Summer Youth Employment Program Evaluation Report

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Department of Employment Services
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

ACRONYMS

AED	Academy of Educational Development
AYD	Advancing Youth Development
CBO	Community Based Organization
CCDC	Community College of the District of Columbia
CFSA	Children and Families Services Administration
DC	District of Columbia and Washington, DC
DCPS	District of Columbia Public Schools
DCPCS	District of Columbia Public Charter Schools
DME	Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education
DOES	District of Columbia Department of Employment Services
DOL	District of Columbia Department of Labor
DCPL	District of Columbia Public Libraries
DPR	District of Columbia Department of Recreation and Parks
IRB	Institutional Review Board
GWU	George Washington University
OSSE	Office of Stated Superintendent for Education
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPD	Metropolitan Police Department
MYLI	Mayor's Youth Leadership Institute
N/R	No Response
PCSB	Public Charter School Board
PYD	Positive Youth Development
SAS	Statistical Analysis System
SYEP	Summer Youth Employment Programs
WIC/YIC	Workforce Investment/Youth Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The District of Columbia (DC) Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) is a six week program through the Department of Employment Services (DOES) designed to provide eligible youth with enriching summer work experiences through placements in community-based, private, or government sectors. The program is open to youth who ages 14 to 21 years, who are DC residents and permitted to work in the United States. SYEP meets the needs of these youth range using a youth development framework promoting positive work experiences.

The goal of SYEP is to provide DC youth with meaningful professional experiences to increase employment related experiences and alleviate the potential for negative developmental outcomes. Through SYEP, youth participants have a structured and well-supervised opportunity to explore vocational interests, develop useful work habits and marketable skills, learn the value of earning money through gainful employment, and obtain educational enrichment.
This evaluation utilized quantitative and qualitative methods including surveys, focus groups, interview, and SYEP records. Key findings were given in four categories: characteristics of participants, characteristics of job placements and supervisors, youth and employer satisfaction, youth and employer job responsibility and support, and job readiness and work skills.

SYEP served about an equal number of males and females, with a majority in high school or below between the ages of 14 and 17 years. In addition, a majority of the participants came from Wards 7 and 8. It should also be noted that SYEP has a high retention rate. In addition, a majority of the organization sites that youth were employed and supervisors that oversaw the students were at were local non-profits and the District Agencies.

Posttest results revealed youth and employers were very satisfied with their participation in SYEP. Over two-thirds of the youth stated that they were very satisfied as did two-thirds of supervisors. In addition, over 95% of supervisors as well as over 95% of youth stated they wanted to participate in SYEP again next year. It should be noted over half the supervisors stated that they would not hire the same youth next year as this year, even though 75% of the supervisors reported having identified the youth they wanted to employ prior to the job starting. With regards to the application process, 89% of youth stated that the application process was easy and 57% of supervisors stated the Host Portal was easy to use. With regards to the payroll system, about half the supervisors stated they did not have problems with the payroll system with the remaining majority only stating that they sometimes had issues

In addition, 80% of the youth said they felt safe at their job. Furthermore, a majority of youth stated they would not have gotten in trouble if they had not participated in SYEP. It should be

noted that when asked what they would have done if they had not participated, many youth said they would have hung out with their friends, tried to find another job, or babysat.

A majority of youth felt prepared for their job with supervisors confirming this. However, supervisors did express dress code as a major challenge expressed by the supervisors. Also, a majority of the supervisors stated they had a clear understanding of their responsibilities before the start of SYEP and felt that they were given the information necessary to properly plan a high quality program. With regards to support, a majority of youth stated they were very satisfied with the support they received from their supervisors. Also, supervisors stated that their questions were answered in a timely manner by SYEP staff.

With regards to future orientation and job readiness and work skills, over half of youth felt that SYEP would help them later in life and youth reported having gained more of an understanding of career interests and qualifications for future careers. In addition, the work skills that youth stated and supervisors reported the youth gained were responsibility, reporting to work on time, and communication.

This evaluation was conducted through support from DOES, the DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation (CYITC) and George Washington University (GWU). Comments and questions are welcome and can be directed to the evaluator, Nisha Sachdev at nasachde@gwu.edu or the Associate Director of Youth Program at DOES, Gerren Price at gerren.price@dc.gov.

INTRODUCTION

Background of Youth Needs

The successful transition from youth to adulthood is not only critical to individual development but the well-being of society. The societal consequences of a well-educated citizenry include increased productivity, lower crime rates, and increased community service. Unfortunately, many issues plaguing youth in the United States--including poverty, sexual health, substance abuse, low academic achievement, and crime--hinder this successful transition. While adolescents often maintain high educational and occupational aspirations, the transition is often characterized by few institutional supports, lack of persistence in education, and a lack of guidance with respect to the combination of post secondary education, work, and family (Mortimer, Zimmer-Gembeck, Holmes & Shanahan, 2002).

In addition, in today's economy, making a successful transition into adulthood often requires not only finishing high school but also earning a post-secondary education or training credential and maintaining a job. Unfortunately, this is not achieved by many youth from the District of Columbia (DC) (Ross, 2011). In 2007, only 43% of DC youth graduated from high school within five years and only 29% of those students enrolled in post-secondary education within 18 months of graduation (Double the Numbers (DTN), 2006). Moreover, DC Public Schools' (DCPS) students have the fourth highest dropout rate in the nation. In fact, in 2003, 29% of DC's youth (ages 18 to 24 years) were not in school, not working, and had not attained a high school diploma (UA, 2010). This contributes to the fact that 67% of DC's youth cannot find viable employment (UA, 2010; Annie Casey Foundation (ACF), 2011).

Furthermore, when compared to other urban cities, DC youth have a lack of opportunities and resources and are threatened by higher rates of high school dropout, teenage pregnancy, violence, and substance abuse (Chaplin, 1999; UA, 2010). Sixty percent of youth live in single-parent households and over half of youth are in households earning below the living standard (200% of the federal poverty line) (ACF, 2010). In 2008, the teenage pregnancy rate in DC was 51 pregnancies per 1,000 girls ages 15 to 19 as compared to 41 per 1,000 nationally (ACF, 2011). Violence continues to be higher than the national average with DC having nine times more child murders than the national average (Finkelhor & Ormrod, 2010).

These statistics further show that poverty, educational inequalities, environmental threats, and lack of access to health care, which many low-income youth experience, might lead to more negative health and social outcomes (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2010). In 2009, about one in four of youth who were African American was considered disconnected from education and work (Ross, 2011). Also, low-income African American youth are faced with limited resources and generally have the poorest record of student academic success

(Thomas, 2000). In urban areas, effective out of school time programs can provide a positive environment to help decrease the negative outcomes by giving opportunities and resources. For example, youth who participate in at least one hour of activities per week are 49% less likely to use drugs and 37% less likely to become teen parents (National Recreation and Park Association, 2010). The need for these programs is also expressed by the DC community. At a Citizens Summit in 2010, DC residents asked "the District to offer more support for teenagers as they transition to adulthood" with the top three suggestions being to increase mentoring, vocational training, and life skills programs (UA, 2010).

Specifically, youth employment programs play an encouraging role in youth's lives by exposing them to work environments, teaching leadership, interpersonal and occupational skills, provide opportunities to explore careers and serving as a catalyst for a positive youth development (Ross, 2009). Current studies show that participation in these programs can have lasting academic, vocational and life benefits including increased high school graduation rates, greater employability skills, decreased drug use, and reduced teenage pregnancy rates (Flannery, Hussey & Thomas, 2009). Lastly, summer youth employment has been found to provide the greatest short term benefits to society (Mael, Morath & McLellan, 1997).

Significance of Youth Employment Programs

Without the necessary academic and employment skills, many urban youth such as those in DC will continue to achieve negative outcomes such as involvement in gangs, criminal activity, substance abuse, and early childbearing (Hastings, Tsoi & Harris, 2010). Employment programs exhibit potential to expose youths to supportive relationships, increasing self-worth, reducing criminal behavior, decreasing high school dropout rates, and decreasing teenage pregnancies. Also of importance is the need to diversify opportunities to better meet the needs and interests of an increasingly diverse population of young people (Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE), 2011). Employment experiences such as internships, summer jobs, and part-time jobs allow youth to explore their interests, while providing opportunities for learning skills and exposing them to real world workplace practice (Ross, 2011). Although, these experiences are noted, many youth face challenges in obtaining job experiences.

Post-World War II years included a booming economy where high school graduates had little trouble securing a job and the transition from adolescence to adulthood was typically smooth. Today however, radical changes in the job market, including the growing demand for post-secondary graduates and technology-based global economy, have sharply decreased opportunities making it more difficult for young adults to become economically self-sufficient (HGSE, 2011). This trend is posing a serious challenge on the United States as there are a

significant numbers of workers retiring over the next 10 years and there is a lack of prepared youth to meet the workplace demands (Casner-Lotto & Barrington, 2006).

During the late 1970's American attitudes toward youth employment started to shift from a positive to negative view when new research concluded that employment during high school tended to weaken youth commitment to their academic and other extracurricular opportunities (Whalen, DeCoursey & Skyles, 2003). However, more current research in the early 2000's revealed that youth jobs do in fact have more beneficial than negative outcomes such as the development of employability skills, increased maturity and confidence in communication with adults, and more motivated youth to aspire to seek jobs in their interests through education. Workplaces, it now appears, may be a unique developmental asset for youth and providing youth with job opportunities can have a very positive impact on future prospects for employment and earnings (Whalen et al, 2003; HGSE, 2011).

It should be noted that these benefits are often tied to amount of time worked. Studies have suggested that youth who work long hours might have conflicts with school and engage in more negative behaviors (Staff & Mortimer, 2010). Contrasting, youth who work a moderate number of hours are more academically engaged and perform better in school than if they were not working (Mortimer, 2003). It is important to distinguish the number of hours working when exploring current research.

Overall, employment, education, and training in job skills equip adolescents with the ability to secure jobs and assist them in becoming self-sufficient adults (Jekielek, Cochran & Hair, 2002). Research studies have also shown that young people who work are more likely to graduate, less likely to be involved with crime, less likely to become teenage parents, and more likely to achieve greater lifetime earnings (Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, 2011). Alternatively, low-income teenaged males who cannot find work are more likely to become connected with the law and females are more likely to become single mothers (HGSE, 2011).

Likewise, work experience benefits individual youth by proving them with opportunities that assist in the development of work readiness skills including social responsibility, communication, professionalism, and teamwork. In addition, it provides career exploration, financial benefits, education, work preparedness, and future employment. Lastly, exposure to work during adolescence assists in the growth of adult identities through opportunities for increased responsibility, financial independence, and exposure to adult roles and expectations. Employers also gain from work experiences and receive benefits such as increased productivity and opportunities to train future workers.

Career Exposure and Awareness

Youth may have limited aspirations for careers and fields of study because they may not have exposure to diverse options. Low-income parents and schools often lack the knowledge and resources to provide this exposure to their children and youth (Americas Promise, 2011). Although career guidance and counseling is a component of the traditional school system, it is often inadequate due to high ratios of students to counselors. Moreover, many counselors are trained in the area of mental health and do not have the expertise or training to provide high quality career guidance. The lack of adequate guidance often leads youth to pursue courses in which they are not engaged which may serve as a precursor for dropping out of schooling. Providing a visible connection between a program of study and tangible opportunities in the work world reduces the likelihood of this (HGSE, 2011). In addition, providing opportunities and career experiences to young people allows them to develop individualized career goals and pursue high school courses and post-secondary options that align with these goals.

