If you don't want to answer a question, leave it blank or choose "I prefer not to answer".

Be sure to read the instructions before you mark your answers.

Please DO NOT USE your web browser's back button. If you need to go back a page, use the "PREV" button at the bottom of the page. If you exit the survey, you will not be able to re-enter the survey.

If you agree to take this survey, click "next" and you will begin.

Demographic Section

Are you a current participant or a previous participant of Goodwill program(s)?

◯ Current participant   ◯ Previous participant   ◯ Don't know

How old are you? (Years)

[   ]

What is your zip code? (enter "99999" if you don't know or prefer not to answer)

[   ]

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

Please select the name of your neighborhood from the following drop-down menu. If you can't find your neighborhood, choose "other" and enter it into the response box below.

[ ]

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

Activities

These questions are about your activities.

Tell us about things you do in a typical week. From the list below, check the activities that you do each week. Click all that apply.

[ ] Working for pay

[ ] Working without pay or volunteering

[ ] Looking for a job

[ ] Attending classes at high school, trade/vocational school, or college

[ ] Attending classes at a work readiness or GED preparation program

[ ] Doing homework

[ ] Doing organized activities in the school or community (such as church, sports, art, or music)

[ ] I prefer not to answer

[ ] Other

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

Activities (Continued)

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

During the last 30 days, how many times did you participate in any of the following activities?

Enter the number of times for each activity. If you did not participate in an activity within the last 30 days, enter 0 ("zero").

Activity	
Tests to help you get a job	
Résumé help	
Customer Service Training	
Job Training Class	
Skills to better manage my money	
Mentoring	
Help with looking for a job	
Help with homework/tutoring	
Help with Juvenile Justice	
Getting into college	
Volunteering/Community Service	
Entrepreneurship	
Leadership class	
Getting help as a runaway/homeless	
Safe Sex/Health Education	
Help to move out of foster care	
Other	

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

Future

These questions are about your plans and hopes for the future.

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

What do you want to accomplish by a year from now? (Check all that apply)

WITHIN A YEAR from now, I want to…

- [ ] Stay in high school, trade/vocational school, or college
- [ ] Finish high school, trade/vocational school, or college
- [ ] Work or find a job
- [ ] Find a different job than the one I have now
- [ ] Get a GED
- [ ] Learn a trade or skill that will help me find a job
- [ ] Get an associate's degree (2-year degree) at the community college
- [ ] Get a bachelor's degree (4-year degree) at a college or university
- [ ] Join the military
- [ ] Have a child/children
- [ ] Get married
- [ ] Don't know
- [ ] Don't care
- [ ] I prefer not to answer
- [ ] Other

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

Future (Continued)

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

From the list below, which of the following do you feel stand in your way in accomplishing the things you checked off in the last question? (Check all that apply)

☐ Don't believe I can achieve what I checked off   ☐ Low grades

☐ Family responsibilities   ☐ Language

☐ Child-care responsibilities   ☐ Discrimination (such as racial, ethnic or gender)

☐ Lack of money   ☐ Transportation

☐ Lack of information   ☐ Don't have any goals

☐ Lack of support from my family   ☐ Don't care

☐ Lack of support from my friends   ☐ Not sure

☐ Lack of motivation to achieve what I checked off   ☐ I prefer not to answer

☐ Lack of job training   ☐ Other (If you feel you don't face any barriers, please check this box and enter "None" below)

☐ Lack of work experience

If you answered "Other" above, please specify. If you feel you don't face any barriers, please enter "None" here.

[   ]

Do you know what kind of job or career you would like to pursue in the future?

○ Yes

○ No

○ Not sure

○ I prefer not to answer

Occupation

Which of the following area of occupations do you see yourself working in the future? Pick one.

If the occupation you want isn't listed, pick other and enter it in the response box below.

[   ]

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

[   ]

Help in Skills/Areas

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

How much help do you need with the following skills or areas? (Check only one for each item)

*Remember, your answers are anonymous.

	None	Some	A Lot	Don't Know
1) Basic preparation for work, work ethic, work readiness skills	◯	◯	◯	◯
2) Knowing more about my career interests	◯	◯	◯	◯
3) Learning about work opportunities (for example, different occupations, industries, employers)	◯	◯	◯	◯
4) Looking for work (for example, résumé, interviews)	◯	◯	◯	◯
5) Help with homework, tutoring	◯	◯	◯	◯
6) Getting a GED	◯	◯	◯	◯
7) College applications	◯	◯	◯	◯
8) Life skills (for example, managing household finances)	◯	◯	◯	◯
9) Basic educational skills (for example, reading, writing or math)	◯	◯	◯	◯
10) Parenting skills	◯	◯	◯	◯
11) Childcare	◯	◯	◯	◯
12) Housing	◯	◯	◯	◯
13) Physical health	◯	◯	◯	◯
14) Mental health counseling	◯	◯	◯	◯
15) Drug or alcohol counseling	◯	◯	◯	◯
16) Family or individual counseling	◯	◯	◯	◯
17) Personal safety	◯	◯	◯	◯
18) Getting out of a gang	◯	◯	◯	◯
19) Legal services	◯	◯	◯	◯
20) Practicing safe sex	◯	◯	◯	◯
21) Other	◯	◯	◯	◯

If you do not need any help with skill or other areas, please enter "None" here

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

Education

These questions are about your education.

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

Are you attending school NOW? (Check only one)

○ Yes, high school   ○ No, I am suspended

○ Yes, trade/vocational school   ○ No, I am expelled

○ Yes, college   ○ I prefer not to answer

○ No, I graduated   ○ Other

○ No, I quit or dropped out

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

High School

What grade are you in?

○ 9th

○ 10th

○ 11th

○ 12th

What is the name of the high school you are currently attending? Pick one from the drop down menu.

If you can't find your high school, choose "other" and enter it into the reponse box below.

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

Trade/Vocational School

What year did you start your program?

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

What is the name of the trade/vocational school you are currently attending?

◯ Central Piedmont Community College

◯ ECPI College of Technology

◯ TechSkills

◯ Don't know

◯ I prefer not to answer

◯ Other

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

[ ]

College

What year did you start your program?

[ ]

What is the name of the college you are currently attending?

◯ Brookstone College   ◯ Queens University

◯ Central Piedmont Community College   ◯ Pfeiffer University

◯ DeVry University   ◯ University of Phoenix

◯ Gardner-Webb University   ◯ University of North Carolina at Charlotte

◯ Johnson & Wales University   ◯ Don't know

◯ Johnson C. Smith University   ◯ I prefer not to answer

◯ King's College   ◯ Other

◯ Montreat College

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

[ ]

Last Grade Finished

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

What is the LAST GRADE or YEAR of school you FINISHED? (Check only one)

- ◯ Grades 1-8
- ◯ Grade 9
- ◯ Grade 10
- ◯ Grade 11
- ◯ Grade 12

- ◯ 1–2 years of trade/vocational school
- ◯ 1–2 years of college
- ◯ 3 or more years of college
- ◯ I prefer not to answer

IF YOU ARE NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL NOW, tell us why. Please check all the MAIN REASONS why you are not in school.

- ◯ Received diploma, completed course work
- ◯ Expelled or suspended
- ◯ Just moved here
- ◯ Too old for school
- ◯ Don't have time
- ◯ Don't like school
- ◯ Don't get along with other students
- ◯ Child-care responsibilities
- ◯ I have to work
- ◯ Got pregnant
- ◯ Got offered a job

- ◯ Can't afford to go
- ◯ Have a health problem
- ◯ Just got out of a detention center, jail or prison
- ◯ My friends dropped out of school
- ◯ My school was unsafe
- ◯ Nobody cared if I went to school
- ◯ Don't get anything out of school
- ◯ Transportation (lack of reliable)
- ◯ I prefer not to answer
- ◯ Other

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

[text box]

Degrees/Diplomas

Do you have any of these diplomas or degrees? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ GED
- ☐ High school diploma
- ☐ Trade/vocational certification
- ☐ Associate's degree

- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ I don't have any diplomas or degrees
- ☐ I prefer not to answer
- ☐ Other

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

What is the LAST GRADE or YEAR of school you FINISHED? (Check only one)

◯ Grades 1-8
◯ Grade 9
◯ Grade 10
◯ Grade 11
◯ Grade 12

◯ 1–2 years of trade/vocational school
◯ 1–2 years of college
◯ 3 or more years of college
◯ I prefer not to answer

IF YOU ARE NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL NOW, tell us why. Please check all the MAIN REASONS why you are not in school.

