

Follow Up Services Handbook

A Technical Assistance Guide for Minnesota WIA Youth Practitioners

**Prepared for
Minnesota Department of Economic Security
Office of Youth Development**

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I. PROJECT SUMMARY

This handbook was prepared as a technical assistance guide for Minnesota practitioners providing Workforce Investment Act youth programming. It cites WIA requirements for implementing follow up services and reviews research on current practices and model programs. The document also provides guidance on developing a follow up system and contains useful tools and sample forms. This handbook is intended to assist youth practitioners as they:

- Become familiar with WIA requirements for follow up systems;
- Learn about "Best Practices";
- Develop a follow up system to comply with WIA requirements and meet the needs of participants.

II. RESEARCH

A. FOLLOW UP REQUIREMENTS

This section contains legislative and DOL technical assistance citations related to follow up. The Workforce Investment Act and the Final Rule give local programs broad authority to develop follow up strategies that address the needs of the participants they serve.

Federal Acts & Regulations

Workforce Investment Act

WIA Section 129 (c) (2) (I) *follow up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate;*

Workforce Investment Act Final Rule

664.450 –664.450(b)

Follow up services for youth may include:

The leadership development and supportive service activities listed in sections 664.420 and 664.440 of this subpart;

Regular contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise;

Assistance in securing better paying jobs, career development and further education;

Work-related peer support groups;

Adult mentoring; and

Tracking the progress of youth in employment after training.

All youth participants must receive some form of follow up services for a minimum duration of 12 months. Follow up services may be provided beyond twelve (12) months at the State or Local Board's discretion. The types of services provided and the duration of services must be determined based on the needs of the individual. The scope of these follow up services may be less intensive for youth who have only participated in summer youth employment opportunities. (WIA sec. 129 (c)(2)(I).)

TEGL 3-99

Local areas have broad discretion in determining the intensity and type of follow up services.

B. RESOURCES

1. Minnesota WIA Youth Providers Follow Up Systems

This summary represents information gathered by the MDES Office of Youth Development from local WIA plans and 2000 and 2001 Field Monitoring Reports as they relate to follow up strategies. Sixteen WSA's are represented.

Follow Up Goals

- Develop new strategies to enable youth to follow their plan
- Assist youth in overcoming barriers which may be in the way of achieving and maintaining career objective
- Assessing the need for new intervention and prevention strategies
- Help youth stay on track in moving toward their long-term goals
- Identify problems
- Identify supportive service needs
- Ensure continued success
- Provide support
- Troubleshoot employment and personal issues
- Gain insights into future intervention and prevention strategies
- Continuous improvement of youth services

How are exited participants contacted?

- Mail
- E-Mail
- Telephone
- Personal Meetings
- Surveys

Who is contacted?

Youth
Parents
Employer
School
Special Education Staff
Court Services
Social Services
Other agencies involved with youth

Follow up Services Offered

Leadership development
Mentoring
Support services
Assistance with job retention or career advancement
Referral to resources to continue education
Information and Fliers on topics of job search, careers job keeping tips
Troubleshooting employment and personal issues
Job development assistance, if youth loses a job
Help with updating resumes
Contact with school
Employment services
Life skills training

Length of Follow Up is 12 Months with intervals:

Quarterly
60-days (employer/youth)
Regular Periodic
13 weeks, 26 weeks and 52 weeks

Note: very few WSA's reported the frequency of follow up

Who will do follow up?

Case managers/WSA or contracted staff

Tracking Systems

MIS Tickler/tracking System
Case notes
File Drawer
TEAMS Management Information System

2. **Model Programs – “Best Practices”**

a. ***Radar Approach to Job Retention***

The Radar approach focuses mainly on job retention. However, the principles used could apply for general follow up as well. The approach relies on education, prevention and intervention. Retention is linked to planning and is initiated not just when the participant is ready to exit the program, but at the very beginning when they are enrolled and an assessment/service strategy is developed.

Participants identify their personal role models and support systems as they learn about the reality of work. The approach teaches them when, how and why to quit a job and helps them set career goals to achieve before quitting a job. They gain insight into why they have quit jobs in the past and how to deal with difficult situations in the future.

A Retention Risk Assessment Inventory helps the participant and the case manager develop a profile that can assist with determining the level of contact and follow up required.