Youth in low-income urban areas especially lack the information or the connections to help them determine and obtain the jobs they want (McClanahan, Sipe & Smith, 2004). It is important that they learn about different careers as it has been found that jobs that they find unchallenging in nature create negative attitudes toward work and acceptance of unethical practices (Mael et al, 1997). It is particularly important for youth to learn how to translate their personal interests and strengths as a tool to help guide their career choices and educational options (Whalen et al, 2003). Employment programs can inform youth about career and educational options and motivate them to see the connection between high school studies and work (Whalen et al, 2003).

Career Exploration

Likewise, youth are more likely to succeed in both school and the workplace when they are able to explore topics and acquire skills that are relevant to their interests, when they have supportive adults guiding them, and when they are given opportunities to be exposed to different careers (Lippman & Keith, 2009). Specifically with regards to urban youth, consistent exploration in professional work settings provides them not only with work experiences but also often with the opportunity to be exposed to new neighborhoods, diverse populations, and life skills such as managing a bank account (Whalen et al, 2003). Also, youth who work during their high school years develop strategies of time management that stay with them through their educational career (Staff et al, 2007). Employment programs can help better prepare youth for the world of work and provide unique learning opportunities to acquire these applied skills.

Financial and Social Benefits

Low-income African American and Hispanic youth are generally more susceptible to the consequences of economic fluctuations (Land, 2010). When the economy is doing well, usually

their well-being improves also. However, when the economy falls, they experience more hardships than their white counterparts (Land, 2010). Youth with limited work experience also face limited earnings later in life, perpetuating the cycle of poverty (Ross, 2011). For example, between 1979 and 2005, real hourly wages for college graduates rose by 22%, remained constant for high school graduates, and fell by 16% for high school dropouts (Mishel, Bernstein & Allegretto, 2005). These statistics are of particular importance to low-income youth as they often have lower rates of high school completion and college attendance.

Youth in urban neighborhoods often lack positive adult role models for employment as many of the working adults they know often earn low wages, may not have positive experiences to share, and possess only a few occupational skills (McClanahan et al, 2004; Allen, 2006). This may not only inhibit their awareness of careers but also make them complacent with engaging in low paying jobs. Also, parents of youth in poverty often lack the connections to help the youth obtain jobs and do not encourage their children to obtain employment (Allen, 2006).

Youth employment programs have been found to provide long term benefits such as higher annual earnings, greater likelihood of receiving fringe benefits, and higher status occupations. (Jekielek et al, 2003). Also, programs that have supervisors that assume the role of a natural mentor may help youth engage in positive health behaviors (Bauermeister, Zimmerman, Gee, Caldwell & Zue, 2009). Furthermore, it has been found that youth who earn their own money access social services such as medical care and money – all the more reason to adequately prepare low-income youth for successful transition into the workplace (Bauermeister et al, 2009).

Educational Benefits

Youth participation in out of school time activities including employment programs is predictive of academic success as measured through test scores, absenteeism, school dropout rates, homework completion and school grades, and course enrollment (Simpkins, 2003). Youth who have quality work experiences are also more likely to be inspired to stay in school, graduate, and form concrete goals (HGSE, 2011).

Between 2000 and 2015, about 85% of jobs will require education beyond high school (Casner-Lotto et al, 2006). Employment programs can promote positive academic attitudes and increase the likelihood that youth will take academic courses of interest (Jekielek et al, 2003). A majority of young people understand the necessity of a post-secondary degree and aspire to go to college, yet lack the knowledge and motivation to not only apply and enroll in college, but in some cases even to graduate high school. Since many low-income youth face the prospect of a difficult transition into the work or college world, practical work experiences can provide not only income benefits, but can also help them recognize why educational attainment is important,

increase their interactions with working adults, and expand their aspirations and achievable goals (McClanahan et al, 2004).

Work Preparedness

Work experience helps youth develop employability skills. A study by Greenberger & Steinberg (1986) found that working adolescents describe themselves as possessing qualities such as being dependable, punctual, and responsible more than nonworking adolescents (Greenberger et al, 1986). This reinforces the fact that college readiness alone does not equip young people with all of the skills and abilities they will need in the workplace or to successfully complete the transition from adolescence to adulthood (HGSE, 2011).

In addition, employers believe that youth are not equipped with the adequate skills needed to succeed in today's workforce (HGSE, 2011). According to a survey of several hundred employers, 80% rated professionalism and work ethic as the most important skills needed by entrants to succeed in today's workforce (Casner-Lotto et al, 2006). In addition, over 40% of the same employers responded that new entrants with a high school diploma are poorly prepared in these skills (Casner-Lotto et al, 2006). Furthermore, human resource executives interviewed emphasized the need for proper dress, strong interviewing and communication skills and an understanding of the job application process (Casner-Lotto et al, 2006). Youth employment programs are an excellent venue to prepare youth to enter the workforce.

Future Employment

Research also shows that the more teenagers work in one year, the more likely they are to work in the following year (Ross, 2011). Traditionally, adolescence is a period where youth are structured to engage in long-term academic preparation instead of activities that expose them to the adult world (Whalen et al, 2003). This causes youth to not be exposed to workplace norms and have unrealistic expectations about the work world (Whalen et al, 2003). Reducing the share of youth with low or no qualifications is a key to addressing the challenges facing youth in America (OECD, 2009). By providing experiences early on, youth are exposed to interests and areas that they may pursue in future employment.

Role of Employers

Work experience not only benefits young people but employers as well. Employers play an important role in preparing youth for successful transition into adulthood. Not only do they provide opportunities for work-linked learning but often also advising and training in relevant skills (Casner-Lotto et al, 2006). Employers also can provide developmental assets to youth that no other setting can fully duplicate including exposure to the mainstream economy, practices of

the working world, authentic information about career options and paths, and opportunities to apply formal learning to solve real-world problems in a team setting (Whalen et al, 2003).

Employers can increase their financial and productivity goals by investing in a skilled workforce, particularly in the current economic environment (Martinson, 2010). Employers spend over $400 billion a year in providing both formal and informal training to employees who have already completed their schooling and are currently working full-time (Casner-Lotto et al, 2006). By providing jobs through youth employment programs, not only are employers preparing youth at an early age for employment, but can also rely on the program to support training efforts. This allows for employers to spend less time and costs on training while preparing their future workforce. Specifically, summer youth employment programs are an excellent avenue to include employers as it allows for them to spend more time providing direct service to youth and less time on program administration (Whalen et al, 2003).

Positive Youth Development Framework

This evaluation follows a positive youth development (PYD) approach, focusing on the strengths of youth rather than their weaknesses (Breinbauer & Maddaleno, 2005). This approach recognizes that all youth can be successful if provided support, guidance, and opportunities that meet their needs (Clymer et al, 2002). PYD suggests that helping young people achieve their full potential is the best way to prevent them from engaging in risky behaviors (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2010). The fundamental principle underlying PYD is that youth can successfully progress through adolescence by developing skills and abilities including social and interpersonal skills, basic academic skills, capacity to understand and plan for the future, ability to take responsibility, and obtain knowledge of vocational skills and career interests (Clymer, Edwards, Ponce & Wyckoff, 2002). There are many variations of this approach but important constructs included in all are promoting a sense of safety; providing appropriate structures; creating supportive relationships; providing opportunities to belong; providing positive social norms; giving youth responsibilities and meaningful challenges; and providing opportunities for skill building (see Figure 1).

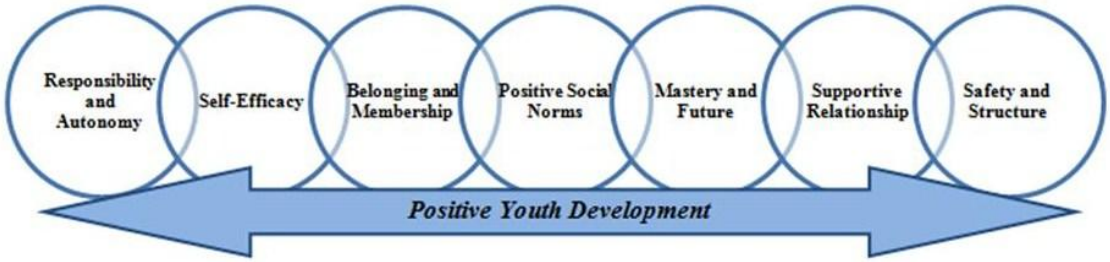
PYD occurs in a wide range of settings such as programs, organizations, socializing systems, and communities (Public/Private Ventures (PPV), 2005). Many young people, particularly in low-income communities, rely on PYD programming to help them make a safe and healthy transition into adulthood. PYD programs help youth gain skills and provide them with the resources necessary for them to learn to solve issues they are facing and make decisions that result in healthy living (Clymer et al, 2002).

As mentioned, much empirical research has shown that urban youth lack direction with the transition from school to the postsecondary and workforce worlds. This issue is further intensified by the lack of academic preparation, economic issues, and need for youth development skills. There is also growing empirical evidence that well-designed PYD interventions can lead to both short and long term positive outcomes for youth. PYD approaches have also been found to be effective with youth employment programs by increasing workforce competencies, providing education and training opportunities, and increasing future orientation. In addition, they usually involve caring adults who serve as role models. Lastly, they incorporate activities that allow peers to interact (Zuckerman, n.d.). Overall, incorporating

Many PYD theoretical constructs and frameworks have been developed and used to guide programming and studies (PPV, 2005). DC has developed a citywide strategy centered on youth development utilizing the Academy of Educational Development (AED) Advancing Youth Development (AYD) Curriculum Framework. As the local provider of this curriculum, the DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation (CYITC) provide training for District agencies and providers, front line staff, supervisors and policy makers. In particular, these trainings have been customized for DCPS teachers and staff and DC Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) school resource officers. To date, over 3,000 youth workers have completed the 30-hour training, representing more than 180 CBOs, Department of Employment Services (DOES), the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), the Children and Families Services Administration (CFSA), and the DC Public Libraries (DCPL).

AED's Youth Development Model and the citywide use of this model make it the appropriate framework for this evaluation. AED's model identifies opportunities and supports for youth that are necessary to achieve 12 outcomes that indicate healthy development in youth. The model further categorizes these 12 outcomes in areas of identity (youth demonstrate a positive identity when they have a sense of personal well-being and a sense of connection and commitment to others) and areas of ability (youth demonstrate ability when they gain knowledge, skills and attitudes that prepare them for adulthood) (see Table 1). Specifically, SYEP works towards mastery and future, employability, and responsibility and autonomy, and the development of the evaluation in this study is appropriately grounded in these core constructs.

Figure 1: Positive Youth Development Model.



Source: PPV, 2005.

Table 1: Academy for Educational Development Advancing Youth Development Framework

Youth Development Outcome	Definition
	Identity
Safety and Structure	A perception that one is safe in the world and that daily events are somewhat predictable.
Self-Worth	A perception that one is a "good person" who contributes to self and others.
Mastery and Future	A perception that one is "making it" and will succeed in the future.
Belonging and Membership	A perception that one values, and is valued by, others in the family and in the community.
Responsibility and Autonomy	A perception that one has some control over daily events and is accountable for one's own actions and for the consequences on others.
	Ability
Self-Awareness and Spirituality	A perception that one is unique and is intimately attached to extended families, cultural groups, communities, higher deities, and/or principles.
Physical Health	The ability and motivation to act in ways that best ensure current and future physical health for self and for others.
Mental Health	The ability and motivation to respond affirmatively to and cope with positive and adverse situations, to reflect on one's emotions and surroundings, and to engage in leisure and fun.
Intellectual Ability	The ability and motivation to learn in school and in other settings, to gain the basic knowledge needed to graduate from high school, to use critical thinking, to be creative, to use problem-solving and expressive skills, and to conduct independent study.
Employability	The ability and motivation to gain the functional and organizational skills necessary for employment, including an understanding of careers and options, and the steps necessary to reach goals.
Civic and Social Ability	The ability and motivation to work collaboratively with others for the larger good and to sustain caring friendships and relationships with others.
Cultural Ability	The ability and motivation to respect and affirmatively respond to differences among groups.