◯ Received diploma, completed course work
◯ Expelled or suspended
◯ Just moved here
◯ Too old for school
◯ Don't have time
◯ Don't like school
◯ Don't get along with other students
◯ Child-care responsibilities
◯ I have to work
◯ Got pregnant
◯ Got offered a job

◯ Can't afford to go
◯ Have a health problem
◯ Just got out of a detention center, jail or prison
◯ My friends dropped out of school
◯ My school was unsafe
◯ Nobody cared if I went to school
◯ Don't get anything out of school
◯ Transportation (lack of reliable)
◯ I prefer not to answer
◯ Other

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

[ ]

Degrees/Diplomas

Do you have any of these diplomas or degrees? (Check all that apply)

☐ GED
☐ High school diploma
☐ Trade/vocational certification
☐ Associate's degree

☐ Bachelor's degree
☐ I don't have any diplomas or degrees
☐ I prefer not to answer
☐ Other

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

Grades and Attendance

Putting them all together, what were your average grades like, or your grade point average (GPA), THE LAST YEAR YOU ATTENDED SCHOOL? (Check only one)

- ◯ 90-100% / 3.1-4.0 GPA / A Letter Grade
- ◯ 80-89% / 2.1-3.0 GPA / B Letter Grade
- ◯ 70-79% / 1.0-2.0 GPA / C Letter Grade
- ◯ 60-69% / 0.1-0.9 GPA / D Letter Grade

- ◯ 0-59% / 0 GPA / F Letter Grade
- ◯ Don't remember
- ◯ I prefer not to answer

IN THE LAST YEAR YOU WERE IN SCHOOL, (approximately) how many times did you miss school? (Check only one)

- ◯ None
- ◯ Less than once a month
- ◯ Once a month
- ◯ Two or three times a month

- ◯ 5 Four times a month
- ◯ 6 More than five times a month
- ◯ I prefer not to answer

While attending school, did you receive FREE or REDUCED LUNCH?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

- ◯ Don't know or don't remember
- ◯ I prefer not to answer

Work Experiences

These questions are about your work experiences.

Have you ever had a PART-TIME job, working less than 30 hours a week? (Check only one)

- ◯ Yes, one job
- ◯ Yes, two or three jobs
- ◯ Yes, four or more jobs

- ◯ No, I never worked part time
- ◯ I prefer not to answer

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

Have you ever had a FULL-TIME job, working 30 or more hours a week? (Check only one)

◯ Yes, one job

◯ Yes, two or three jobs

◯ Yes, four or more jobs

◯ No, I never worked full time

◯ I prefer not to answer

Do you NOW work at a job for pay? (Check only one)

◯ Yes, part time (less than 30 hours per week)

◯ Yes, full time (30 or more hours per week)

◯ Yes, occasional jobs (such as babysitting)

◯ No, I do not work now

◯ No, I never worked

◯ I prefer not to answer

Work Experience (Continued)

What kind of work do you do at this/these job(s)? (For example: auto mechanic, cook, construction worker)

`_____`

Are you paid at an HOURLY RATE on this job?

◯ Yes

◯ No

◯ Don't know

◯ I prefer not to answer

If you answered "Yes" above, what is your hourly rate?

`_____`

Agree/Disagree

How much do you agree or disagree with each sentence? (Check only one for each sentence)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Most jobs are dull and boring.	◯	◯	◯	◯
I have enough skills to do a job well.	◯	◯	◯	◯
The only good job is one that pays a lot of money.	◯	◯	◯	◯
I am not quite ready to handle a job.	◯	◯	◯	◯
I know I can succeed at work.	◯	◯	◯	◯
I would take almost any kind of job to get money.	◯	◯	◯	◯
Working hard at a job will pay off in the end.	◯	◯	◯	◯

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

What is your race or ethnicity? (Check only one)

( ) Black

( ) White

( ) Asian/Pacific Islander

( ) American Indian or Alaskan Native

( ) More than one race/ethnicity

( ) I prefer not to answer

( ) Other

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

General Information (Continued 2)

Were you born in the United States? (Check only one)

( ) Yes

( ) No

( ) I prefer not to answer

If you answered "no", in which country were you born?

How long have you lived in the United States? (Check only one)

( ) I have always lived in the United States

( ) 4 years or less

( ) More than 4 years

( ) I prefer not to answer

Were both of your parents born in the United States? (Check only one)

( ) Yes

( ) No

( ) Not sure

( ) I prefer not to answer

Relationships and Children

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

What is your current relationship status? (Check only one)

- ◯ Single
- ◯ Have a boyfriend/girlfriend but we don't live together
- ◯ Living with a partner
- ◯ Married
- ◯ Divorced
- ◯ Separated
- ◯ Widowed
- ◯ I prefer not to answer

Do you have any children? (Check only one)

- ◯ Yes, one child
- ◯ Yes, two children
- ◯ Yes, three or more children
- ◯ No
- ◯ I prefer not to answer

Children

Do any of your children live with you?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ I prefer not to answer

Are you the person who takes care of your child/children most of the time?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ I prefer not to answer

Are any of your children currently in foster care?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ I prefer not to answer

How old were you when your first child was born?

[   ]

Provide Care for Any Children

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

Do you take care of any children (not counting your own if you have any), for example your own brother or sister, or your boyfriend's or girlfriend's children? (Check only one)

○ Yes

○ No

○ I prefer not to answer

If yes, about how many times per week?

[   ]

Family and Home

These questions are about your family and home.

*Remember, your answers are anonymous.

How long have you lived at your current home?

○ Less than 6 months   ○ More than 5 years

○ More than 6 months but less than one year   ○ Don't know

○ 1 to 2 years   ○ I prefer not to answer

○ 3 to 5 years

Within the last year, did you or your family have to worry about where you would sleep at night?

○ Yes   ○ Don't know

○ No   ○ I prefer not to answer

Household

How many people live in your household including yourself?

[   ]

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

Who do you live with most of the time? (Check all that apply)

☐ Live alone   ☐ Parent's boyfriend or girlfriend   ☐ Grandfather

☐ My boyfriend or girlfriend   ☐ My husband or wife   ☐ Aunt

☐ Mother   ☐ My child/children   ☐ Uncle

☐ Stepmother   ☐ Older sister(s) or stepsister(s)   ☐ Cousin(s)

☐ Female legal guardian   ☐ Older brother(s) or stepbrother(s)   ☐ Someone else's child/children

☐ Father   ☐ Younger brother(s) or stepbrother(s)   ☐ I live with a foster family

☐ Stepfather   ☐ Younger sister(s) or stepsister(s)   ☐ I prefer not to answer

☐ Male legal guardian   ☐ Grandmother   ☐ Other

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

How many adults (over 21) live with you?

Of those adults (over 21) who live with you, how many work at a job for pay?

Native Language and Legal Guardian

What language is USUALLY spoken in your home? (Check only one)

○ English

○ Spanish

○ I prefer not to answer

○ Other

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

Who do you live with most of the time? (Check all that apply)

☐ Live alone	☐ Parent's boyfriend or girlfriend	☐ Grandfather
☐ My boyfriend or girlfriend	☐ My husband or wife	☐ Aunt
☐ Mother	☐ My child/children	☐ Uncle
☐ Stepmother	☐ Older sister(s) or stepsister(s)	☐ Cousin(s)
☐ Female legal guardian	☐ Older brother(s) or stepbrother(s)	☐ Someone else's child/children
☐ Father	☐ Younger brother(s) or stepbrother(s)	☐ I live with a foster family
☐ Stepfather	☐ Younger sister(s) or stepsister(s)	☐ I prefer not to answer
☐ Male legal guardian	☐ Grandmother	☐ Other

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

How many adults (over 21) live with you?

Of those adults (over 21) who live with you, how many work at a job for pay?

Native Language and Legal Guardian

What language is USUALLY spoken in your home? (Check only one)

○ English

○ Spanish

○ I prefer not to answer

○ Other

If you answered "Other" above, please specify:

2010 Goodwill Youth Participants Survey

What is the highest grade of school or year of college your legal guardian completed?