Central Minnesota Jobs and Training currently uses a modified version of the Radar approach with participants who have recently gotten off welfare programs. Copies of a retention brochure, a survey, assessment forms, sample letters and a retention plan form are contained in the appendix of this report.

Retention specialists, not MFIP case managers, work with clients before they are employed and develop relationships of trust. Three key components of retention are:

- Developing good relationships with the Retention Specialist before the participant is employed and exits the program;
- Persistent Contact with participants;
- Written Retention Plans that include goals and emergency plans.

Additional information about the *Radar Approach to Job Retention* may be obtained by contacting:

Robbin and Associates
Employment and Training Program Consultants
556 Merritt Avenue
Oakland, CA 94610
(510) 834-8524
FAX: (510) 834-2706

- b. ***Getting in Staying on Moving Up (A Practitioner's Approach to Employment Retention)*** is a publication of Public/Private Ventures. According to P/PV Moving Up, an employment program operated by New York's Vocational Foundation, Inc. (VFI) is a national model for job retention. Their approach stresses coordination and continuity from training to placement to job retention. P/PV reports that "VFI's career advisors are the front-line employment specialists who not only help graduates find work, but who then stick with those graduates for up to two years, making sure they stay on the job, learn and advance."

Lessons learned from *Moving Up*:

- Introduce participants to a "culture of employment" beginning on Day one.
- Recruit and maintain a professional staff with personal skills and life experience that can relate to youth
- Develop a holistic approach to services to support the whole person—emotionally, physically and intellectually, as well as vocationally.
- Create a close, long-term relationship with at least one successful, caring adult.
- Incorporate follow up services into the rhythm of the youth's workday, so staff can provide effective support without disrupting the job.
- Cultivate employers whose requirements you understand, and use every opportunity, no matter how brief, to learn something more about the company and its industry.
- Retention begins at intake.

Additional information about the Moving Up program may be obtained by contacting P/PV at the following address or at their web site www.ppv.org

Public/Private Ventures
2000 Market Street
Suite 600
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Phone: 215-557-4400
Fax: 215 -557 4469

- c. ***Memorandum for Youth Opportunity Grantees – Follow up and Retention Strategies*** is a U.S. Department of Labor memorandum designed to provide a framework for Youth Opportunities Grantees that are required to provide two years of follow up for program participants.

The memo can be found in the appendix of this Handbook. It

focuses on follow up services and activities to achieve youth development, education, and employment goals and presents a brief description of principles and best practices developed by service providers such as Vocational Foundation inc., STRIVE, MY TURN, JUMA Ventures, and other PEPNET awardees.

The Youth Opportunity Memo offers practical examples of follow activities and work and school-related questions to ask during follow up activities as well as a schedule for follow up services.

III. DEVELOPING A FOLLOW UP SYSTEM

A. FOLLOW UP CHALLENGES

Youth are often mobile; they move and may do not leave forwarding addresses.

Develop a written exit strategy before the youth exits the program.
Record name, address and phone numbers for two contacts.

Some youth are reluctant to participate in follow up. They might feel they don't need or want to continue "in the program" once they've graduated or found a job.

Build follow up into the service strategy from the beginning. Help the participant understand that 12-month follow up is a program requirement, but that he/she will be an active participant in the plan and should decide when, where and how much follow up is necessary. Lay the groundwork for a follow up plan long before exit.

Including the employer in follow up is often difficult and can put a stigma on the participant.

For youth receiving OJT or Work Experience Services that turn into full-time unsubsidized employment, follow up is considered part of "the program." It can be build into the expectations from the beginning.

For youth who find their own jobs, this is a matter to be worked out with the participant. Several questions need to be considered and addressed in the exit strategy. Is it necessary to contact the employer, or will close contact with the former participant be enough? How can you contact the employer without disrupting his/her workplace? What do you have to offer the employer? Why should he/she want you to visit the workplace?

B. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FOLLOW UP

1. Match follow up services to the participant's characteristics, needs and personal situation.

Consider:

- Age
- Needs
- "At Risk" status
- Family/School/Personal Support Systems
- Workplace hours

2. Develop a follow up assessment tool to determine the kind and amount of follow up needed.

Consider:

- Work History
- Reasons he/she has previously left jobs or dropped out of school
- Social Skills
- Life Skills
- Crisis and Stress Management Skills
- Attitude towards work or school
- Family/life situation
- Barriers to employment/school completion including transportation, childcare, substance abuse, mental health issues

The Assessment information gathered at intake and throughout the training/service period should be a resource for this type of information. Do not wait until the participant exits from the program to gather and evaluate his/her situation as it relates to follow up.