Source: CYITC, 2011.

Purpose of the Evaluation Report

Ongoing, rigorous evaluation of programs helps determine what works, why it works, and what are replicable youth development interventions (Bernat & Resnick, 2006). The purpose of this evaluation was to design and implement a qualitative and quantitative analysis to document the value, benefits, innovations, capacity building, and key challenges of SYEP for the summer of 2011, as well as to provide recommendations for implementation for the following years. Specifically this report will examine the extent to which SYEP is reaching the youth and providing diverse programming with which the participants and employers are satisfied. In addition, it will examine the short term changes in the youth participants with regards to job readiness and work skills. This evaluation is also very timely, as it will provide insight for SYEP's action plans being developed for the Summer 2012.

Specifically, this report addresses:

- What changes have occurred to address shortcomings identified in previous program evaluations?
- What are the support mechanisms for participating youth and employers?
- What kinds of youth and supervisors participate in SYEP?
- What kinds of jobs are youth placed in through SYEP?
- Are youth and supervisors satisfied with their participation in SYEP?
- What are the short term impacts in regards to job readiness and specific work skills for participating youth?

This evaluation report was compiled for the Council and DOES to provide an evaluation of SYEP and the results are intended to provide guidance to future program implementation. It should be noted that an extensive research study is currently being conducted by the evaluator (Nisha Sachdev) through support from George Washington University (GWU), CYITC, and the Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration. The purpose of this extensive study is to expand the understanding of the impacts that summer youth employment programs have on youth as they transition to adulthood in not only DC but other cities implementing youth employment programs. Specifically, the study will document the implementation of the program and the short term behavioral impacts of SYEP on the youth participants while providing a framework to assess longer term impacts. This study will not only assist DOES, but also the stakeholders at large such as other agencies, youth, parents, and taxpayers, with results on the effectiveness and quality of programming and resulting behavior change. The results of this comprehensive study will be made available in May 2012.

DC SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

History of Youth Employment and Training Programs

In the early 1960's, to reduce poverty and inequality in the labor market, the Manpower Development and Training Act was established which provided federal funding for employee training and development. This allowed for the development of youth employment and training programs geared towards low-income youth to provide means for them to not only earn money, but also learn new skills and explore careers (McCalahan et al, 2004). Specifically, publically subsidized summer youth employment programs were implemented to provide urban youth who lacked opportunities with career experience as well as activities to help them stay out of trouble (McCalahan et al, 2004).

However, in the early 1980's, research revealed that the jobs were often poorly planned and supervised and did not portray real-world work experiences. In addition, critics of the programs stated that an educational focus needed to be included as it is linked to career success (McCalahan et al, 2004). This coupled with the economic growth in the 1990's, which provided youth alternative opportunities for employment, decreased the visibility of youth employment programs (McCalahan et al, 2004). Summer youth employment programs experienced similar trends with rates also reaching new historical lows, especially within minorities, low-income youth (Sum et al, 2008). Currently there is only some federal money reserved to youth employment programs, and no fully federally funded summer job programs. However, many local jurisdictions such as Washington, DC have developed their own summer programs using supports from the private, local government, and non-profit sectors (McCalahan et al, 2004).

In 2010, the unemployment rate for all 16 to 24 year olds fell to its lowest since the end of World War II (18.1%), making 3.8 million unemployed (Weeter et al, 2011). Teens from low-income families who were African American or Hispanic were more severely affected than the average. Only 19% of low-income African American teens worked during 2007 compared to almost 50% of their more affluent White counterparts (Sum, Khatiwada, McLaughlin, Palma, 2008). In addition, according to Kuhen & McDaniel (2009), by the age 24, around half (57%) of low-income African American youth were employed, compared to nearly three quarters (74%) of white youth (Kuhen et al, 2009). Over the past decade the summer youth employment of teens fell from 45% to 25.6% (McLauglin & Sum, 2011).

The lack of jobs is further exacerbated for inner city and minority youth, due both to spatial isolation and discrimination, denying youth these developmental benefits (Whalen et al, 2003). Although local jurisdictions are in fact implementing summer youth employment programs, many youth are often turned away due to lack of space with the limited resources. The high rates of applications submitted to participate suggests that many youth do want to work, but are not

provided the resources or opportunities due to limited space or financial resources (Hastings, Tsoi & Harris 2010).

History of DC Summer Youth Employment Program

SYEP was initiated by then Mayor Marion Barry in 1979 through both Federal and local District funds. The program was open to all DC youth ages 14 to 21 years. In 1988, the Federal Workforce Investment Act was established which prohibited federal summer job program that were not connected with year round programs. Recognizing the importance of the program, Mayor Barry continued to support it through local funds and employed almost 16,000 youth (Curnan, Kingley, LaCava & Frees 2010). Although there was strong support from both the Mayor and the public, low oversight and accountability led to a lack of quality, scale, and scope over the years.

SYEP aims to prepare participants for work; help them explore career and vocational opportunities by placing them in supervised career-related jobs or opportunities; provide them adult support and guidance; and provide career-related experiences such as resume writing and interviewing skills. SYEP has grown substantially since its inception in 1979. Key programmatic milestones were implemented beginning in 2006 including expanded youth employment opportunities to include the private and government sector, providing electronic payments on an individualized debit card, a more comprehensive online application system, providing youth with neighborhood based placements, taking in account youth interests and strengths, and site visits to assess quality work assignments. This has led to youth experiences that are diverse and meet their needs.

In 2008, with Mayor Adrian Fenty in office, there were hopes of doubling the youth enrollment from 10,000 to 20,000 youth and increasing the number of worksites. While this goal was reached, little preparation was put into the necessary upgrades in management infrastructure, capacity-building, and payroll systems leading to much criticism from the media and press (Curnan et al, 2010). In an attempt to diminish these criticisms, considerable efforts were made to improve SYEP in the summer of 2009 including new organizational, management, tracking, and payroll systems (Curnan et al, 2010). With these systemic successes, in 2010 efforts were then reinforced on ensuring youth had positive experiences. Pre-screening site visits of potential worksites were implemented, youth development training was provided to supervisors, a Work Readiness Assessment was performed by the supervisor to evaluate youth performance, and financial training workshops were provided for the youth. This was done while maintaining the success of providing opportunities to 20,000 youth at over 1,300 worksites.

Also in the summer of 2010, Brandeis University conducted a qualitative study of SYEP to identify successes, challenges, and lessons learned. Through interviews with SYEP staff at a select number of worksites as well as worksite observations, they found that although there have been many short term and technical advances in the program, longer term strategies are needed such as ensuring age appropriate worksites, decreasing the number of participants to provide quality experience, better communication and more planning time (Curnan et al, 2010). This study draws on these findings and furthers explores the implementation of SYEP as well as outcomes on for the youth.

Key Stakeholders

DOES is the primary agency responsible for workforce development in DC. Youth programs and services within DOES include a Year-Round In-School Program, Out-of-School Youth Program, the Mayor's Youth Leadership Institute (MYLI), and SYEP. CYITC is a public-private partnership with the DC Government and is the primary resource for expanding and improving services and opportunities youth in DC, especially during out of school time. Specifically, CYITC provides grants, technical assistance, capacity building, learning opportunities, policy support, and youth development training to youth workers using AED's AYD curriculum in the District. Since the summer of 2009, CYITC has partnered with DOES to provide funding through a competitive proposal process to qualified applicants that provide high quality summer programs for SYEP registered youth ages 14 to 15 years. Specifically, CYITC seeks to support the delivery of a variety of workforce exploration and experience based programs that will provide purposeful and developmentally appropriate employment and career exploration opportunities. Applicants must employ the youth development philosophy in their approach and program design. There are about 136 CBOs in DC that provide education, training, or development services to youth (Ross, 2011). These services include GED preparation, academic assistance, work readiness training, occupational skills training, job and internship placement, wrap-around services, and case management (Ross, 2011). Many of these programs act as Host Worksites for SYEP and provide counselor positions for older youth to work with younger youth as well as employability or work readiness training.

2011 Summer Youth Employment Program Design

In 2011, SYEP was a six week program, locally funded initiative administered by DOES that provides DC youth ages 14 to 21 years with enriching and constructive summer work experiences through subsidized placements in the private and government sectors. The program is structured to provide youth with experience and training to develop their employment skills and career awareness. It strives to provide young people with the opportunity to earn money and gain meaningful work experience; learn and develop the skills, attitudes, and commitment

necessary to succeed in today's world of work; gain exposure to various exciting career industries; and interact with dynamic working professionals in a positive work environment. The 2011 program began on Monday, June 27, 2011 and ended on Friday, August 5, 2011 (with July 4, 2011 an observed holiday).

Though SYEP is a short term employment and training program, the goal is to introduce DC youth to employers and experiences that will positively impact their futures. Employers in the DC metropolitan area make this program possible by volunteering to serve as Worksite Supervisors (hereby referred to as supervisors) and provide structured job opportunities for youth during the summer. They provide guidance and training which enable young people the opportunity to develop positive work habits, attitudes, and the valuable job skills necessary to enter the workforce prepared and qualified to be productive employees.

This summer, youth were paid the federal minimum wage ($7.25 per hour in 2011). All of these wages were fully paid by DOES. Participants were only compensated for time worked up to the maximum number of hours permitted by the program. This includes 20 hours per week for youth ages 14 to 15 years and 25 hours per week for youth ages 16 to 21 years. Youth signed in and out daily via an online system (SYEP Youth Portal), signed up to receive their bi-monthly pay on an ADP Visa Debit Card. Youth ages 18 years and older had the option to sign up for direct deposit with partnering banking institutions.

Youth who participated were required to participate in an in-person orientation hosted at DOES that went over program details including logistics, rules, and expectations. In addition, there was a supplemental an online orientation through the SYEP Youth Portal available prior to the start of the program. The orientation consists of a series of short videos that addressed specific SYEP content questions. In addition, during the first week of work, youth were provided orientation at their worksite provided by their supervisors. This orientation included information pertaining to the hours the youth would be working, the regulations of the worksite, time and length of lunch breaks, emergency contacts to notify when the youth may be late or absent, safety procedures and steps to take in case of an accident, appropriate attire for the workplace, and a clear explanation of the duties and responsibilities including the criteria by which they would be evaluated.

Changes to Address Shortcomings in Previous Program Evaluations

Based on the findings of the study conducted by Brandeis University as well as budget cuts and pressure for sound oversight and accountability, SYEP 2011 incorporated significant changes to improve quality. First, the program decreased the number of youth to serve about 12,000 youth and placed an emphasis on older youth with 3,000 slots available to youth ages 14 to 15 years

and 7,000 slots available to youth ages 16 to 21 years. An additional 2,000 slots were allocated to youth who are participating in CYITC funded programs. It should be noted that an extra 990 slots were added during the first week of the program due to extra external resources and were made available due to the large waitlist (see Table 2).

Furthermore, the online application through the Youth Portal was accompanied with in-person events to provide ample opportunity for assistance with the application process and eligibility requirements. The new system also allowed youth to apply for jobs in which they are interested and in which they feel meet their needs. Job placements were also categorized in two different strands: (1) work experience programs designed to provide youth with hands-on work experience and (2) work readiness programs designed to provide youth with an opportunity to receive basic skills training and enrichment in a non-work setting such as a CBO. The system and an SYEP Job Expo not only allowed for multiple opportunities for supervisors to interview and screen the youth participants, but also allowed for the youth to learn about the different opportunities available. This helped ensure placements were made that met the needs of both the youth and the employer. More emphasis was also placed on youth orientation and transparency about all program dates and deadlines by providing this information at the start of the program. Lastly, all supervisors were required to participate in youth development training provided by the CYITC to help with program quality.