- ○ Less than high school (Grade 11 or less)
- ○ High school diploma (including GED)
- ○ Some college
- ○ Associate degree (2 years) or specialized technical training
- ○ 4-year college or university (Bachelor's degree)
- ○ Some graduate training
- ○ Graduate or professional degree
- ○ Don't know
- ○ I prefer not to answer

Legal Background

These questions are about your legal background and other areas of your life.

We are asking you this information because we want to learn about different areas of youth's lives. Having a more complete picture of the youth in our community will help us create the right programs for them.

Your answers to all questions will be anonymous. This survey is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions you don't want to answer

Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor?
A misdemeanor is a crime that usually involves less than a year of jail time, if any at all.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ I prefer not to answer

Have you ever been convicted of a felony?
A felony is a more serious crime that usually involves a year or more of jail time.

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ I prefer not to answer

Thank You!

Thank you for helping us with the survey.

Please click "done" to submit your answers and close out the browser.

Appendix K
YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL FOCUS GROUP

This focus group was conducted with members of Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmonts' Youth Advisory Council to ascertain their views on the Youth Job Connection (YJC) program. Questions covered what they liked about the program and where they saw need for improvement. For most of the discussion, the participant group consisted of three young women who are involved in the Youth Job Connection program and are on the first Youth Advisory Council. The discussion took place at Goodwill headquarters.

THEMES

Goodwill provides a valuable service

One message this focus group made clear is that the Goodwill program *is* serving some of the less disadvantaged youth and is serving them well. As hand-picked members of the inaugural Youth Advisory Council, these three participants are in all probability more responsible and engaged youth than the typical Youth Job Connection participant. The barriers they face resemble the average teenager rather than those of the at-risk youth targeted by this program. They are not at-risk of dropping out of school but instead already have specific career aspirations and are working hard in school to make those dreams a reality. Their major concerns are about getting into college and applying for scholarships to pay for it rather than taking care of children or escaping a gang.

Yet, even though these participants might be higher achievers than the average YJC participant, they still value their experience with the program. On multiple occasions, they expressed their gratitude for the program and said without the program, they would not have a job. They are working more to earn spending money than to support their family or to become reengaged in society after dropping out of school. Although their current jobs will not directly move them toward their career goals, these participants talked about their joy upon receiving that first paycheck and said that having any job was teaching them skills that would help them down the road.

Goodwill should focus on improving existing services

What became clear over the course of the discussion was that the participants placed greater importance on improving the program's existing services than adding new services, a sentiment expressed in the staff focus group as well. The youth participants seemed to have a clear idea of what they saw as Goodwill's niche and expressed concern when the possibility of expanding the program's scope was raised. When asked whether they thought Goodwill should offer services like tutoring, counseling, or college guidance, the participants resoundingly responded "no". These services were already being offered by the school system and participants were concerned that if Goodwill offered these services; they would probably not be well-used. The participants did, however, say they would like to see Goodwill expand in one area—*locations*. They recommended adding more locations around Charlotte, beginning with the North Tryon area.

In terms of improvements to the existing services, the participants suggested a number of changes to make the program better fit the needs of teens. Areas the participants talked about most were classes and the need to make these more interactive and less like school. They also made several suggestions as to how to advertise the program more effectively by utilizing job-search websites and collaborating with the school system.

THEIR YOUTH JOB CONNECTION EXPERIENCE

The discussion began with how the participants got involved in the program. All participants said they heard about the program through individuals (a teacher, someone at church, or a Goodwill staff member) who told them or their parents about it. Upon hearing about the program, they wanted to participate because they wanted to find a job and felt the program could help. They all found the application process quite easy and were quickly accepted into the program.

All participants spoke positively about their experience in the Youth Job Connection program. They currently have jobs which they received through the program. They overwhelmingly agreed they would not have a job at all if it weren't for the help they received through this program. Although quick to acknowledge that these jobs will not likely help them directly in achieving their specific career goals of microbiologist, second-grade teacher, and social worker, they were confident that they will benefit from the more general skills they learned through the program and their jobs. They described how having a job has helped them overcome their shyness, made them more responsible, and taught them how to handle challenging people and situations. They also remarked that having the Youth Job Connection program on their resumé will probably help them get future jobs because it will show employers that they were dedicated to finding a job as soon as they were legally eligible to work.

PROGRAM STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Overall, the participants had extremely positive things to say about the program and could easily list strengths, while articulating specific weaknesses was more difficult. To elicit more specific responses, participants were asked about three particular aspects of the program: the staff, employers, and classes.

Staff

The staff emerged as one of the primary strengths of the YJC program. The participants described them as very welcoming, energetic individuals who clearly wanted to help youth get jobs. The participants felt the staff made it as easy as possible for youth to obtain appropriate employment. Staff found jobs to match the youth's strengths, put in a good word with employers, wrote letters of recommendation, and provided multiple applications. However, they still made it clear that the youth would have to participate in the process as well. The participants also related how persistent the staff had been in calling youth and making sure they were staying on track, a feature that they appreciated because they realized, as teenagers, they often forget about things they need to follow-up on.

Employers

The participants were also pleased with their employers, jobs and coworkers. Although one participant felt her coworkers, who were quite a bit older, were skeptical of her at first, they quickly

warmed up to her. Another participant described how her coworkers, also older than her, had become her friends and have been great sources for life lessons. This participant also commented how her employer, a local grocery store, seems to have a very positive relationship with Goodwill and will email Goodwill whenever a job opens.

Classes

The classes are one area the participants felt could use some improvement. They thought the first customer service class, in particular, should be revisited. They discussed how the PowerPoints and video made it seem just like school (the last thing they want right after they get out of school for the day) and suggested making it much more interactive instead. They thought making this class more fun and lively was doubly important because, as the first class of the program, it could help retain participants by quickly engaging them. The participants used the financial training class as an example of one that uses activities well, by having youth practice using a cash register and playing some relevant games.

They also suggested that the customer service training should be separate from the orientation, and expanded, while the job readiness class should be scaled back. They would like to see some type of role-playing exercises included in the customer service training which would allow youth to experiment with different approaches in dealing with difficult customers. They also felt that a class on appropriate dress and behavior for the workplace is needed and that mock interviews would be helpful in preparing youth for their job search.

The Goodwill Name

An interesting insight the participants made about the program was the associations that come with the name "Goodwill" and how that impacted the image of the program. Participants described how people often equated the program with Goodwill stores. Adding to the confusion is the negative image the participants said many teens have of Goodwill stores as "the place where poor people shop." One participant related that a friend had asked if she received free clothes through the Youth Job Connection program since it is part of Goodwill. These perceptions, however, seemed more of an annoyance to the participants than a real concern. One participant even said she didn't care what other people thought about the program because she was doing it for herself.

YOUTH PROGRAMS IN GENERAL

None of the participants were involved with any other youth employment programs and neither were any of their friends. One participant knew of Urban League, but that was the only other employment program any of them could name. One of the young women made the comment that she is loyal to Goodwill, and to go to another program would be a betrayal.

All three participants, however, were involved in multiple activities that could be broadly considered youth programs, including sports, church activities, community service, and several others. When asked what qualities make a good youth program, participants listed an abundance of activities, enthusiastic leaders, and being able to help people.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS

As the participants were getting ready to leave, they made a few final suggestions. One was that Goodwill should work more closely with the school system to get the word out about the Youth Job Connection. Apparently this was done at the very beginning of the program but has not been continued, and the participants thought it should. Finally, participants suggested that Goodwill put an ad or two on job-search websites such as monster.com and snagajob.com to widen their reach and increase awareness of the program.

QUESTIONS ASKED

1. How did you hear about the Goodwill program?
   a. What made you decide to enroll?
   b. Was it easy to get into the program or hard? Why?

2. Describe what you like and don't like about the Goodwill program?
   a. How do you feel about the staff?
   b. How do you feel about the classes
   c. How do you feel about the employers?

3. Is there a service that Goodwill provides that you want more of?

4. Were you able to get a job through Goodwill?
   a. How is your job working out for you?

5. Have you been involved with other programs that you like or worked out well for you?
   a. What are they, and how did they help you?

6. When you think about your future, what do you see yourself doing for a job?
   a. Do you have a career goal?
   b. If so, what is it, and what led you to think about it?

7. What are some things in your life that make it hard or difficult to get the job you want?

8. What are some things people could do for you to help you get that job?

9. If Goodwill helped teens in ways other than just helping them find a job, what types of services would you suggest?

10. Would you want Goodwill in more places (like schools, neighborhoods, churches, etc) or are things good the way they are?

