



OJJDP FACT SHEET

Shay Bilchik, Administrator

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A Compendium of Programs That Work for Youth

by Eileen M. Garry

One of the most encouraging trends in the field of programming for youth is the increase in the number of programs that are being evaluated for concrete and measurable outcomes. Despite the doomsayers who look at the problems of youth and say, “nothing works,” a growing body of evidence demonstrates that many programs are helping youth—including those who are at risk or disadvantaged—develop into responsible, self-sufficient citizens. The next step after evaluating the effectiveness of these programs is to convey the results to legislators, policymakers, practitioners, and the general public. It is through this kind of effort that we can create a constructive dialog to inform the public about how best to invest scarce resources for youth in order to obtain the most positive impact.

MORE Things That DO Make a Difference for Youth: A Compendium of Evaluations of Youth Programs and Practices, Volume II, a publication of the American Youth Policy Forum (AYPF), is a valuable tool for those who want to know “what works.” The *Compendium* profiles evaluated programs that effectively address a variety of concerns related to youth, from increasing academic achievement to reducing delinquent behavior. From a review of 150 documents, the editors chose 46 programs, based on 3 criteria: program characteristics, data produced, and quality of evaluation.

Building on the 1997 *Some Things DO Make a Difference for Youth: A Compendium of Evaluations of Youth Programs and Practices*, this new volume includes many studies not described in the first *Compendium* and features updates, new evaluations, and a broader array of program types. Through an analysis of the program evaluations, AYPF identified the following nine program principles leading to positive outcomes for young people:

- ◆ Quality of implementation.
- ◆ Caring, knowledgeable adults.
- ◆ High standards and expectations.
- ◆ Parent/guardian participation.

- ◆ Community involvement.
- ◆ Holistic approaches.
- ◆ Youth as resources/community service and service-learning.
- ◆ Work-based learning.
- ◆ Long-term services, support, and followup.

The *Compendium* organizes the program summaries under three headings: Education and Career Development, Building Strong Communities, and Of Interest (studies dealing with topics of special interest, such as adolescent health behavior, employment for school dropouts, and the future for youth with a General Educational Development credential instead of a traditional high school diploma). Each program description presents research findings, discusses key components, and examines the factors that contributed to the program’s success.

The summaries are brief (generally three to four pages), and the format adds to the accessibility of the information. Most of the program sketches consist of up to nine sections, including Overview, Population, Evidence of Effectiveness, Key Components, Contributing Factors, Study Methodology, Geographic Areas, Contact Information, and—for a few summaries—Additional Resources. Policymakers and practitioners will find these concise descriptions an ideal introduction to these programs and the results they achieved. Researchers will be interested in the models for studies that can be both rigorous and practical, and all those working with youth will discover a source of new ideas and practical lessons on effective principles and practices.

For a more indepth look at the results of the evaluations, especially details of methodology, readers are encouraged to consult the original evaluations. Contact information is provided with each program summary, and a bibliography of all evaluations is included. A new feature in this *Compendium* is the Summary of Program Characteristics, which encapsulates each program’s focus, findings, and key components.

For Further Information

To obtain a copy of *MORE Things That DO Make a Difference for Youth: A Compendium of Evaluations of Youth Programs and Practices, Volume II* or *Some Things DO Make a Difference for Youth: A Compendium of Evaluations of Youth Programs and Practices*, send \$10 (which includes postage and handling in the contiguous United States) for either volume or \$17.50 for both volumes to American Youth Policy Forum, 1836 Jefferson Place NW., Washington, DC 20036-2505. To obtain prices for bulk orders and prices for orders outside the contiguous United States, call 202-775-9731.

For information about Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) program initiatives, contact:

Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse
800-638-8736; 301-519-5212 (fax)
askncjrs@ncjrs.org (e-mail)
www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org (Internet)

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AYPF is a nonpartisan professional development organization providing learning opportunities for policymakers and practitioners working on youth issues at the local, State, and national levels. Its goal is to provide participants with information, insights, and contacts on issues related to the development of healthy and successful young people, productive workers, and participating citizens in a democratic society.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, and the Office for Victims of Crime.

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