Table 2. SYEP Youth Participants and Supervisors (2007 – 2011)

Year	Total Youth Placements (% change from previous year)	Total Supervisors
2011	13,641 (-36%)	2,243
2010	21,297 (+6%)	1,350
2009	About 20,000 (+5%)	n/a
2008	About 19,000 (+37%)	n/a
2007	About 12,000 (n/a)	n/a

Source: Ross, 2011; Curnan et al, 2010; DOES, 2011.

Goals of 2011 Summer Youth Employment Program

The core activities of the SYEP program aim to expose youth to meaningful summer employment experiences. These work experiences will provide a motivating context integral to the PYD model and will ultimately lead to positive transition to adulthood while decreasing negative behaviors. Although SYEP's primary goal is to provide DC youth with meaningful professional experiences and basic work skills, the program was designed with the hope that these short term impacts will lead to long term impacts in the development of the youth

participants. These impacts include school engagement, workplace readiness, decreased engagement in risk behaviors, retention in the program, and enrollment in college which ultimately leads to youth being able to enter the workforce and becoming self-sufficient adults.

Youth Eligibility

Youth ages 14 to 21 years make up about 11.5% (about 69,352 youth) of the total population in DC (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). It should be noted that Wards 2 and 8 have the greater share of the older teenage population (18 years and older) in the city compared with other wards, according to the 2000 Census, at 10.4 and 10.7 percent, respectively (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). The demographics of these two wards are extremely different. The high share of teenagers in Ward 2 is presumably driven by enrollments at Georgetown University and George Washington University. The share of teenagers in Ward 8 is primarily low-income youth who presumably grew up in the District (or nearby).

Program recruitment targeted youth whose ability to access employment opportunities may be limited. Taking this and the above into consideration, a more accurate estimate of the target youth for SYEP is 33,577 youth ages 14 to 21 years (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). This estimate was calculated by looking at the youth population of those ages 14 to 21 in Wards 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. This is also where a majority of the youth were recruited and participated from. During the summer of 2011, SYEP served 13,641 (41%) of these youth.

To be eligible for the SYEP program, youth had to be a resident of DC, be between the ages of 14 and 21 years (prior to the start of the program), provide a social security card and birth certificate to verify eligibility to work in the United States, and have parental or guardian permission to participate (if under 18 years of age). Each SYEP participant was placed in a job at a CBO, private, or public agency under the guidance of a supervisor. This provided participants with the opportunity to develop work skills in a real work environment.

Youth Application and Selection Process

The youth application process consisted of an online application through the SYEP Youth Portal and a document certification. The application process for 2011 remained open from February 25, 2011 until March 19, 2011. A total of 20,463 youth applied to SYEP during the enrollment period. Each youth was required to provide their full social security number and a valid email address to access the system. Recruitment efforts included providing youth with information on public computers available in their neighborhoods (see Appendix A).

After the youth successfully completed the online application, they were required to bring their eligibility documents to DOES. These documents included a parental consent form for youth

under the age of 18 and verification of residence in DC, age, and permission to work in the United States. If the youth was a prior participant, documents were migrated over from the previous year with the exception of the parental consent and DC residency verification. DOES understood that transportation might be an issue for the youth and therefore held SYEP Eligibility Certification Events in local neighborhoods on evenings and weekends. Youth were also provided email reminders about these events as well as the documents they needed to submit (see Appendix A).

SYEP accepted 14,183 eligible youth who completed these steps (69% of those who applied). Youth who completed these steps and did not fall in the spots were placed on the waitlist. It should be noted that although 14,183 youth were accepted into SYEP, only 13,641 youth participated in the program as by the start of the program some youth had found other employment or had outstanding circumstances.

Once the complete application was submitted and accepted, youth were then required to submit a resume, complete an online and in-person orientation course, and apply for specific job opportunities that were of interest to them, all through the SYEP Youth Portal (see Appendix B). In addition, youth could view important messages sent by SYEP, learn about financial management, and view total hours worked per pay period on the SYEP Youth Portal. In addition, the youth were provided a handbook with expectations, logistical information, and further information to help guide their time in the program (see Appendix C).

Once youth applied for specific job opportunities through the SYEP Youth Portal, supervisors had the ability to screen, interview, and select, through the Host Employer Portal, the specific youth from the eligible applicant pool who they would like to hire. SYEP also hosted a SYEP Job Expo on April 20, 2011 and April 21, 2011 at the Building Museum that was open to all eligible youth applicants and provided them with an opportunity to meet employers and gain additional information about available summer job opportunities. In addition, employers were able to interview candidates on the spot and make selections of youth who they wanted to hire. For the employers who did not wish to screen or interview youth, DOES placed youth on their behalf. Youth were matched based on selections made by the employers and/or the interests that the youth listed their online application.

SYEP placements followed DOL regulations on child labor laws, although most of the jobs restrictions listed are out of the scope of SYEP and Host Agencies. This includes that youth ages 14 to 15 years cannot engage in public utilities or construction jobs, driving a motor vehicle or helping a driver, manufacturing and mining occupations, power-driven machinery, public messenger jobs, and warehousing and storage. In addition, youth ages 16 to 17 years may not

work in jobs involving manufacturing and storing of explosives, driving a motor vehicle and being an outside helper on a motor vehicle, mining, logging and sawmilling, most power-driven machines, roofing operations, and excavation operations. Youth ages 18 years or older were no longer affected by the child labor laws.

Host Employer Application and Selection Process

Employers who were interested in participating as a host employer were required to submit a Host Employer Application though the Host Employer Portal. The application consisted of contact information, names of employers who would be supervising the youth (required a minimum ratio of one adult to 12 youth workers), contact for who will be coordinating timesheets, and job descriptions detailing the specific opportunities to be offered along with the age and skill criteria required for the positions. Once the application was submitted, a DOES Representative completed a site visit to ensure the site was safe, structured, and properly supervised. Applications were reviewed on a rolling basis and final decisions were made on April 1, 2011. A total of 2,243 supervisors (465 Host Agencies) applied and were accepted. This allowed for a total of 16,629 positions for the youth.

A Supervisor's Handbook and Information Packed helped guide the process of employing youth (see Appendix D). The handbook also provided information related to payroll, the role of staff, working with youth, and the necessary paperwork required by DOES.

Each Host Agency had to have an indentified team to ensure a positive experience for both the employers and youth. The team consisted of a Host Coordinator, Payroll Coordinator, and supervisor. The Host Coordinator was responsible for serving as the primary point of contact between the Host Agency and DOES, communicating problems or questions regarding the program to DOES, and ensuring supervisors collect all required documentation. The Payroll Coordinator was responsible for submitting time electronically on behalf of the youth weekly and maintaining copies of all timesheets and providing them to DOES at the end of the program. The supervisors were responsible for ensuring that youth were properly supervised at all times, ensuring youth time and attendance procedures were followed, keeping the Host Coordinator informed of all issues, and administering performance evaluation of each youth under their direct supervision. The supervisors become one of the primary adults with whom the young people formed a relationship during the program. They not only provided participants with training and career exposure, but also serve as an adult role model.

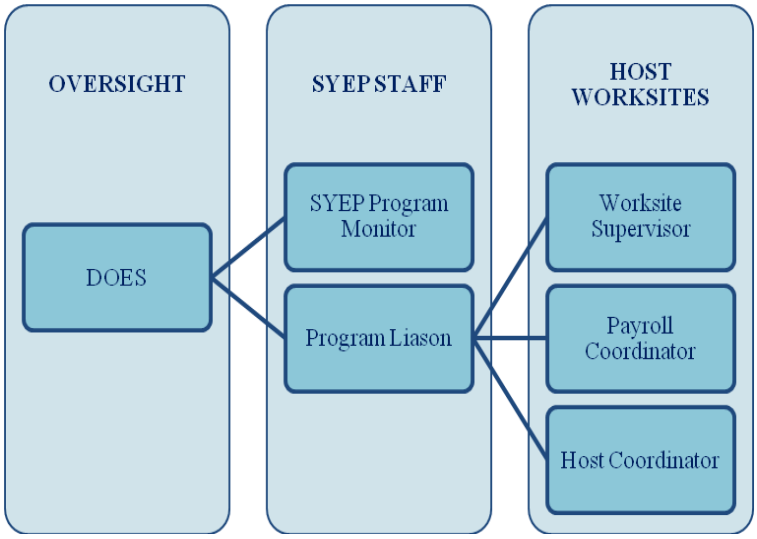
Each approved application was provided one of seven SYEP Liaisons based on the sector from which they are applying: CBO, DC Government, Federal Government, Private Sector, or Schools (see Figure 2). This SYEP Program Liaison was an SYEP employee who served each sector (e.g.

private sector, CBO, etc.) as the primary contact for the Host Agency. The SYEP Program Liaison was responsible for providing support and guidance to employers, communicating pertinent information about the program, facilitating the process for transfers and terminations, resolving pay disputes, and addressing other program issues. In addition, an SYEP Program Monitor was assigned to worksites to monitor the environment, advocate for youth and support supervisors with any issues they may have experienced. Specifically, they monitored the site to ensure youth were receiving quality work experience, supervisors were receiving adequate assistance and resources from DOES, tracked the submission of necessary paperwork, and again assisted youth and supported supervisors with any issues they may be experiencing.

Once the application was approved, all employers at the respective organization or agency who were identified as supervisors were required to attend a mandatory SYEP Supervisor Training and Orientation that provided information about program logistics, payroll instructions, and program planning (see Appendix E). Here they were also provided extensive training on youth development following AED's AYD curriculum. These trainings were conducted by CYITC as they are the local provider of this curriculum. Supervisors working directly with youth participants under the age of 18 years were also required to obtain a criminal background clearance within the last two years through the DC MPD prior to the start of the program. DOES provided these clearances free of charge. In addition, during the first week of work, supervisors were required to provide the assigned youth with an onsite orientation. Information to help with this process was in the Supervisor's Handbook.

A select number of CBO sector worksites received funding through a partnership with CYITC and DOES. These organizations went through a competitive proposal process and were chosen for their capacity and ability to provide high quality summer programs for SYEP registered youth ages 14 to 15 years. A total of a total of 41 worksites were selected that served 2,048. These sites were referred to as CYITC-Funded programs and received extra guidance and support to provide intentional work readiness programs to the youth they served. In addition, they were required to also follow all guidelines of SYEP.

Figure 2: Supervisor Oversight and Support



Additional Rules of Summer Youth Employment Program Participation

The youth were required to give advance notice of any absences from work, regardless of the reason. If this could not be done in person, the participant was told to telephone the supervisor as soon as they know they will be unable to report to work that day. If the absence continued beyond one day, the participant was to notify the supervisor each day that they would not be present. In addition, the supervisor had to notify their SYEP Program Liaison about the youth worker's absenteeism when the youth was absent more than three consecutive days. Youth were not paid for any absent days; however they could schedule makeup hours if approved by the supervisor or Host Coordinator.