3. Develop a written follow up plan with the participant before he/she actually exits the program. The plan should be agreed to and signed by the participant.

Include:

- The retention or follow up assessment

- A list of people/resources the participant could use when tempted to quit school or job.
- Goals to reach on the job before quitting
- Goals to reach in school before graduation
- Plans for transportation, and child care
- Back up plans for transportation and childcare
- Name, address, phone and email address of people to contact, if the case manager cannot locate the participant
- Retention services to be provided by Youth Program Case manager or other agency staff.
- Include the when, where, who, and how follow up will occur and what services will/can be provided based on need.

4. Follow the plan and hold the participant accountable for his/her signed agreement. Be persistent. Maintain the agreed schedule of contact.

Develop a tickler (reminder) system for sending out letters, surveys or scheduling telephone or personal contacts. Solicit feedback from the participant.

Be respectful of the participant's work and home responsibilities. Consider taking him/her to lunch to discuss successes, potential problems and to offer support.

5. Maintain High Expectations and Lots of Support. Provide additional support, counseling, resources and supportive services as needed. Make adjustments to the plan, when necessary.

C. TOOLS FOR DEVELOPING FOLLOW UP

Charts on the following pages may be used as tools to assist in developing a follow up system. The Appendix includes samples of forms and other useful tools and materials.

WIA Follow Up Strategy Matrix

Type of Service or Status at Exit from Program	Summer Work Experience Only	Full-time Employment	Post Secondary Education/Training
General Participant Characteristics	Younger Youth 14-18 Likely to be still in high school or ALC May be in Special Education	Older Youth 18-21 High School Graduate or Attending ALC or GED	Older Youth 18-21 High School Graduate
Contact Method	Mail E-Mail Telephone Personal Contact	Telephone (scheduled or unscheduled calls) E-Mail (survey, congratulations on your new job, offer services) Personal Contact (home visit, at work site, work place lunch or break, before or after work)	Telephone Mail E-Mail Personal Contact
Who will be Contacted?	Participant/youth Parents School Special Education Staff Court Services Social Services Other Agencies involved with youth	Participant Employer	Participant School – academic reports

<p>Services Offered/Provided</p>	<p>Leadership Development Mentoring Tutoring/study skills training Career Exploration Services Job Shadowing Career Day</p>	<p>Mentoring (work-based) Support Services Job Retention Services Career Advancement Services Troubleshooting –employment & personal issues Resource Materials such as the <u>JIST Job Survival Book</u></p>	<p>Mentoring Scholarship/grants/loans Tutoring/study skills training Support Services Life skill training Job Networking Job Development Assistance Resume Writing Employment Services</p>
<p>Follow Up Intervals</p>	<p>Exit Interview Monthly Quarterly</p>	<p>Exit Interview Weekly Bi-Weekly Monthly Quarterly</p>	<p>Exit Interview Monthly Quarterly</p>
<p>Who will Contact?</p>	<p>Case Manager</p>	<p>Case Manager Career Advisor Retention Specialist</p>	<p>Case Manager Career Advisor Retention Specialist</p>
<p>Tracking Systems</p>	<p>Tickler/tracking system Case notes Surveys Completed</p>	<p>Tickler/tracking system Case notes Surveys Completed</p>	<p>Tickler/tracking system Case notes Surveys Completed</p>
<p>Model Programs</p>	<p></p>	<p>Robbin & Associates Radar <u>Approach to Job Retention</u> <u>Working Ventures Getting in</u> <u>Staying on Moving Up</u></p>	<p></p>

WIA Follow Up Strategy Planning Matrix

Type of Service or Status at Exit from Program				
General Participant Characteristics				
Contact Method				
Who will be Contacted?				
Services Offered/Provided				
Follow Up Intervals				
Who will Contact?				
Tracking Systems				

This form may be used to plan Follow Up services for individuals or for general program planning.

