

a training  
quick start  
guide for  
youth council  
members

YOUTH  
COUNCIL  
TOOLKIT **MODULE 4**



**United States Department of Labor**

Employment & Training Administration / Office of Youth Services / Office of Youth Opportunities

200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N4671 / Washington, DC 20210

phone: 202 693 3035 fax: 202 693 3532 [http://www.doleta.gov/youth\\_services/](http://www.doleta.gov/youth_services/)

## start here

The Youth Council is a new feature of the workforce development system mandated by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). It provides a unique opportunity for a local community to create, through a common vision, a system of activities and services enabling youth to be successful in education and the workplace, and to become leaders in their community.

Over 600 Youth Councils across the nation are establishing local youth development systems and making youth policy recommendations to local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs).

### what does the youth council do?

Through this common community vision, the Youth Council becomes actively engaged in planning and managing youth funds received in their local area under WIA as well as:

1. Build community awareness and demonstrate leadership and addressing key development, education and employment issues affecting youth;
2. Facilitate coordination of youth activities in the community;
3. Influence and leverage other community youth funds and services; and
4. Address the specific needs of youth in the community.

### who are the members of the youth council?

Youth Council members are volunteer men and women who have a special interest or expertise in youth policy. Under the Act, the membership of the Youth Council must include:

1. Members of the local WIB who have special interest or expertise in youth policy;
2. Members who represent service agencies, such as juvenile justice and local law enforcement agencies;
3. Members who represent local public housing authorities;

4. Parents of eligible youth seeking assistance under WIA;
5. Individuals (including former participants) and members representing organizations that have experience relating to youth activities; and
6. Members who represent Job Corps Centers, if a Center is located in the local area.

While the Act requires certain representation, it also leaves considerable discretion to the local WIB and local elected official(s) to determine the appropriate additional members needed to create a Youth Council that best represents the community and one that will be successful in accomplishing the goals of the Youth Council. For example, many WIBs are including youth members as well as representatives from business and education. There is no mandated size, but the typical Youth Council might include 20-25 members. Members are appointed to the Youth Council by the local WIB, with input and consultation of the local elected official(s).

### what are the youth council's roles and responsibilities

The primary responsibility of the Youth Council is to provide expertise in youth policy and to assist the local WIB.

1. Create a strategic plan using labor market information and other community data;
2. Craft the parameters for a Request for Proposal to direct how local WIA youth services are to be delivered, recommend WIA youth providers to the WIB, and conduct oversight;

3. Broaden the youth employment and training focus in the community to incorporate a youth development perspective; and
4. Promote and market goals, activities and accomplishments of the Youth Council.

### is there a mechanism for youth input?

Absolutely. Youth input is a vital component in the development of a system that most directly affects our youth. Efforts will be ongoing to ensure their active participation, as well as that of parents.

### what is the workforce investment act?

Briefly, the Workforce Investment Act is the nation's principle workforce development legislation, replacing the Job Training Partnership Act. It provides funds to address the employment and training needs of adults, dislocated workers and youth. The youth program is designed to create local youth systems that are closely linked to the labor market and provide youth with a comprehensive set of year-round comprehensive service strategies based on an individualized assessment. The youth program blends youth development activities with employment and training activities.

### why are youth councils important?

Because communities need a youth development system and an economic and workforce development strategy that will attract and retain employers and prepare a skilled workforce.

### accept the challenge?

Youth Council members are called upon to serve as advocates for local area youth and to ensure the provision and coordination of workforce training activities.

federal government  
workforce investment act  
workforce investment act  
state workforce  
state workforce  
investment board  
(appointed by governor)  
(appointed by governor)  
local workforce  
local workforce  
investment board  
(appointed by local elected official)  
(appointed by local elected official)  
youth council  
youth council  
(appointed by WIB chair, in  
consultation with  
local elected officials)  
local elected official