11. Are you interested in keeping touch with the folks at Goodwill once you graduate?
    a. What's the best way for them to keep in touch with you?

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Appendix L

YOUTH JOB CONNECTION PARTICIPANTS FOCUS GROUP

The purpose of this focus group was to get feedback on Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont's Youth Job Connection (YJC) program from participants and determine any additional services youth need from either Goodwill or other organizations in the community. The discussion took place at Goodwill headquarters and included 8 participants (5 girls and 3 boys). While the youngest participant was in the 8th grade, most were in the middle of high school and two were about to graduate. Nearly all of the participants had finished the required 6 classes in the program.

THEMES

The YJC program is focused on getting youth into jobs of any kind, usually typical teen jobs (fast food, recreation, and similar jobs), and teaching youth the basics needed for obtaining these jobs. Youth are generally   not terribly excited about these types of jobs and would much rather get jobs that will interest them and take classes that directly relate to their career of choice. Although most of the participants in this focus group realized that it is probably not Goodwill's responsibility to offer a class relating to every career interest, they were the most excited and engaged in the discussion when talking about their career aspirations.

THEIR YJC EXPERIENCE

These participants heard about the Goodwill program in several ways: the newspaper's job section, the local TV news, a school job fair, and individual connections to Goodwill staff. They all found it easy to apply and get accepted into the program.

Staff

Not a single participant had a negative thing to say about the program staff and most had positive comments. They described the staff as "nice people" who clearly enjoy their jobs at Goodwill and care about helping the youth who come through the program. Several youth spoke about their specific career development counselor and how they had procured job leads or interviews.

Classes

The participants expressed mixed feelings about the classes. Some thought the classes (the resumé writing course in particular) were boring, too long, and too much like school. As one participant put it, "After you get out of school, you want a break, not another long class." A few other participants, however, felt that if the length of class time were cut, youth would be losing out on valuable information. Nearly everyone agreed that having shorter classes more often would be a good solution.

Employers

Only two participants had actually gotten jobs through the program, so it was difficult for many of the participants to say much about the employers. Of the two participants with jobs, both had mostly positive things to say about the employers. One participant said she loved her job and coworkers but that when she was interviewed, she felt like the person interviewing her did not expect much from her but was pleasantly surprised as the interview went on.

BARRIERS

Transportation

Nearly all of the participants reported that transportation was the number one barrier to getting the job they wanted. Without a car of their own, or even a driver's license in many cases, these participants are completely reliant upon their parents for transportation. Although one participant said she rides the bus, several other participants said they did not know how to navigate the bus system, and one said she refused to ride the bus. Having to rely on their parents to drive them is a great concern for these teens. Several even said they would not be able to take a particular job because their parents would not be able to get them there.

Age

Several of the younger participants commented that age was a barrier for them because some employers do not hire people under 18 years of age.

Motivation

One participant thought that he had not gotten a job yet because he was not motivated and was not looking hard enough. When asked how this barrier could be overcome, another participant commented that going after jobs that she really wants and is interested in would make her try harder than just going after any job she could get.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Transportation assistance

One idea nearly all participants expressed support for was the addition of some sort of assistance with transportation. Although the initial reaction to the suggestion of a ride service to and from jobsites was positive, participants ended up agreeing that transportation should probably not be Goodwill's responsibility. Instead, everyone agreed that holding a brief tutorial on riding the bus would be a worthwhile addition.

Additional classes

In contrast, there was great disagreement about the need for additional classes. Many of the participants suggested adding classes specific to their individual career interests (cooking classes, music classes, fashion design classes, etc). Several other participants, however, felt that Goodwill should not be teaching specific career interests classes.

Hang out spot

When asked how Goodwill could help teens in ways other than just finding work, one participant suggested that Goodwill be a place for teens to go and hang out on the weekends. Other participants added there was often no place to go other than the movies or the mall, and that having a place where they could hang out and play games, without spending a lot of money, would be nice.

More opportunities for diversity

When asked about things Goodwill could improve upon, one participant suggested an increase in the diversity of participants, and an enlightening discussion ensued. Many participants live in a mostly African American environment; they live in predominantly black neighborhoods and go to predominantly black schools and churches. One participant even made the comment that she could go for days without interacting with a white person. The YJC program is no exception, with most of their fellow participants being black. The participants know that the workplaces they have been trying to prepare for with this program are filled with people of many racial and ethnic backgrounds, and they worry that the lack of diversity in the program is not preparing them well for this aspect of employment.

Additional locations

Most participants were fine with the current program location but also expressed support for additional locations closer to where they live. One participant suggested adding office locations in the struggling rural areas surrounding Charlotte.

QUESTIONS ASKSED

1. How did you hear about the Goodwill program?
   a. What made you decide to enroll?
   b. Was it easy to get into the program or hard? Why?

2. Describe what you like and don't like about the Goodwill program?
   a. How do you feel about the staff?
   b. How do you feel about the classes
   c. How do you feel about the employers?

3. Is there a service that Goodwill provides that you want more of?

4. If Goodwill helped teens in ways other than just helping them find a job, what types of services would you suggest?

5. Were you able to get a job through Goodwill?
   a. How is your job working out for you?

6. Have you been involved with other programs that you like or worked out well for you?
   a. What are they, and how did they help you?

7. Are you still in high school?

8. If you left school before graduating, why did you leave?
   a. Did you seek help or was help offered before you left?

9. If you left school, have you reconnected with another school, education or training program since then?

10. When you think about your future, what do you see yourself doing for a job?
    a. Do you have a career goal?
    b. If so, what is it, and what led you to think about it?

11. What are some things in your life that make it hard or difficult to get the job you want?

12. What are some things people could do for you to help you get that job?

13. Would you want Goodwill in more places (like schools, neighborhoods, churches, etc) or are things good the way they are?

14. Are you interested in keeping touch with the folks at Goodwill once you graduate?
    a. What's the best way for them to keep in touch with you?

Appendix M
YOUTH NOT INVOLVED IN YJC FOCUS GROUP

The participants for this focus group were recruited through the Helping Empower Local People (H.E.L.P.) organization, a network of churches in the northern part of Mecklenburg County. The participants included seven youth, ranging in age from 11 to 18. The discussion took place at the United Presbyterian Church in Davidson, NC.

Employment and Training

Two of the participants, both 18 years old, reported having jobs. One worked at a local fast food restaurant, and the other was currently a cheerleading instructor but had also worked in the fast food business.

Some of the participants reported receiving some résumé help in school, especially those who had taken business or marketing classes, but they readily acknowledged that the school system does not provide much training in terms of how to find a job. None of these participants had participated in any formal employment training. The closest thing any participant had experienced was a babysitting class. When asked if they thought such training would help them, the response was mixed. The two currently employed participants remarked that they received all of the training they needed on the job. A number of participants even seemed baffled that anyone would need to be taught how to look for and get a job. One of the younger participants, however, felt that the résumé help she received in school would help her find a job in the future and seemed to think further training would be beneficial.

Barriers to Employment

For several of the participants, age emerged as the primary barrier preventing them from getting a job. At 13, 14, and 15, most employers consider them too young to hire. Even though these participants were too young for most formal jobs, they discussed participating in more informal jobs like babysitting and pet sitting.

Transportation was also acknowledged as a barrier to employment for many people but not as much for the participants themselves. The two participants that currently had jobs had cars of their own or access to a family car, so transportation to work was not an issue. Another participant described how her mom drove her sister to and from her job at Birkdale Mall in Huntersville. One participant, however, remarked that her parents would not be able to do this for her, so she is consciously looking for work within walking distance of her home.

Impression of Goodwill

All participants were familiar with the name "Goodwill", but none had heard of the Youth Job Connection. The participants echoed some of the same opinions expressed by the YJC participants in earlier focus groups: that the name "Goodwill" brought to mind donating unwanted goods and/or

buying used items for little money (in short, Goodwill stores). They were surprised to hear that Goodwill had another side—the employment services.

Upon discovering that none of the participants had heard of Youth Job Connection, the moderator described the program and asked the participants if this would be something they would be interested in. They did seem interested and asked many questions about the program. However, once they learned that it was only offered at the Freedom Drive location, it was clear that they no longer considered participation in the program as a real option.