Youth and/or supervisors could request a transfer if there was a safety issue, health concern, site closure, or another approved extenuating circumstances. The Host Coordinator would process transfer requests and make the final determination of the transfer. Youth could face termination from the worksite if they engaged in misconduct including possessing, selling, or using illegal drugs or alcohol while on the job, failing to report to work on three consecutive work days without prior approval; disruptive behavior such as fighting; physical or verbal assaults; stealing property from the worksite, employees, or other youth workers; falsifying time records; refusing to adhere to the worksite's rules and regulations; and verbal, sexual, or physical harassment. All incidents leading to termination had to be documented and submitted to the Host Coordinator. If approved, an official termination letter was sent to the youth worker. If a SYEP participant believed they had been wrongfully terminated from a worksite, they had the opportunity to schedule an appointment with the Host Coordinator (see Appendix F).

OVERVIEW OF METHODS OF EVALUATION

The evaluation encompassed qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection including interviews and focus groups, surveys, and SYEP records to obtain information geared toward understanding youth and supervisor characteristics, experiences, successes, and challenges in the program and their overall development. The study sample includes the SYEP youth and employer participants for the summer of 2011 as well as a small sample of non-participants. For the purpose of this report, the data from the posttests will be used as all it incorporates all of the areas being addressed (i.e. satisfaction and support, job responsibilities, and work related skills).

Quantitative Methods

Youth Survey

Youth participants completed a baseline survey at the start of the program and again at the end of the six week program. The survey included demographics, satisfaction with program, career interests, academic characteristics, work orientation and attitudes towards risk behaviors. Youth received the link via Zoomerang, an internet-based survey tool to complete the questionnaire via multiple recruitment efforts including SYEP reminders, site reminders, social media sites, as well as emails sent to the youth (See Appendix G). The survey took between 10 to 15 minutes to complete. All data was analyzed in Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) version 9.2.

The multiple attempts made to have all the participants complete the survey resulted in a 7% response rate for both the pretest (930 youth completed) and for the posttest (888 youth completed). Although this rate may seem low, for a population size of over 10,000, an adequate sample size is 350 (Fitz-Gibbon et al, 1987). This allows for ample consideration for non-responses. Analysis of this subgroup of respondents shows similar representation of the total youth participant population with respect to age, gender, ward, and grade level.

The survey instrument was developed specifically for this evaluation using items and scales from existing validated surveys. When developing the instrument, items were constructed and modified from other tools such as Detroit's Summer Youth Employment Program Evaluation 2010, MyCom Summer Work Readiness Assessment, The Colorado Trust Youth Participant Survey, and the Ascend Summer Youth Employment Program 2005 (Shanks & McGee, 2010; Flannery et al, 2009, The Colorado Trust, 2004; Nielsen & McGhee, 2005). These surveys address youth employment experiences as well as risk behaviors, however very few provided information over their reliability and validity (see Table 3). The AED AYD framework guided development of the survey.

Since a new survey was being developed from existing instruments, steps were taken to ensure the new scale was valid and appropriate for intervention specific outcomes. Validity is the scale's ability to measure what it intended to measure. It is especially important to conduct validity checks when the instrument is new or has been changed from its original form as many factors affect the validity of a measure. First, face validity, which is the degree to which an instrument appears to measure what it is designed to measure, was assessed. This was done by having non-experts review the survey as well as the youth pilot-testing the survey. The surveys were pilot-tested by a convenience sample of ten individuals ranging from 18 to 22 years of age who previously participated in the program but did not be this year due to age restriction or missing application deadlines. They specifically assessed the length and readability of the questions. Content validity is based on the extent to which a tool reflects the specific intended domain of content. Content validity was assessed using a panel of experts including faculty at GWU and researchers in the youth development field, who will judge the relevance of the items asked on the survey in order to ensure that the questions asked is actually. In addition, 96% of the 888 posttest youth respondents reported that they were honest in taking the survey (the last question asked "How honest were you in filling out this survey?") further validating the results.

It should be noted that there was an attempt to implement a quasi-experimental design with a comparative group of those youth who have applied to the program and not been accepted due to lack of space in the program or not turning in the necessary documents to enroll in the program. Due to logistical and consent issues, the completion rate of these surveys was low therefore were not included in this evaluation. It is planned to implement this design for the summer of 2012.

Table 3: Youth Participant Survey Development

	Description	Sample Items	Response Formats
Detroit's 2010 Summer Youth Employment Exit Evaluation	Measures attitudes about how employment opportunity might influence career/academic aspirations, program impact on attitudes and knowledge, and overall satisfaction of the program.	28 items: How did the program help you academically? What job skills did you learn from this program?	Multiple choice, Yes/No, and open-ended.
MyCom Summer Work Readiness Assessment	Measures interpersonal relationships, psychosocial functioning, self-efficacy, out of school time activities, and independent living.	20 items: Overall how satisfied are you with your life right now? How optimistic are you with your future?	Likert-scale
The Colorado Trust Youth Participant Survey	Measures knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors with regards to youth outcomes including academic success, community involvement, arts and recreations, life skills, sense of self and positive choices.	20 items: I feel good about myself. I am good at learning new things. I do well at school.	Likert-scale
2005 Ascend Summer Youth Employment Program	Developed from previous studies, measured pre/post attitudes towards specific program goals (gaining computer skills) as well as self-efficacy and post-secondary career/educational skills.	I am a good student. I know what it takes to succeed on a job. I know about jobs or careers I might be good at.	Yes/No

Source: Shanks et al, 2010; Flannery et al, 2009, The Colorado Trust, 2004; Nielsen et al, 2005

Supervisor Survey

A supervisor survey was administered within the three weeks following completion of the program to gather information on their satisfaction with the program as well as their assessment of how the youth performed and increased work related skills. The survey was sent to all supervisors via Zoomerang (see Appendix H). The survey included items adapted from Detroit's Summer Youth Program 2010 Evaluation (Shanks et al, 2010). An email was sent from DOES to all participating supervisors at the end of August. In order to increase the response rate, two additional reminder emails were sent in early September as well as one week before the survey is scheduled to close. A response rate of 9% (213 supervisors) was achieved. Analysis of the subgroup shows that the sample that completed the survey has similar representation of the total supervisor population with respect to organization type. All data was analyzed in Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) version 9.2.

Validity was also assessed with the supervisor survey as it was an adapted version of an existing survey. This was done pilot-testing of the survey occurred with a convenience sample of five supervisors who have previously participated in SYEP, however did not this year due to relocation of program or position. In addition, experts in the field such as SYEP staff and GWU faculty reviewed the survey to ensure all relevant content was being captured. The individuals were selected by the researcher through previous knowledge of them in a different capacity. They specifically assessed the length, readability, and overall content being captured.

SYEP Records

SYEP records provided information regarding characteristics of the agencies and organizations that host the youth, the characteristics and total enrollment of participants, program offerings, and youth attendance. DOES provided this information to the evaluator at the start of the program with exception to the youth attendance which was obtained at the end of the program. Specific de-indentified information provided was the number of youth served, average number of hours worked per week worked, school youth attends (if applicable), ward youth resides in, age of youth, and hours worked per youth.

Qualitative Methods

To gain more in-depth information that was not captured in the survey, in-depth interviews and focus groups with SYEP and employers as well as a small sample of non-participant youth were conducted. All interviews and focus groups were audio recorded and were transcribed verbatim for analysis. Once the initial data was transcribed, NVIVO version 8, a qualitative software, was used to code the transcribed data for emerging themes and concepts. The coded data was then reviewed to determine emerging concepts of youth and employer experiences and future recommendations for SYEP.

Supervisor and Youth Focus Groups

Individuals engaging in these focus groups and interviews were chosen at random as well as an email inviting all SYEP Host Agencies and youth to participate was sent. A focus group protocol was developed with input from SYEP staff (see Appendix I). All supervisor focus groups took place at DOES and included a brief presentation about SYEP 2011 and then break out groups to discuss specific areas such as application process, payroll, and overall strengths and challenges. The youth focus groups took place at DOES and Sasha Bruce Youthwork and included an icebreaker, short presentation, and smaller breakout groups to discuss overall experiences in the summer. Transportation money and refreshments were provided to the youth with support from GWU. Over 100 supervisors and 50 youth engaged in the focus groups.

Supervisor Interviews

Structured interviews were conducted by phone with 35 supervisors at the completion of the program. Interviews consisted of open ended questions addressing staff satisfaction of the program, SYEP's progress towards objectives from their prospective, and strengths and challenges of program implementation (see Appendix I). DOES provided the evaluator a list (compiled at random) of potential supervisor interview participants as well as their contact information. The evaluator then reached out via email to these supervisors and scheduled interviews at a convenient time for the supervisor with those that were willing to participate. The interviews ranged from 20 to 45 minutes.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval to conduct this evaluation was granted by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of GWU School of Public Health and Health Services in Washington, DC. In addition, approval to recruit from the SYEP program was obtained and a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed with CYITC and DOES. Eligible participants were identified by SYEP and all communication took place by the evaluator via SYEP staff except for recruitment of the supervisor interviews in which SYEP staff provided the contact information to the evaluator. Data was analyzed and stored in a locked file on the computer and the evaluator ensured that information related to an individual subject's participation was protected and maintained in a confidential manner. Informed consent was obtained from all individuals enrolled in the study as well as their parents if they were under the age of 18 years. No investigator or supervisor enrolled a participant without having obtained the informed consent from of the participant or his/her legally authorized representative using an IRB and DOES approved consent document. It was clear at all times that participation in the evaluation was voluntary and participants may opt-out at any time. In addition, with regards to the survey, youth and supervisors had the option to skip questions they did feel comfortable answering.

FINDINGS

A majority of the findings provided include data from the focus groups, interviews, and posttest. The posttest was primarily used as the purpose of the report is to describe the outcomes of the youth and supervisors post program that were not applicable prior to the start of the program (i.e. satisfaction, supports, and placements).

Characteristics of Youth Participants

This summer, SYEP employed 13,641 youth. Table 4 describes the demographic and academic characteristics of the participants. SYEP served about an equal number of males and females. In addition, a majority of the youth were in high school or below (76%) and between the ages of 14 and 17 years (62%). Although youth participated from all wards, most of the participants came from Wards 7 and 8 combined (53%). Lastly, most of the youth identified themselves as Black (Non-Hispanic) (84%). Lastly, SYEP has a high retention rate with about 88% of the participants returning to participate from a previous year. This high rate of retention shows that youth value the program and want to return. Figure 3 shows visual representations of the demographic breakdowns.

Posttest Survey Subsample

In addition, a subsample of the youth (888 youth or 7%) completed posttest. Analysis of this subgroup of respondents shows similar representation of the total youth population with respect to age, ward, and grade level of the youth (see Table 5). The posttest results provided further demographic information including parental and household characteristics (see Table 6). These characteristics can be used as an estimation of what these demographic characteristics would like in the entire SYEP youth participant pool. Therefore, the findings provided of the survey can also be representative of the entire SYEP youth participant population.

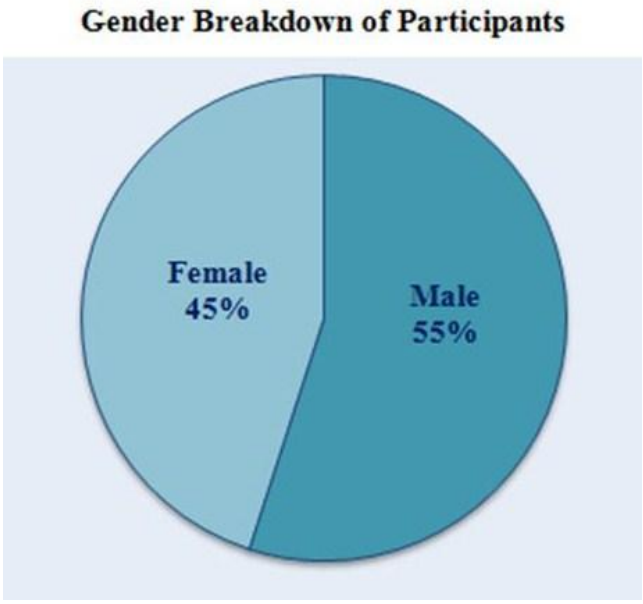
This subsample shows that over half of the participants (58%) live with their mother. In addition, most of the participants lived in a household with three or more people and English was the primary language (92%). Furthermore, the highest education level obtained by their mother or father was high school or a GED, however more mothers had some college (23%) compared to fathers (10%). In addition, it was found that about 70% of youth have at least one parent that is currently employed. Lastly, about 8% of youth reported having a child, with a majority of these teenage parents (77%) having a child between the ages of 0 to 2 years.