IV. APPENDIX

- A. Focus on Success for the Future..**
- B. Job Retention Survey**
- C. Retention Assessment**
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- F. WIA Questionnaire**
- G. Sample Letters**
- H. Risk Factors/Follow Up Services**
- I. Memorandum for Youth Opportunity Grantees – Follow up and Retention Strategies**

Job Retention Survey

Contact Made Y/N:

SSAN -- Sequence Letter:

Contact #

Contact Date / /

Survey person

Employed At:

Job Title:

Hours per week: Benefits Y/N:

Pay per Hour: \$ -

Tips/OT Y/N:

Wage Increase \$ -

Wage Increase Date: / /

Advance/Education Y/N:

Advance/Education Explain:

Trans Problems Y/N:

Trans Problem Explain:

Travel Miles:

Adequate Housing Y/N:

Adequate Housing Explain:

Child Problems Y/N:

Child Problem Explain:

Other Problems Y/N:

Other Problems Explain:

What Do You Like About Your Job:

Date Left Job: / /

Reasons for Leaving Your Job:

Reasons for Leave Explain:

Referred to Job Search Y/N:

HRF Sent Y/N:

MFIP Closed? Y/N

Reason MFIP Closed:

Date MFIP Closed: / /

Received McKnight Clothing \$ Y/N

Referred to McKnight Transportation Y/N

Handwritten signature or initials

Problems Survey

Tuesday, October 23, 2001

SSN _____

Last Name _____

First Name _____

Employed At _____

Job Title _____

Problem Date ____/____/____

Problem Resolved Date ____/____/____

Trans Problems

Travel Miles _____

Housing Problems

Child Problems

Other Problems

Other Problems Explain _____

Employment Survey

Employment Survey 2013
Employment Survey 2013

SSN _____

Last Name _____

First Name _____

Employed At _____

Employment Start Date ____/____/____

Job Title _____

Job Title Start Date ____/____/____

Hours Per Week _____ Date ____/____/____

Pay Per Hour _____

Benefits

Employer Related:

Health

Dental

Sick Leave

Vacation

Pension

Flex Schedule

Flex Benefits

County Related:

Food Stamps

TYCC

Stand Alone MA

Extended MA

Wage Increase Amt _____

Wage Increase Date ____/____/____

Advance/Education Opportunity

Advance/Education Achievement

How many times have you been late to work _____

How many times have you been absent from work _____

Do you get along with co-workers/supervisor

What do you like about your job? _____

Date Left Job ____/____/____

Reason(s) for leaving job _____

Date: _____
Name: _____
Employer: _____
Job Title: _____

Retention Assessment

1. This job is a stepping stone to a better job and life for me because:

Skills I can learn on this job that will help meet my employment goals:

2. The major problems or fears that could stop me from reaching my goals are:

3. My plan of action for overcoming these problems/fears is:

4. Besides accomplishing the goals listed above, before I leave this job I will need the following:

- _____ Ability to get a good reference
- _____ Time on the job
- _____ Amount of \$ saved

Other accomplishments that I want to achieve before I leave this job are:

5. I know that some things about work will be stressful. The things that would be most stressful for me would be:

6. The bad ways I deal with stress are:

The good ways that I deal with stress are:

7. I've left jobs in the past because:

8. The things I would most like to improve about myself as a worker are:

9. The most important thing to me about having and holding a job is:

10. I will be able to stay in this job because:

Retention Plan

Name: _____

This is my emergency plan for when I am tempted to leave this job:

People I can call who support my employment goals (list names and phone numbers):

I will not leave this job until I have reached this goal:

These are my back up plans:

Transportation:

Child care:

Here's what I can expect from CMJTS retention services:

Signature

Date

WIA YOUTH EXIT STRATEGY

Participant name: _____ Date _____

Employer Name: _____ Phone _____

Address: _____

Wage _____ Hours per week _____ Start date _____

Benefits: _____ YES _____ NO

What are your future plans?

Additional Services:

Name and address of 2 people who we may contact to maintain accurate follow-up:

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Relationship to participant _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Relationship to participant _____

I agree that I will inform Youth Specialist of any changes in work, address, promotions, or any concerns that will affect employment. I am aware that I will be receiving retention services for one year from this date _____.

Retention services will include; any support services needed to insure self-sufficiency, as WIA funds allow.