Suggestions for YJC

Like the YJC participants, those in this focus group expressed the desire for Youth Job Connection classes and services to be offered in more locations. Given that most of these youth live near Davidson, the Freedom Drive location is particularly out of the way for them. Because the classes start shortly after the school day ends, these youth would not be able to make it to the program on time, given the distance and traffic conditions during the afternoon rush. To remedy this situation, the participants suggested offering YJC classes at one or more of the CPCC campuses or even at high schools during the summer when school is not in session. Another suggestion was to offer the classes online.

Given their lack of knowledge of YJC before the focus group, the participants thought Goodwill should do more to advertise the program, especially in schools. They suggested using flyers, school newspapers, and even the morning announcements to get the word out.

QUESTIONS ASKED

1. Are you still in high school?

2. What are some things in your life that make it hard or difficult to get the job you want?

3. What are some things people could do for you to help you get that job?

4. How does transportation factor into your plans to get a job?

5. Have you ever been in a specific program to help you get a job? If so, what types of things did you do? Training? What type? Job referrals?

6. Have you ever heard of Youth Job Connection?

7. Have you ever heard of Goodwill? What do you think of when you think about Goodwill?

8. What are one or two things the community could do for you regarding employment?

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Appendix N

PARENTS OF YJC PARTICIPANTS FOCUS GROUP

A focus group was arranged to gather input from parents of youth currently involved in Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont's Youth Job Connection (YJC) program. Parents were asked questions regarding their experience and their children's experience with the program to-date. This discussion took place at Goodwill headquarters and included eight participants.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Overall, parents were appreciative that a program designed to help their children enter the workforce exists. They understood the benefits that their children would receive from the program, such as skills in résumé building and job interviews. Parents also indicated that their children had learned things from the program that they may not typically learn from their school, such as customer-service skills and basic life skills (e.g. balancing a check book).

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROGRAM AND YOUR CHILD

The discussion began with parents introducing themselves to the group and sharing how they heard about the program. In general, parents indicated that they learned about the program accidentally through the media such as radio, TV and newspaper. One parent learned about the program from a career fair at a local high school. Since the program is relatively new, it is not surprising that none of the parents stated that they had learned about the program by word-of-mouth. As more parents and youth become aware of this program through involvement with Goodwill, the prevalence of passing on information about the youth program by word-of-mouth should increase over time.

Upon hearing about the program, parents said that this was a good opportunity for their children to learn about finding a job, and thus they became involved with program. Parents mentioned that their children benefitted from the program by learning how to create résumés and by learning how difficult it is to get a job at a young age. When asked about the application process, parents reported that the process was easy, well-organized, and had a quick turn-around for their children to be accepted into the program. Overall, parents found the online application process to be convenient and accessible.

When asked if their child was still in (high) school, the majority of parents indicated that their children were in school—with one exception, a daughter that had recently graduated from high school. Thus, questions related to children who left school before graduating and being reconnected with another school or training program did not apply to this particular focus group's participants.

PROGRAM STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Parents were asked to describe what they liked and did not like about the youth program. Overall, parents had many positive things to say about the youth program and Goodwill as an organization in general. The most reoccurring positive comment was regarding the friendliness and great customer-

service from the Goodwill staff. "Selling the Image" of Goodwill, was a critical area parents identified as needing improvement—particularly since many youth are more familiar with the retail store aspect of Goodwill.

To elicit more specific responses, questions about two aspects of the program were asked: *classes and employers*.

Classes

Parents had only positive things to say about the classes offered to youth in the program, particularly the broad curriculum, and did not offer any negative comments. One suggestion that came up in the discussion about classes was to provide more locations. Parents understood that since the program was new, only one Goodwill location provided classes for this program. They suggested providing classes at different locations in the future. Class location may also help another concern that parents raised: *time*. One parent articulated her concern that afternoon classes might be tight for some students, particularly due to extra activities and traffic.

Employers

The question pertaining to how parents feel about the employers was not applicable to this particular focus group because their children were new to the program and had not had prior work experience. The only exception was for one parent whose daughter had worked last summer, but that employer was Goodwill. When asked about her daughter's experience with working at Goodwill, the parent said her daughter loved the experience. Furthermore, parents were asked if their children had been involved with other programs that helped them find a job. The majority of parents responded that their children were not involved with other programs. The primary reason for this was due to the age of their children (mostly 14 years old).

BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

When parents were asked to list aspects that made it difficult for their children to get the job they want, the most common response was the age factor. Prospective employers may deem their children too young and inexperienced to be considered for hire. This barrier to employment is related to another mentioned by parents: *lack of work experience*. Parents indicated that very few employers hire those who are under 16 years old. This is particularly problematic for youth who are just entering the workforce when most employers look for experience as a criterion for hiring. The primary area that parents would like Goodwill to assist their children with would be to increase job availability. They suggested that this be accomplished by providing more job positions for youth within Goodwill to gain first-hand work experience. Another way to solve the age-experience dilemma is to create partnerships with local employers to preserve some positions for youth. However, given the current economic condition, these solutions may be difficult to implement as youth continue to compete for jobs with older workers.

Another barrier mentioned by parents was transportation. Even if their children find a job, some parents will be responsible for transporting youth to the jobsite, especially if their child is not of driving age. A challenge for Goodwill and youth program participants is to locate jobs that are accessible by public transportation.

Finally, parents expressed concern that their children could be exposed to the mass public at an early age. While not a barrier to employment per se, this parental concern has limited job opportunities for youth. Jobs that will require numerous face-to-face interactions and where their children will receive little supervision were particularly an issue for parents with 14 and 15 year olds. Parents indicated that jobs in an office setting and working for libraries or nonprofits would be ideal for young workers. Overall, parents indicated that they would prefer to have their children work in a professional environment (i.e. "white collar" jobs).

PARENTS' RECOMMENDATIONS

Parents were given the opportunity to provide suggestions on which services they would like to see increased. One suggestion was to provide assistance with job placement. This was particularly an issue for one parent who, when he first learned about the program from the media, thought the program was about job placement rather than preparing youth to enter the workforce (i.e. job connection). Although job placement was available last summer, the limited availability of jobs for youth was a big concern for parents. As mentioned above, parents suggested partnering with local employers to reserve a number of positions for youth in order to ensure job availability.

A suggestion from one parent was for Goodwill to offer periodic sessions for parents on how to facilitate their child's job search (i.e. train parents to help). These sessions would be a good opportunity for Goodwill to help ensure that parents are supportive of their children's progress with the program. The group also discussed that many youth today feel entitled and less motivated to work than previous generations. So these parent-focused sessions could help parents to instill in their children how to be motivated when it comes to job searching.

In terms of services that are not related to finding a job, parents were receptive to services that help youth with school work, and services that provide after-school activities and counseling. One parent further stated that Goodwill has the opportunity to provide an environment for youth to open up about issues they might be facing in a group therapy setting, particularly if there are issues they do not feel comfortable discussing with their parents or with their social networks at school.

Given the current economic condition, a primary concern for parents was financial literacy. Parents recommended that Goodwill provide more education on personal finance to youth. Financial terms such as credit score and annual percentage rate (APR) are terms that parents feel youth should know more about so they can make wiser spending decisions. One parent indicated that teaching financial literacy to youth is a growing trend in the schools. Goodwill has the opportunity to complement these lessons by emphasizing that some employers conduct credit history checks as part of their hiring process, particularly jobs in finance.

PARENTS' CONNECTION WITH GOODWILL

A group of specific questions were posed to parents to gather their input on their own experience with the program as a parent of a youth participant. Parents were asked if there are things that Goodwill could do better to reach out and connect to them as a parent. Overall, parents mentioned that Goodwill does a good job connecting parents to Goodwill (for example, by inviting the parents to their children's classes). One parent even indicated that she has had such a good experience with Goodwill that she recently volunteered to be part of the mentoring program. This parent further noted that she wanted to set an example for her children by volunteering at Goodwill. Another

parent said that Goodwill does a great job in restating the same values or lessons that she teaches her children at home. Moreover, parents indicated that this focus group provided a good opportunity to connect parents to Goodwill.

Overall, parents who participated in this focus group have limited experience with Goodwill. Only one had a previous volunteering experience with the organization, but several had donated to Goodwill stores. Based on discussions with this focus group, Goodwill has room for improvement on how they communicate their services to the public. One parent mentioned that there needs to be more advertising about Goodwill programs like they have for store donations. This is especially the case for one parent who indicated that she was not sure what Goodwill had to offer (in addition to the youth program and retail stores).