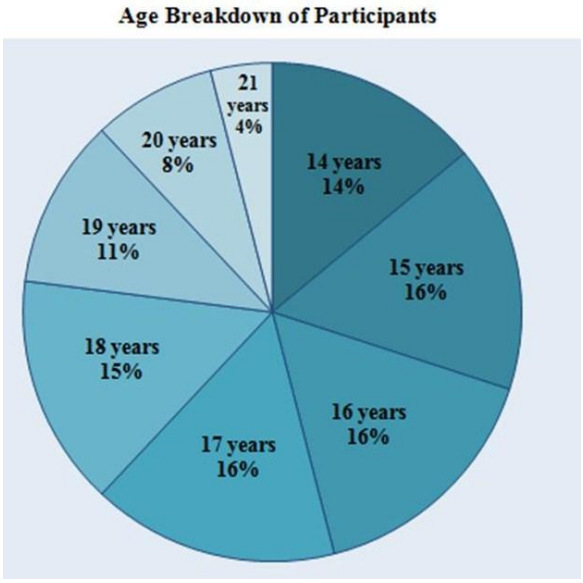
*Table 4. Demographic and Academic Characteristics of SYEP Youth Participants**

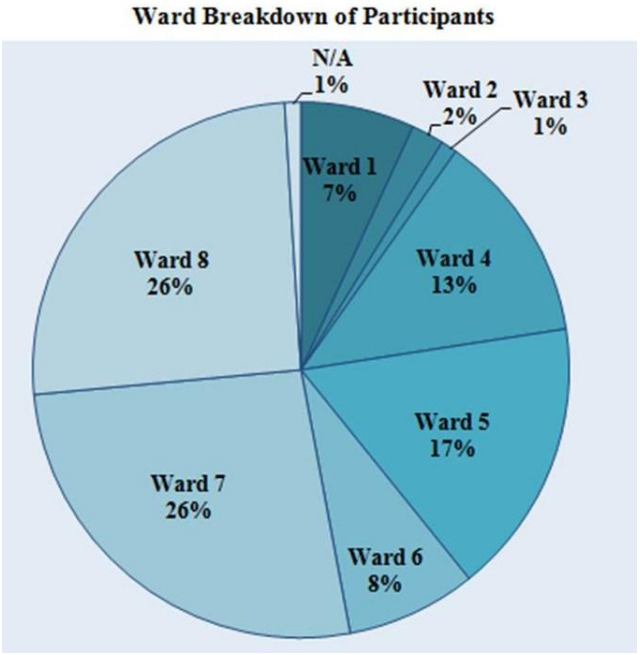
Characteristic	Youth (n=12,651)	Percent
Gender		
Male	5,664	55%
Female	6,987	45%
Age		
14	1,736	14%
15	2,049	16%
16	2,060	16%
17	2,051	16%
18	1,869	15%
19	1,339	11%
20	982	8%
21	565	4%
Ward		
1	829	7%
2	258	2%
3	60	1%
4	1,563	13%
5	2,096	17%
6	1,018	8%
7	3,444	27%
8	3,245	26%
n/r	138	1%
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian	61	1%
Asian (Non-Hispanic)	72	1%
Black (Non-Hispanic)	10,576	84%
Hispanic/Latino	385	2%
Pacific Islander	8	<1%
White (Non-Hispanic)	36	<1%
Other	230	2%
n/r	1,283	10%
Education Level		
High School or Below	9,631	76%
High School Graduate	1,066	9%
GED Recipient	232	2%
Left High School Before Graduating	186	1%
College Student	1,530	12%
n/r	6	<1%
Prior SYEP Participant		
Yes	11,131	88%
No	1,520	12%

***Data is reported for 12,651 youth. The remaining youth began the program after the evaluation had begun (the first week of the program).*
***n/r means No Response.*

Figure 3. Characteristics of SYEP Youth Participants







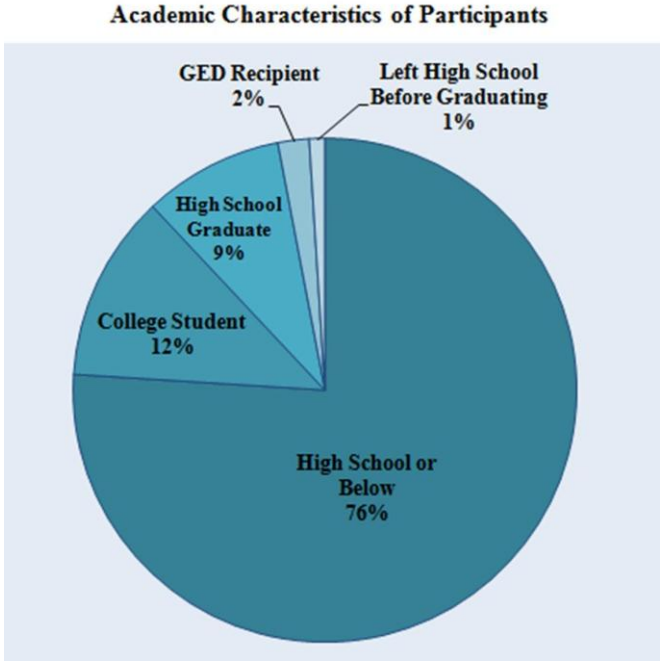


Table 5. Characteristics of SYEP Youth Survey Participants

Characteristic	Youth (n=888)	Percent
Gender		
Male	293	33%
Female	586	66%
n/r	9	1%
Age		
14	94	11%
15	160	18%
16	126	14%
17	117	13%
18	138	16%
19	107	12%
20	76	9%
21	51	6%
n/r	19	1%
Ward		
1	40	5%
2	16	3%
3	7	1%
4	116	13%
5	96	11%
6	74	8%
7	183	21%
8	201	23%
n/r	155	17%
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian or Alaska Native	5	1%
Asian or Pacific Islander	7	1%
Black or African American	783	88%
Hispanic or Latino	22	2%
White	7	1%
n/r	64	7%
Highest Level of Education Completed		
7th Grade	5	1%
8th Grade	59	6%
9th Grade	153	17%
10th Grade	162	18%
11th Grade	141	16%
12th Grade	154	17%
Graduated from High School/GED and Not in College	36	4%
Freshman in College	81	9%
Sophomore in College	45	5%
Junior in College	20	2%
Senior in College	7	1%
Left College Before Completing	4	<1%
Graduated from College	1	<1%
n/r	20	2%
Prior SYEP Participant		
New Participant	217	24%
Second Summer	180	20%
Third Summer	196	22%
Four of More Summers	238	27%
n/r	57	7%

Table 6. Family Characteristics of SYEP Youth Survey Participants

Characteristic	Youth (n=888)	Percent
Family Structure		
Lives with Both Mother and Father	201	23%
Lives with Father	36	4%
Lives with Mother	520	58%
Other	104	12%
n/r	27	3%
Household Size (Number)		
1	13	2%
2	120	14%
3	205	23%
4	209	24%
5	146	16%
6	92	10%
7	36	4%
8 or More	45	5%
n/r	22	2%
Average Age of Parent		
Mother	40 – 45 years	
Father	45 – 50 years	
Highest Education Level of Parent		
Mother		
Middle School or Junior High School	35	5%
High School or GED	288	32%
Some College	223	25%
College or Above	205	23%
n/r	137	15%
Father		
Middle School or Junior High School	40	5%
High School or GED	333	38%
Some College	134	15%
College or Above	94	10%
n/r	287	32%
Parent Employment (At Least One Parent Employed)		
Yes	624	70%
No	149	17%
n/r	115	13%
Primary Language Spoken at Home		
English	816	92%
Spanish	13	1%
Other	14	2%
n/r	44	5%
Teenage Parent		
No	770	87%
Yes	79	8%
n/r	39	5%
Age of Child		
0 to 2 years	61	77%
3 to 6 years	9	12%
Over 10 years	8	10%
Don't know	1	1%

Characteristics of Job Placements and Supervisors

Job Placements

A majority of the organization sites that youth were employed at were local non-profits (CBOs) (34%) and the District Agencies (40%). In addition, these sectors provided a majority of the supervisors (see Table 7). This is consistent with the youth self-reporting on the survey where most youth reported working in an office setting (15%) or government entity (15%). Also, 13% of youth reported having engaged in educational or academic classes (see Table 8). With regards to job placements, 88% of youth were satisfied with their job placement (See Table 9 in Youth and Supervisor Satisfaction section below).

Table 7. Organization Types Available

Organization Type	Total Hosts (%) (n=465)	Total Supervisors (%) (n=2,243)	Total Open Positions (%)* (n=16,629)
DC Charter School	22 (5%)	52 (1%)	1,303 (8%)
DC Public School	13 (3%)	74 (2%)	655 (4%)
District Agency	76 (16%)	1,090 (48%)	6,692 (40%)
Federal Agency	46 (10%)	235 (10%)	791 (5%)
Non-Profit (CBO)	179 (38%)	612 (27%)	5,802 (34%)
Private Sector	129 (28%)	280 (12%)	1,476 (9%)

**This represents the total number of spaces available at each site.*

Table 8. SYEP Placements (Youth Survey Results)

Organization Type	Total Job Types Identified (n=1,150)	Percent
Business	100	9%
Government	176	15%
Office Work	176	15%
Mentoring or Tutoring	73	6%
Community Cleanup/Improvement	52	4%
Research or Data Collection	44	4%
Camp Counselor	102	9%
Gardening/Outdoor Maintenance	29	2%
Building Maintenance	23	2%
Academic or Educational Classes	149	13%
Other	235	21%

Job Selection Process

Most of the supervisors responding to the survey (73%) reported having identified the youth they wanted to employ prior to the job starting. Of these supervisors 90% reported that they received some, if not all of the youth they requested. Also, multiple supervisors expressed an improvement this year in the process of identifying and requesting. For example, a supervisor from a CBO stated and a supervisor from a District agency stated:

> *"It was a great improvement and it really helps us to be able to identify certain kids that are interested in working for our organization and to be actually be able to interview the kids and receive the kids we choose."*

> *"The biggest improvement was that the options for the screening process was a lot better"*

It should be noted that an area of challenge expressed around this process was the concern that youth need to also engage in the placement process. For example, one supervisor stated:

> *"The quality of the youth – the screening process was a lot better – but we need to help youth to realize that they have to be serious and if they don't follow suit they could lose their employment. They need to engage in the process with us."*

In addition, youth expressed that they do in fact like to be able to choose their job placements depending on what their interests are. For example, some youth expressed:

> *"They should ask us, which they do, our interests and maybe what we want to focus on. Like say somebody wants to be a lawyer, they can work at a law firm part time, or, me I want to do news broadcasting so I would want to be in that office, you know, something like that. It's a big difference."*

Another youth expressed how choosing job placements are also related to actual job skills that they want to learn. It was stated:

> *"Some people in SYEP, they work at a recreation center, or a school, some were at an actual office. And you learn different things depending where you are. Depending on what type of person you are, what type of skills, or what you want to get from this, where your job is at is important."*

Supervisors

A subsample of the supervisors (213 youth or 9%) completed a supervisor survey. Analysis of this subgroup of respondents shows similar representation of the total supervisor population with respect to type of organization (see Table 9) therefore results of the survey can be used as a representation of the supervisors participating in SYEP. The characteristics of supervisors reveal that most supervisors are executive directors or program managers (56%). In addition, many of the supervisors are returning, with over half participating for three or more summers. This high

retention rate shows commitment to the program. In addition, more than half have been working with their organization for over five years. Most of the organizations hosted one to ten youth (47%). Lastly, a majority of the supervisors reported the main purpose of their organization was to serve youth (25%) or educational (21%).