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this focus group was to gather information about youth's experience with the program from a parent's perspective. Given that the program is relatively new, this particular group of focus group participants had no children employed through Goodwill. Thus, parents were not able to provide information about employers that hired their children. Nevertheless, parents expressed gratitude that an organization such as Goodwill exists to provide assistance with job preparedness for their children. However, there might be some unrealistic expectations from parents such as job preference for white-collar jobs.

Overall, parents expressed gratitude for the program. They believed that it provided their children with first-hand experience in job searching in today's job market. Additionally, it teaches their children other skills such as time management, customer-service, professionalism, financial literacy, and basic life skills. Perhaps the biggest challenge for the success of the program is job placement. Not only will youth participants compete with older workers for jobs traditionally occupied by a younger inexperienced workforce, but they will also face the challenges of job availability in today's job market. Finally, parents in this focus group are particularly supportive of their children's involvement in the program. However, this may not be true of all youth who participate in the program. Thus, a challenge for Goodwill is determining when to provide assistance and resources to help parents become more involved and to be more supportive of their children's success in the program.

QUESTIONS ASKED

Questions about the program and your child

1. How did you hear about the Goodwill program?
   a. Was it easy for your child to get into the program or hard? Why?

2. Describe what you like and don't like about the Goodwill program?
   a. How do you feel about the classes
   b. How do you feel about the employers?

3. Is there a service that Goodwill provides that you want more of?

4. If Goodwill helped teens in ways other than just helping them find a job, what types of services would you suggest?

5. Was your child able to get a job through Goodwill?
   a. How is your job working out for them?

6. Has your child been involved with other programs that worked out well?
   a. What are they, and how did they help?

7. Is your child still in high school?

8. If your child left school before graduating, why did they leave?
   a. Did they seek help or was help offered before they left?

9. If your child left school, have they reconnected with another school, education or training program since then?

10. What are some things in your child's life that make it hard or difficult to get the job they want?
    a. What are some things people could do for your child to help them get that job?

Questions about your experience with the program as a parent

11. How do you feel about the staff?
    a. Are there things they are doing well to connect to you as a parent?
    b. Are there things they could improve to connect to you as a parent?

12. Are there other Goodwill services/programs you would like to know more about for yourself?

13. As a non-profit organization, Goodwill funds its programs through revenue from Goodwill stores, grants, and donations from groups and individuals in the community. If you like the programs and services Goodwill provides, have you thought about ways you might give back to Goodwill?

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Appendix O
GOODWILL YOUTH SERVICES STAFF FOCUS GROUP

The goal of this focus group was to gather information on the strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities of the Goodwill Youth Job Connection (YJC) program. Although initially guided by a pre-determined series of ten questions, the moderator allowed the conversation to flow and encouraged expansion on some topics with follow-up questions. The participants included six Goodwill staff members of varying ages and levels of experience in the non-profit sector, all of whom are involved in the operation of this program.

Overall, the participants were eager to offer their thoughts and opinions. Because this program is quite new, they viewed this focus group as an important opportunity to step back from their daily involvement in the operation of the program and critically assess where the program currently stood, where they would like it to be in the future, and how they will achieve that vision.

THEMES

Quality of service is being compromised by quantity

Participants brought this issue up repeatedly.   When asked about the most frustrating part of the job, several participants mentioned the overwhelming volume of applicants.

This issue surfaced again in the discussion of strengths and weaknesses of the program. Although the sheer volume of youth served by the program was pointed out as one of its strengths, many felt that it was also compromising the quality of services being provided. Participants also felt that the one-on-one job search sessions offered to youth once they have completed the coursework are a distinct strong point of the program. However, since the one-on-one sessions are time consuming and staff members are in short supply, the number of these sessions they can hold is limited.

This issue seemed to be one of the central dilemmas of this program, and probably of most human services programs. The staff would like to help as many youth as possible, but at the same time, they need to concentrate their limited resources on doing a few things really well. It essentially becomes a question of providing quantity or quality service. Feedback from the participants in this focus group suggested the Youth Job Connection has achieved a sufficient quantity of services, but now it needs to scale that back and improve the quality.

Separating suitable youth from those who are merely eligible

Through their involvement in the program, the staff have come to realize that some youth in the program are just not ready to have a job. These youth are pushed into the program by their parents and often have bad attitudes, are disrespectful to staff and volunteers, and are generally not motivated to improve the outlook of their future.   In this example, these youth expect to be handed a job by merely walking through the door and are not willing to do their share of work.   Other applicants are mentally or physically disabled or are so far behind that they would require significant extra attention to make it through the classes.   The staff expressed frustration at their inability to

meet the needs of all youth that come through their door but also realize that serving these individuals takes time and resources away from those participants who are ready for a job and are motivated to get one. With limited resources, any additional attention given to youth who are not suitable for the program comes at the expense of those who are.

To address this problem, the participants concluded that it is not their job to make all youth suitable for employment. Instead, they think the program should serve only those youth who are ready and motivated to participate in the program, and those who are not should be referred elsewhere. To achieve this, the staff suggested improving the application and assessment process to determine which applicants are ready for the program.

Need for information on other service organizations in Charlotte

Several participants remarked that they are fairly new to Charlotte and do not have a good feel for the other organizations serving at-risk youth in the community. They expressed a desire for a resource containing all of the organizations and programs that serve at-risk youth in Charlotte as well as the opportunity to meet people from these organizations to network and begin to form connections with them. During the conversation, the need for referral programs and organizations was also mentioned, but participants could not pinpoint specific programs for referral. The creation of this resource should be a great opportunity for Goodwill to form some strategic partnerships.

STAFF EXPERIENCES

The participants were asked to describe their happiest day on the job and then the most frustrating. Many stated that it wasn't a whole day that stuck out in their mind but rather specific moments or individuals that were particularly memorable.

Happy moments

When the staff described their happiest moments on the job, most were a success story of one form or another. They took great pride and joy in seeing individual youth succeed over the course of the program—from youth who might be disconnected from society to youth who are well-prepared for the workplace when they leave the program. For several staff members, their happiest moments were finding out that a particular youth had achieved their ultimate goal, finding a job.

Another rewarding aspect of the job is the appreciation expressed by the youth. Several staff members related specific instances in which a particular youth went out of their way to thank the staff member; called the staff member before their own parents when they landed a job; or were so grateful to finally get a job, they cried when telling the staff member the news.

Frustrations

As mentioned earlier, staff were overwhelmed with applicants for the first few months of operation of the program. Not only were there hundreds of new applications to review each day, but many of them were incomplete or filled out incorrectly. Some youth assumed the application to the program was an actual job application. Others applied from other states, not understanding that the program was only held in Charlotte. Still others completed the application properly, but staff were unable to contact them due to a missing phone number or a number that had been disconnected. Although not as overwhelmed as they were at the start of the program, the staff would still like to see significant improvement in the application process.

Another frustration staff expressed was dealing with youth who do not want to be in the program, but their parents sign them up and make them participate. These youth have had a consistently negative attitude and have been disrespectful to the staff and other participants. This frustrated the staff because these youth are difficult to deal with, and they are taking vital resources away from the youth who really want to be there.

Another area of frustration for staff has been difficulties with some parents. These parents have unrealistic expectations of the program or use the program as an alternative childcare service. Some parents think that the program will be the "cure" for their child's problems or expect the program to take charge of the youth while the parents are busy. Other parents are barely involved in the process at all, not attending the orientation, neglecting to sign paperwork when their child brings it home, etc., which can hold back even the most motivated youth. One staff member suggested that parents might need their own orientation.

PROGRAM STRENGTHS

Customer service

The staff consider themselves to be a major strong point of the program. They feel that their own dedication to the program and its participants and their willingness to go the "extra mile" to serve youth needs are a definite strength of the program. They also spoke to (and displayed in their eager participation in the focus group) their openness to new ideas and suggestions for improvement. Throughout the conversation, staff showed a mutual commitment to the program and the youth in the community. They are willing and even eager to hear what parts of the program are and are not working, so they can make the appropriate changes to better serve youth.

Being part of the Goodwill Network

Another asset pointed out by staff is the position of the Youth Job Connection program within the broader Goodwill organization. One participant discussed how resources and connections of the organization have helped connect some youth in the program to jobs. This benefit is multiplied by above average communication within the individual program as well as between this program and other departments.