Table 9. Characteristics of SYEP Supervisor Survey Participants

Characteristic	Supervisors (n=213)	Percent
Type of Organization		
Government Agency	70	34%
For-Profit Organization	22	10%
Non-Profit/Community Based Organization	98	46%
School/University	21	10%
Other	2	<1%
Purpose of Organization		
Youth	84	25%
Faith	5	1%
Law enforcement	9	2%
Education	67	21%
Community improvement or development	44	13%
Research or data collection	4	1%
Outdoor beautification	2	1%
Arts or culture	22	7%
Sales or retail	9	2%
Health	16	5%
Sports or recreation	3	1%
Childcare	5	1%
Other	66	20%
Years Worked at Organization		
Less than 1 year	27	12%
1 to 2 years	40	19%
3 to 5 years	43	20%
5 to 8 years	44	21%
More than 8 years	59	28%
Role in Organization		
Administration	43	20%
Assistant	15	7%
Executive Director/Manager	59	28%
Program Manager	60	28%
Youth worker	9	4%
Other	27	13%
Prior SYEP Participant		
New Participant	55	26%
Second Summer	50	23%
Third Summer	32	15%
Four of More Summers	75	35%
n/r	1	1%
Age of Youth Employed		
14 to 16 years	79	37%
17 to 21 years	131	62%
n/r	3%	1%
Number of Youth Employed		
1 to 10 youth	100	47%
11 to 20 youth	30	14%
More than 20 youth	79	37%
n/r	4	2%

Youth and Employer Satisfaction

Overall Satisfaction

Overall, the youth and employers were very satisfied with their participation in SYEP. Over two-thirds of the youth (69%) stated that they were very satisfied, with 29% saying they were somewhat satisfied. Only 2% of youth stated they were not satisfied at all. A majority of the youth (96%) stated they would participate next year. Of these youth, over half (54%) said they would want to stay in the same job. Of the 4% of youth that said they would not participate, main reasons included that they would be in school, have a better job, or not live in DC. Only eight youth stated they would not participate because of a bad experience.

Likewise, 68% of supervisors stated being extremely satisfied, with the remaining 28% stating they were somewhat satisfied, and only 4% stating they were not satisfied at all. Almost all of the supervisors said they would participate next year (96%). In addition, 93% of supervisors reported they would encourage others to apply to be a Host Agency.

Satisfaction with Placements

However, it should be noted that over half (59%) of supervisors stated they would not hire the same youth they had this year. In addition, as mentioned, over half of the youth (54%) that said they would participate next year would like the same job. Similar findings were seen in the interviews with statements such as the following:

> *"I think you all are doing a great job, I am impressed. Are you are certainly doing a great service to the city, and you are making a huge deposit in the lives in youth. I think the payoff will be great."*

> *"I think that SYEP did a great job this summer and I hope that we can keep the same employees next year – I think having the relationship with my SYEP liaison was good – and I hope we can have the same one next year."*

However, it should be noted that most supervisors did state there is still room for improvement in certain areas, however they were very pleased with the progress that SYEP has made in the past two years. For example, one supervisor stated:

> *"I think that they were definitely trying to improve things – there were definitely things that really make a good effective program."*

Application Process

With regards to the application, 89% of youth stated that the application process was easy and 57% of supervisors stated the Host Portal was easy to use (with 43% stating it was somewhat easy and only 1% stating it was never easy to use). In addition, when supervisors were asked if

they had issues with the payroll system, about half (46%) stated never and (49%) stated sometimes. Only 4% stated they consistently had problems. These findings are complemented with the challenges that were expressed in the interviews and focus groups around the application process, specifically with supervisors and youth workers and youth enrollment. For example, one supervisor stated:

> *"The multiple steps for application made it hard for them [the youth] to apply – lines for certification was discouraging – it is hard for kids. I know it is something they have to do but it is hard for them."*

> *"The only thing that was hard was tracking down kids to make sure they had everything in. It is hard because a lot of the kids could not find their stuff like birth certificates, etc."*

> *"What was hard was supporting the kids to have all of their stuff for their application – it was hard to have the time sources to help the kids. I took a few kids about enrollment events but even that took a lot of time – kids did not have a lot of stuff – kids do not know how to do this stuff and it comes down on the teachers to help."*

Youth expressed similar issues, especially around the deadline and communication of the deadline:

> *"I wanted to be in the program, I heard about the application process late and the deadline was too short."*

> *"When I went down to the counselor's office to talk to her about SYEP, she gives me my application, mind you, its April, she knows that the deadline is up. I did my application, and when I finally give it back to her, she's all like "oh wait, the deadline is over, you can't get this job, because no one really informed us."*

The focus groups also complemented the supervisor survey results with regards to the Host Portal and further satisfaction was discussed with the transparency of information on the website. Comments included:

> *"It was my first year doing this and it was user friendly."*

> *"The portal overall worked well, everything online. They also did a much better job of informing us with program information. This was done by email and DOES website. Email was good and having everything posted clearly on DOES website was good."*

Safety

In addition, 80% of the youth said they felt safe at their job. However, 18% said they only usually felt safe and 2% said they never felt safe. When asked if they felt that having this job kept them out of trouble, a majority of youth (82%) stated it would not have.

In addition, when asked what they would have done if they had not participated, many youth said they would have hung out with their friends, tried to find another job, or babysat.

Table 9. Youth and Employer Satisfaction

Youth Satisfaction	Youth (n=888)	Percent
Easy to Apply		
Yes	734	89%
No	94	11%
n/r	60	-
Satisfied with Placement		
Yes	707	88%
No	123	14%
n/r	58	-
Safe at Job		
Always	660	80%
Usually	145	18%
Never	18	2%
n/r	65	-
Felt Job Kept Them Out of Trouble		
Yes	58	9%
No	537	82%
I Don't Know	58	9%
n/r	235	-
Participate Next Year		
Yes, at the Same Job	359	54%
Yes, but at a Different Job	279	42%
No	30	4%
n/r	220	
Overall Satisfaction		
Very Satisfied	446	69%
Somewhat Satisfied	184	29%
Not Satisfied at All	19	2%
n/r	239	-
Supervisor Satisfaction	**Supervisor (n=213)**	**Percent**
Easy to Use Host Portal		
Always	108	56%
Sometimes	83	43%
Never	1	1%
I did not use the portal	20	-
n/r	1	-
Issues with Payroll System		
Never	90	46%
Sometimes	95	49%
Always	9	5%
Did not use payroll system	17	-
n/r	2	-
Participate Next Year		
Yes	188	96%
No	7	4%
n/r	18	-
Hire Same Youth Next Year		
Yes	37	19%
No	114	59%
I Don't Know	43	22%
n/r	19	-
Overall Satisfaction		
Very Satisfied	133	68%
Somewhat Satisfied	56	28%
Not Satisfied at All	7	4%
n/r	17	-

Youth and Employer Job Responsibility and Support

Orientation, Professionalism, and Preparedness

A majority of the youth (91%) stated they received an orientation (see Table 10). This is consistent with the responses of the supervisors where 92% of supervisors stated giving a job orientation. Of those that received an orientation, most of them consisted of a tour, introduction to other staff members, an overview of job responsibilities, an overview of the schedule, and explanation of the dress code. In addition, 93% of youth felt prepared for their job. When supervisors were asked if they felt that they youth were prepared for the job, 68% stated that a majority of their youth were and 29% stated only some of their youth were. Overall dress code was a major challenge expressed by the supervisors. The following comments sums up thoughts from the focus groups and interviews:

> *"Work place attire was a challenge. Some of the youth had to be pulled aside."*

> *"I continued to tell them and even provided them with a dress code and emphasized importance. Males continued to dress inappropriately. Dress code should be standard. Everyone should have some sort of uniform; it prepares them for the real world."*

Job Responsibilities

Furthermore, 98% of supervisors stated they had a clear understanding of their responsibilities before the start of SYEP and furthermore, 88% felt that they were given the information necessary to properly plan a high quality program. About 63% of supervisors stated participating in the AYD training provided by CYITC. Of those supervisors, 83% stated that this training was very helpful. Supervisors felt that the training helped reinforce concepts and ideas with working with youth and it was especially beneficial to those who do not usually work with youth.

Support

With regards to support, 75% of youth stated they were very satisfied with the support they received from their supervisors with 21% somewhat satisfied. Likewise, 88% of supervisors stated that their questions were answered in a timely manner by SYEP staff and all of the supervisors interviewed expressed how helpful and supportive the SYEP staff is. For example:

> *"Interaction between my liaison and I was great – they were very proactive, sent emails, constant contact, that was the biggest strengths of the program."*

> *"Communication with the program staff was excellent. They were right on everything."*

Furthermore, over half (62%) stated that they felt that SYEP would help them later in life with the remaining stating it would help them a little bit (31%) and only 7% stated it would not help them at all. In addition, 58% of the youth stated that they talked to their supervisor about future careers they were interested in.

Table 10. Youth and Supervisors Sense of Job Responsibilities and Support

Youth Job Responsibility	Youth (n=888)	Percent
Orientation		
Yes	752	91%
No	74	9%
n/r	62	-
Prepared for Job		
Yes	757	93%
No	59	7%
n/r	72	-
SYEP Will Help Later in Life		
Help Me Very Much	471	62%
Help Me a Little Bit	231	31%
Not Help Me at All	55	7%
n/r	131	-
Support By Supervisor		
Not Satisfied at All	37	4%
Somewhat Satisfied	169	21%
Very Satisfied	613	75%
Discuss Future Careers with Supervisors		
Yes	403	58%
No	293	48%
n/r	192	-
Supervisor Job Responsibility	**Supervisor (n=213)**	**Percent**
Orientation		
Yes	193	92%
No	16	8%
n/r	4	-
AYD Participation		
Yes	119	63%
No	69	37%
n/r	94	-
Questions Answered		
Yes	175	88%
No	25	12%
Did Not Have Questions	7	-
n/r	6	-
Understood Job Responsibility		
Yes	204	98%
No	5	2%
n/r	4	-
Adequate Information		
Yes	183	88%
No	25	12%
n/r	5	-
Youth Prepared		
Majority of the Youth	136	68%
Some Youth	57	29%
None of the Youth	6	3%
n/r	14	-

Job Readiness and Work Skills

Tables 11 and 12 shows indicators related to job responsibility and work skills. The work skills that youth reported gaining were responsibility, reporting to work on time, and communication. This is similar to the supervisor's assessment of the youth where they reported the top work skills being responsibility, reporting to work on time, communication, and accepting supervision. Supervisors also reported that the youth gained critical thinking skills and more of an understanding of the importance of a career.

With regards to work readiness and future employment skills, youth reported having gained more of an understanding of career interests and qualifications for future careers. Supervisors reported that they learned good work ethic and an introduction to a professional atmosphere. In addition, the youth learned leadership skills and working in teams.