Volume of services provided

As stated earlier, the large number of applicants processed and youth served by the program is an aspect staff take pride in. They feel they have become highly efficient at getting large numbers of youth through the process.

One-on-one sessions

Once youth have completed the coursework and are ready to look for a job, they are connected with an individual staff member or volunteer who helps them with the job search process. The staff spoke highly of this aspect of the program and considered it to be one of the most effective tools to help these youth find work. Not only do the one-on-one sessions provide individualized help and attention, they also provide a contact person for the youth when they need help with the process or just someone with whom to confer. Essentially, this activity helps foster relationships between the youth and staff that they both value.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

Quality of services provided

As mentioned earlier, staff voiced concerns that the large volume of participants in the program is diminishing its quality. The staff made several suggestions about changes to improve the quality of the program. They also voiced the need to trim down their caseload. From the earlier discussion of daily frustrations, the desire to improve the application and assessment process seems like a logical first step in reigning in the number of participants. The staff also said that expanding their numbers would also help increase the quality of the program, as a larger staff would be able to devote more time and energy to helping participants.

Curriculum

Another weakness the staff cited was the program's curriculum; the material covered is taught over too short a time period, does not cover enough topics, and does not go deep enough into the topics it does cover. Many youth have developed behavior patterns that help them survive in their particular environment, like using offensive language or threats, and assume that this same behavior is acceptable in the workplace. They enter this program without knowing how to dress appropriately and behave correctly in the workplace and without the basic knowledge needed to find work. One staff member related an experience with a girl in the program who had no concept of sexual harassment and thought it was a good thing when her boss flirted with her. The staff expressed the desire to tweak the curriculum so that it is more intensive, takes place over a longer period of time, and focuses more attention than before on the basics of workplace etiquette and protocol. The staff said that there are also participants who successfully complete the curriculum but want to learn more. The staff expressed the desire to expand the curriculum for these individuals.

Goodwill's role as a safe haven for youth

Staff members were keenly aware that Goodwill is one of the few safe places where many youth in the program can escape the dangers of their communities. However, once they complete the program, that safe place disappears. The staff expressed the desire to be more open to youth in this capacity.

OPPORTUNITIES

Service Gaps

Staff acknowledged that there are several gaps in the current network of youth services and felt that their program could bridge a few of them.

Going back to the earlier discussion of youth who are suitable for the program versus those who are merely eligible, staff recognized that if the assessment process becomes more rigorous in an effort to weed out the ill-suited youth, they would be creating a gap by not serving that population. They expressed willingness to widen the parameters to include youth who are not completely suitable but probably could be with a little extra help. Those who do not fall within that range should be referred elsewhere.

As stated earlier, Goodwill is a safe haven for many youth in the program, but once they leave the program, it disappears. This is essentially a gap in service for those who have finished the program

or those who are not in the program but need a safe place to go. At least one staff member expressed the desire for Goodwill to become more open in this capacity and be able to be a safe place to which any youth could turn.

The staff also acknowledged a number of groups that are in need of services but that would be better served by other programs. This again tied into the discussion of eligibility and suitability. The staff wanted to narrow the target population of the program to those youth who are actually ready and motivated to participate. Staff indicated that those the program cannot reach at this point are youth with certain disabilities or those not emotionally ready to attempt the program. However, the staff could not pinpoint any particular programs to refer these individuals to, making it more difficult to turn them away. Partnerships are a clear opportunity here, but the staff first need a better understanding of other service providers in the community and what services they offer.

Professional Development

When asked whether additional training or professional development would help when faced with a difficult situation, an interesting discussion ensued. The general sentiment among the participants was that they appreciate and take advantage of professional development opportunities. However, no one could pinpoint a specific incident where additional training would have helped. Instead, several participants pointed their reliance on their coworkers or network of contacts at other organizations to help them navigate difficult situations.

CHALLENGES FACING THE PROGRAM

Poor performance of program participants on the job

When youth from this program are placed in a job, they are representatives of the program. Their performance is then a direct reflection of the program as well as the Goodwill organization as a whole. Therefore, if the youth are not doing well in their jobs or living up to their employers' expectations, the program will likely lose credibility among employers and the community. If an employer has one or several bad experiences with youth from this program, they are likely to stop participating. The fewer employers the program has, the fewer opportunities there are for participants. Staff indicated that a key component to the program's success and survival hinges on the performance quality of the youth who complete the program.

Too few quality volunteers

In addition to participating employers, the continued operation of this program relies heavily on the quantity and quality of volunteers. Since volunteers teach most of the courses, these volunteers need to be well-versed in the skills they are teaching and be able to pass their knowledge to the students in an understandable, engaging manner. If the program has difficulty obtaining enough volunteers, the program will not be able to offer as many courses or serve as many youth. If the volunteers are not well-versed in the curricula, or do not possess adequate teaching skills, the youth will not benefit from the classes.

Employers who are involved for the wrong reasons

The commitment of employers to helping youth is also an important consideration. This program needs employers who understand the challenges these youth face and realize that these individuals will probably need more understanding and flexibility than other employees but that this extra effort is

worth it because they are helping improve the futures of youth in the community. Employers who are participating only because they are benefiting from free labor, for example, are probably not going to be very flexible or understanding, and might be quick to fire youth after their first misstep.

Neglecting employer relationships

In addition to establishing relationships with quality employers, the staff spoke about the importance of maintaining and nurturing those relationships. As an essential part of this program, participating employers need to be thanked and contacted regularly, even if they do not have jobs to offer at that point in time. The staff recognized that there is a clear danger of taking participating employers for granted and that if they are ignored and feel unappreciated, they might stop participating, which would severely hurt the program.

Expanding too quickly

One final challenge the staff mentioned was expanding too quickly. As one staff member put it, "Goodwill has the infrastructure to grow as large as they want to grow in this community. Now the question is, should they?" As a fairly new program, the staff expressed the desire to improve their current activities and establish a niche rather than adding more. This is the classic choice that every program has to make: to try to do everything for everyone or do a few things for a certain group of people really well. The staff of the Youth Job Connection program recommended the latter.

QUESTIONS ASKED

1. Describe the happiest day you have experienced so far on the job.

2. Describe the most frustrating day you have experience so far on the job.

3. Describe the characteristics of the youth that Goodwill serves. What are their problems? What are their needs? What are their needs as it relates to finding employment?

4. When you think about your job and the clients you serve, what are the things that you do or this program does that work well? In answering this question, please describe the type of work you do.

5. When you think about your job and the clients you serve, what are the things that you do or this program does that fall short of your expectations? If you could honestly step back and reflect, what about your job or your program needs improving?

6. Do you feel like there are gaps in services for youth that Goodwill could provide? Try not to think about constraints, only the need for services.

7. Are there community partners that could fill the gap in services? Does Goodwill have a relationship with those partners?

8. Do you ever come across a problem with a client that you can't solve? Would additional training or professional development help with this issue?

9. From your position, what is the biggest threat or barrier to the success of your program? Is there something that could make your services necessary or undesirable?

10. From your position, what are some opportunities that Goodwill should maximize?

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Appendix P
DETAILED METHODOLOGY

SECONDARY DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

An important component of any needs assessment is developing a snapshot of the population in question. The Institute's research team collected and analyzed data from multiple secondary sources to describe the youth demographic and those at-risk of becoming disconnected in Mecklenburg County.

In addition, the Institute utilized data from the City of Charlotte's 2008 Neighborhood Quality of Life Study to map the at-risk youth populations in Mecklenburg County. Specifically, the number of teen births, juvenile arrests, and high school dropouts were mapped by neighborhood. These three variables were then summed to create composite disconnected youth value for each neighborhood. In addition, the location quotient method was employed to compare the relative concentration of disconnected youth in each neighborhood to that of the city at large. For each neighborhood, the disconnected youth value was divided into the youth population (0 to 18 years old) of the neighborhood to calculate the concentration of disconnected youth in that neighborhood. The same calculation (number of disconnected youth divided by youth population) was completed for the city of Charlotte. Finally, the resulting ratios were used to calculate the location quotient. For each neighborhood, the ratio of disconnected youth was divided by the ratio of disconnected youth in the city overall. These values were then mapped to identify spatial patterns in the relative concentrations of disconnected youth.

ONLINE SURVEYS

The Institute research team conducted a series of web-based surveys of various groups who are either involved in, or have the potential to be involved in, Goodwill's Youth Job Connection (YJC) program. The following groups were surveyed: youth, school professionals, and employers. Youth currently participating in YJC were surveyed. For employers, two subgroups were also surveyed separately: previous employers and potential employers. School professionals included members of Communities In Schools (CIS) and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS).

Given that the study is program-specific (focused on the YJC program), two sampling methods were employed: listed-sampling and convenience sampling. A convenience sample is a sample where survey respondents are selected by their availability to complete a survey, but respondents are still part of a targeted and narrowly-defined population. A listed sample was used to target specific groups (school professionals and employers) that were pre-defined to have experience and/or knowledge about youth and their employability. The following sections detail the sampling and surveying approaches employed for the various groups involved in this study.

Youth Survey Methodology

As an essential component of this assessment, the Institute conducted a web-based survey of youth 14–24 years in age who have participated in the YJC program. A letter describing the survey and a

corresponding consent form were distributed to youth 18 and over and the parents of youth under 18. All youth entering the YJC program during the survey period of February 23, 2010 through June 30, 2010 were given the opportunity to fill-out the Youth Participant Survey after their orientation session. Over 200 youth participants of the YJC program were surveyed.

School Professionals Survey Methodology

School professionals are in a unique position to provide support to at-risk youth. Students typically spend most of their time in school settings, and school professionals can provide unique perspectives on youth and their ability to complete the most important step in eventually entering the workforce—graduating from high school. This professional group is able to closely monitor student behavior and identify characteristics of at-risk youth, and they are often the individuals who can best identify the needs of students and help prevent youth from dropping out of school. For these reasons, the project team surveyed career development coordinators in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools System and members of Communities In Schools to ascertain what services are currently offered to at-risk youth at the school level, as well as to identify problems youth face as they seek to continue their education and/or find employment.

A listed-sample of career development coordinators from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools System and staff members of Communities In Schools was obtained from both respective organizations. Members from these two organizations were provided access to the survey via their email address. Out of 93 school professionals that were emailed a survey link, 38 responded resulting in a 41% response rate.

Survey of Employers

Two groups of employers were surveyed for this project: previous employers and potential employers. The first group ("previous employers") consisted of employers who previously participated in the Youth Job Connection program, in the form of hiring youth in this program for summer jobs. This group of employers was asked questions pertaining to their experience with the YJC program and the youth they employed from this program. A list of previous employers was obtained from Goodwill. The initial list contained 36 employers, and several attempts were made to contact each employer for their email address. The project team removed those who could not be reached or had no email address, as well as duplicate contacts and those who were not eligible to participate in the survey (either because the contact person was no longer employed at the organization that participated or the organization did not employ any youth from the program). After this process, 24 previous employers were provided a survey link and of those, six completed the survey, resulting in a 25% response rate.

To ascertain what firms typically look for when deciding to hire young workers, a second group of employers was surveyed. This group of employers consisted of firms in various industries, and the individuals surveyed mainly included human resource professionals, as well as business managers and executive directors. A web link to the survey was provided to a local employers' organization and the organization distributed the survey link via email to its members. The survey link was distributed to about 620 employers; after two weeks, the survey link was closed and 67 members had responded, resulting in an 11% response rate.

Cumulatively, 315 youth, employers, and school professionals were surveyed for this study. The table below displays the number of individuals who were provided a survey link and the number of respondents who completed the survey from each group.

Table P-1. Number of Survey Respondents

Target Group	Number of Potential Survey Participants	Number of Actual Survey Participants	Response Rate	Reminders
Youth Program Participants	Unknown	204	N/A	N/A
Participating Employers	24	6	25%	5/18/2010 (20)
Potential Employers	620	67	11%	N/A
School Professionals	93	38	41%	5/18/2010—CIS (53)

FOCUS GROUPS

To complement the findings from the online surveys, a series of focus groups was conducted by the Institute. The focus group methodology involves an organized discussion with a small group of individuals to gain shared insight on a topic. In this study, the technique was used to gather information about the needs, expectations, and attitudes of at-risk youth regarding their preparedness to enter the workforce. With the assistance of Goodwill, various groups of individuals were selected to participate in these focus groups. A focus group session was carried out for each of the following groups: YJC youth participants (including a separate focus group of youth on the Youth Advisory Council), parents of youth participants of the YJC program, youth participants from Helping Empower Local People (H.E.L.P.), youth service providers, and staff from Goodwill. The purpose of the focus groups was to get feedback from these various groups to identify any service needs that are currently not being met either by Goodwill or other organizations in the community. A total of 38 individuals participated in the focus groups. The listing below details how each focus group session was carried out.

Youth Participants Focus Group

Eight youth participants of the YJC program were selected by Goodwill staff to participate in this focus group. In addition, a separate focus group of three youth who were involved in the YJC program and who are also members of the first Youth Advisory Council was carried out. All ten members of the Youth Advisory Council were invited to participate in this focus group by Goodwill staff, but only three actually participated. In each focus group, the participants were asked about their experience with the program, particularly as it relates to the staff, the classes, and employers. Specific questions regarding their educational attainment and career aspirations were presented. Although the questions were structured, group participants were given the opportunity to raise issues or concerns at any time during the focus group session.

Youth Non-Participants Focus Group

The third and final focus group for youth included young people who had not participated in the YJC program. Helping Empower Local People (H.E.L.P.), a network of churches in northern Mecklenburg County, recruited youth to participate in this focus group through its member churches and youth groups. In the end, the group consisted of seven youth and was held at the United Presbyterian Church in Davidson. The participants in this focus group were asked about their need for employment services, barriers to employment they face, and their impressions of Goodwill. Like the other focus groups, the discussion was structured around a prescribed set of questions, but the discussion was allowed to flow freely.

Parents of Youth Participants Focus Group

One of the predictors for a successful transition from youth to adulthood is the presence of a supportive adult. To better understand the needs of YJC participants (and their family), the Institute conducted a focus group of their parents. Eight parents were selected by Goodwill staff to participate in this focus group. Parents were asked questions regarding their and their children's experience with the program to date. The project team wanted to know about the program's strengths and weaknesses, any barriers to employment that their children face, and any recommendations parents had for the program.

Goodwill Youth Services Staff Focus Group

The Institute conducted a focus group of Goodwill staff whose job responsibilities included being involved in the YJC program. Six YJC staff members were selected by Goodwill to participate in this focus group. The purpose of targeting this group was to gather information on the strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities of the program from an internal operational perspective. Although the conversation was initially guided by a pre-determined series of ten questions, participants were encouraged by the moderator to expand on some of their answers through follow-up questions.

Youth Service Provider Focus Group

Youth who are at-risk or disconnected have a range of interrelated needs, such assistance with completing their education, lack of access to mental/health resources, or living in an unstable home. To ascertain the various issues in providing services to disconnected and at-risk youth in Charlotte, the Institute research team conducted personal interviews with representatives from agencies that serve this population. Following the interviews, six individuals were called on again to participate in a focus group. Focus group participants were asked to discuss what they believe to be the fundamental causes of youth becoming disconnected as well as practical solutions that their agency can apply to alleviating the issue in our community.

Table P-2 shows the total number of service providers, youth, parents, and Goodwill staff who participated in focus groups for this study.

Table P-2. Number of Focus Group Participants

Target Group	Number of Focus Group Participants
Youth Program Participants	8
Youth Advisory Council, Youth Members	3
Youth Non-Program Participants	7
Parents of Youth Program Participants	8
Goodwill Staff	6
Youth Service Providers	6

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

Key informant interviews were used by the Institute as a tool to explore the issues and problems associated with the employability of youth ages 14–24 by speaking with individuals who may be particularly knowledgeable about this topic or whose work may impact local policies surrounding this issue. Two sets of informants were interviewed: individuals from youth service agencies and community leaders.

Youth Service Provider Interviews

Seventeen organizations were identified by Goodwill and the Institute as Youth Service Providers. Representatives from each of these organizations were contacted for an interview, and sixteen of the seventeen elected to participate. The interview questions covered multiple aspects of the agency's operation including mission, target population, programs, and budget, among many others.

Community Leader Interviews

Ten community leaders were selected by Goodwill and the Institute. These individuals included elected officials and business and civic leaders within the community. The interviews were semi-structured and conducted in a face to face setting which permitted an open discussion. However, a list of topics/questions that the project team wanted to cover in each interview was presented.

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Appendix Q
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