When the supervisors were asked to do an overall assessment of all of their youth around performance indicators at work such as arriving to work on time, following instructions, accepting constructive criticism, working well with others, and behaving in a professional manner, the supervisors reported that at least 75% of the youth accomplished the skills. This was also expressed in interviews. The following quote from one supervisor summarizes themes around work readiness that were discussed in the interviews.

> *"I think they achieved the main goals of having a job – getting the soft skills, calling into work, contacting their supervisor, showing up on time, communicating with their supervisor."*

A majority of the youth reported spending their money on something they really needed, saving their money, or using it for food or transportation. During interviews with supervisors, money management was a common theme that many of the expressed concerns around.

> *"The kids did not understand the concept of savings. They had no reason or incentive to save. I think they need more help with money management. I know that some of them wanted to open a bank account, but the process was actually not that easy."*

Overall, the youth and the supervisors reporting gaining work readiness and job skills this summer.

Table 11. Job Readiness and Work Skills (Youth Assessment)

Youth Assessment	Youth (n=888)	Percent
Work Skills Gained		
Computer Skills	195	5%
Problem-solving	259	6%
Public Speaking	289	7%
Accepting Supervision	256	6%
Financial Management Skills	152	4%
Importance of Career	307	8%
Communication Skills	391	10%
Organization	279	7%
Reporting to Work on Time	398	10%
Dressing Appropriately for Work	353	9%
Completing Assignments on Time	278	7%
Asking for Help	265	7%
Being Responsible	431	11%
Using Numbers	71	2%
Other	101	2%
None	44	1%
Job Readiness Skills Gained		
Helped Decide Job Interests	390	21%
Showed me how to search for jobs	187	10%
Showed me how to fill out a job application	188	10%
Helped me create a resume	224	12%
Prepared me for a job interview	229	12%
Referred me to potential jobs	137	7%
Qualifications for Future Career	266	14%
Helped me arrange child care	28	2%
Other	88	5%
None	102	6%
Name Three Careers		
Yes	628	90%
No	71	10%
n/r	189	-
Arrive to Work on Time		
Always	578	85%
Sometimes	100	15%
Never	1	<1%
n/r	209	-
Clean Appearance at Work		
Yes	675	99%
No	4	1%
n/r	209	-
Manage Money		
Always	428	55%
Sometimes	316	41%
Never	27	4%
n/r	117	-

Table 12. Job Readiness and Work Skills (Supervisor Assessment)

Supervisor Assessment	Supervisor (n=213)	Percent
Work Skills Gained		
Computer Skills	47	8%
Problem-solving	59	10%
Public Speaking	25	4%
Accepting Supervision	63	11%
Financial Management Skills	12	2%
Importance of Career	33	6%
Communication Skills	72	12%
Organization	15	3%
Reporting to Work on Time	59	10%
Dressing Appropriately for Work	44	8%
Completing Assignments on Time	26	4%
Asking for Help	19	3%
Being Responsible	99	17%
Other	9	2%
Academic Skills Gained		
Reading and Writing	53	17%
Math and Science	19	6%
Problem-solving and Critical Thinking	85	28%
Study Habits	9	3%
Importance of Education	57	19%
Connections to Educational Resources	38	12%
Computer and Technology	47	15%
Future Employment Preparation		
Good Work Ethic	98	25%
Introduction to Professional Atmosphere	97	25%
Importance of Team Work	55	14%
Leadership Skills	64	16%
Exposure to Possible Future Careers	80	20%
Life Skills		
Sharing Ideas and Feelings	59	8%
Listening to Others	97	13%
Working on a Team	128	17%
Making Good Decisions	107	14%
Setting Goals	112	15%
Being a Good Leader	76	10%
Solving Problems Without Violence	56	8%
Adult Support	87	12%
None	23	3%
Youth Performance Assessment*		
On Time to Work	177, 21, 1	89%, 11%, <1%
Called When Late or Absent	151, 38, 7	77%, 19%, 4%
Regular Attendance	171, 24, 0	88%, 12%, 0%
Dressed Appropriately	177, 16, 3	90%, 8%, 2%
Positive Attitude	175, 17, 3	90%, 9%, 1%
Accepted Criticism	163, 18, 15	83%, 9%, 8%
Completed Tasks Appropriately	145, 15, 3	90%, 9%, 1%
Followed Instructions	169, 13, 3	91%, 7%, 2%
Worked Well With Others	172, 9, 6	92%, 5%, 3%
Asked Appropriate Questions	158, 15, 13	85%, 8%, 7%
Behaved in a Professional Manner	160, 30, 5	82%, 15%, 3%
Showed Initiative	141, 45, 8	73%, 23%, 4%

**At least 75% of youth accomplished, at least 75% of youth did not accomplish, unsure*

Limitations

A major issue with self-reporting is that adolescents may not answer sensitive questions honestly and instead may exaggerate or minimize involvement in certain activities. In addition, they may respond to what they feel like is socially desirable. However, due to the large sample size, this method was the best fit. To minimize response bias, participants were be notified that their responses are anonymous and confidential and that their responses would not affect their employment. Because a pre-post test was employed, tracking is necessary. To reduce anxiety about confidentiality, only the first letter of their first and last name was asked as well as date of birth. In addition, survey results were supplemented with qualitative results. This helps validate the findings.

CONCLUSION

Next Steps

This evaluation report provides successes and challenges for SYEP 2011. As seen there has been much progress made in the past year to strengthen program offerings, recruit youth and host agencies, provide support to youth and staff, and to increase skills learned by the youth. This evaluation report will be used by DOES in their strategic plan for summer 2012. In addition, elements of this report will be used as baseline data for a longitudinal study on the program.

Recommendations

Although beyond the scope of this report, some key recommendations are offered to begin the strategic planning stages of summer 2012 including youth placements quality around host sites and supplemental activities, diversity in participants, and collaboration. These were guided by the findings and additional discussions in the focus groups and interviews

Consistent Quality and Supplemental Activities

SYEP has begun to incorporate activities that are age and developmentally appropriate in an environment that engages the youth. In order to continue to build on this it is important that the youth are in quality sites and being engaged positively. For example, worksites should undergo site visits with regards to programming to ensure they are providing positive programming. In addition, worksites that are returning should demonstrate how learning opportunities exists there.

Work placements should continue to be based on each youth's interests, education, and career goals. In addition, a recommendation suggested by a supervisor to alleviate issues that may arise with multiple youth placements is that once a selection of a youth is made, the youth should be removed from the roster until the Host Agency states they are not able to take the youth or the youth declines.

In addition, more intentional job placements should occur around youth interests and expectations of the youth. This could be done through mandatory workshops before being placed at a worksite where participants can learn about the goals of SYEP, different jobs what is expected of them, and worksite rules and responsibilities. These workshops could continue on quarterly with the help of the Host Agencies and include topics like college planning, life skills, and leadership skills.

As SYEP is working with youth who are developing and learning skills to help navigate their transition into adulthood, Program elements should be supplemented by other program activities, including community service, career portfolio development, money management, career and

educational exposure events, and youth leadership development. Community service should also be promoted as this can further expose youth to career interests and long-term opportunities.

Diversity in Participants

Although SYEP has made progress in diversifying their participants and target youth from at-risk areas these efforts should continue to recruit youth who are at higher levels of negative risk factors such as dropping out of school and poverty. In addition, SYEP should continue to make a concerned effort to reach those youth who are disengaged such as youth who have dropped out of high school. SYEP could utilize their offerings to reengage the youth. For example, selected spots could be reserved for these youth and coupled with a GED or credit recovery programs to help reengage them. In addition, SYEP should continue to partner with schools to assist with the application process.

Collaboration

There are multiple agencies in DC that provide, fund, and oversee youth education, training, and employment services (Ross, 2011). However, the different funding streams and performance measures often cause a lack of collaboration and ability for data sharing (Ross, 2011). The main agencies that play a role in youth development employment services in the district can be categorized by Policy/Oversight, Education, and Funding/Service Providers.

Policy/Oversight Agencies

The main policy and oversight agencies in DC include the Workforce Investment/Youth Council (WIC/YIC), Office of the State Superintendent for Education (OSSE), Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME), and the Public Charter School Board (PCSB). WIC/YIC is mandated by the Federal Workforce Investment Act to oversee workforce development and policy, however have been inactive or unsuccessful in the past decade (Ross, 2011). OSSE and PCSB set policies, apply oversight, and direct resources to ensure quality education and resources to DC youth. Lastly, DME oversees the development and implementation of an Education and Youth Development Plan, a comprehensive overview and plan of the current education and youth development policy and practice within DC as well as recommendations for future youth policies and regulations.

Education Agencies

The key education players include DCPS, DC Public Charter Schools (DCPCS), and the Community College of the District of Columbia (CCDC). DCPS and DCPCS offer a variety of special initiatives and programs to engage those enrolled as well alternative programs for those off-track (Ross, 2011). CCDC offers academic and career-focused associate degrees and

workforce development programs for high school graduates who need further study to become college-ready (Ross, 2011).

Funding/Service Providers

The key employment funding and service providers include CBO's, CYITC, and DOES. Their main functions with regards to youth employment are discussed above.

By pulling in collaboration with all of these agencies, a strategic plan with regards to youth workforce development can be achieved and involve not only summer programming but ongoing year round opportunities. SYEP has already begun to make efforts to collaborate with some of these agencies, and by continuing these efforts; the program can leverage the resources and opportunities available. For example, working with other agencies such as OSSE can streamline recruitment and documentation that they require for programs such as DC Tuition Assistance Grants. SYEP should also reach out to local universities to provide assistance with not only the implementation of the program but also to provide resources and opportunities such as college tours and career fairs. Lastly, reaching out to local banks such as PNC and Bank of America to help youth open accounts and teach money management skills.

Conclusion

Although there are limitations, this report does add to the current research of the effects of summer youth employment programs on youth development specifically in DC. In addition, this report focused on a large sample of urban youth. Few studies regarding youth employment have utilized a similar sample without constraining their analysis across races or ethnicities (Johnson, 2004). A 2009 report by the Wallace Foundation stated that there was a lack of evidence found for youth development outcomes because those outcomes were rarely, if ever, evaluated (Terezen, Anderson & Hamilton, 2009). Moreover, a majority of the studies that have evaluated specifically summer youth employment programs focus on process evaluation and not behavior change in participants. Programs are not trained to conduct comprehensive evaluation and use simple research methods to develop quick information about the program and its function. This evaluation combines academic research with a practical model for evaluations of summer youth employment programs. By combining academia with the youth programming field, it allows for researcher to learn the needs, language, and culture while sharing evidence-based practices. As mentioned a comprehensive report will be available in May 2012 which explores youth behavior change and process for replication of SYEP for other cities.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purpose of this report, the following definitions will be used:

- Employability Skills: Set of skills, knowledge and personal attributes that make an individual more likely to secure a job and be successful in the workforce.
- Future Orientation: One's expectations and the degree to which one is thoughtful about their future.
- Higher Education: Two or four year college/university
- Job Readiness Services: Services that include career awareness and exploration activities, general job training activities, resume, cover letter, and interview preparation, and general workforce readiness and skills.
- Low-Income: An individual whose family's taxable income for the preceding year did not exceed 150 percent of the poverty level amount.
- Work Ethic: Demonstrating personal accountability and effective work habits such as punctuality, working productively with others, time and workload management, and appropriate dress.
- Youth: The entire adolescent period, from ages 10 until 24 years.
- Youth Development: The physical, social, and emotional processes that occur during the adolescent period, from ages 14 until 24 years.
- Youth Development Programs: Programs focusing on fostering the skills necessary for personal, social, and career-related success.
- Urban: Belonging to a densely populated city.

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