Participant Signature Date

Specialist Signature Date



Central Minnesota
JOBS & TRAINING SERVICES
 106 Pine St. • Monticello, MN 55362

WIA Questionnaire

Office Use Only	
Mail	<input type="checkbox"/>
Phone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unable to locate	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name _____

Are you still in school? Yes ___ No ___

Current grade in school? ___ Current GPA: ___

Graduated High School? Yes ___ No ___ Received GED? Yes ___ No ___

Are you registered or planning on registering for post secondary education? Yes ___ No ___

If yes; institution: _____
 Program _____
 Start date _____ estimated end date _____

Are you currently employed? Yes ___ No ___

If yes; place of employment: _____
 Address _____
 Phone _____
 Current wage _____ Hours per week you work _____
 Job title _____ start date _____

Do you feel that your goals set with your employment specialist were achieved?
 Yes ___ No ___

Has the CMJTS work experience benefited you? Yes ___ No ___ NA ___

Are there additional services you need? Yes ___ No ___
 If yes; please explain: _____

Are you interested in receiving ongoing Retention Services? Yes No

If yes, how would you like to be contacted: Phone Mail

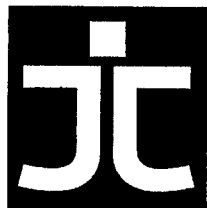
Telephone number where I can reach you: _____

Best time of day to reach you: _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. If you have any further questions or comments for me on this or retention services, you may contact Leslie at (763) 271-3723 or toll free at 1-800-284-7425.



Central Minnesota
JOBS & TRAINING SERVICES
 106 Pine St. • Monticello, MN 55362

March 27, 2001

Participant
 Address
 Address

Dear Participant,

I am writing to you about Retention Services and the benefits it offers. I am able to offer support emotionally and financially (as funds allow). I would like to hear how things are going for you on the job. Please take a few minutes to complete the following survey. It is relatively short and can give me update information so I can better serve you.

Please remember that retention services are offered to you for up to 12 months. It is not mandatory and there are never any obligations on your part. **Even if you are not interested in ongoing retention services, please either call me or return this survey indicating you are not interested. I will then only be contacting you at 9 months to complete a final survey.** It would be great if you would return this survey within 10 days. A self-addressed envelope is enclosed.



Where are you employed? _____

What is your job title? _____

How many hours do you work per week? _____

How much are you paid per hour? _____

Do you receive overtime? Yes No

What benefits do you receive?

Employer

___ Health

___ Dental

___ Sick Leave

___ Vacation

___ Pension

___ Flex Schedule

___ Flex Benefits

___ Other: _____

County

___ Medical Assistance

___ Food Stamps

___ Child Care

Does your company offer advancement or continuing education? Yes No

If yes, please explain: _____

Are you experiencing problems with transportation that could affect your ability to do your job?

Yes No

If yes, please explain: _____

How many miles do you travel to work (round trip)? _____

Do you have concerns with housing needs? Yes No

If yes, please explain: _____

Are you experiencing problems with childcare that could affect your ability to do your job?

Yes NO

If yes, please explain: _____

What do you like about your job? _____

If you have left your job, please state why and the date it ended: _____

Are you interested in receiving ongoing Retention Services? Yes No

If yes, how would you like to be contacted: Phone Mail

Telephone number where I can reach you: _____

Best time of day to reach you: _____

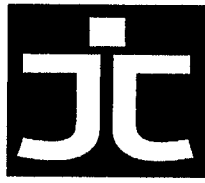
Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. If you have any further questions or comments for me on this or retention services, you may contact me at (763) 271-3723 or toll free at 1-800-284-7425.

Sincerely,

Leslie Wojtowicz
Youth Specialist

THANKS FOR
TAKING TIME OUT
OF YOUR BUSY
SCHEDULE TO
COMPLETE THE
SURVEY. I LOOK
FORWARD TO
HEARING FROM YOU!





Central Minnesota
JOBS & TRAINING SERVICES
 106 Pine St. • Monticello, MN 55362

March 27, 2001

To: Participant

From: Leslie Wojtowicz

Hi! I would like to hear how things are going for you with your employment. Please use the checklist below to indicate any problems, concerns or employment changes you have and return to me in the addressed stamped envelope. I hope that things continue to go well for you with your employment. Please give me a call if there is anything I can help with.

Are you with the same employer? (If not please give name of new employer and the title of your position): _____

- Any changes in hours or wage: _____
- Transportation: (please explain) _____
- Child Care: (please explain) _____
- Housing (please explain) _____
- Other (please explain) _____

Just as a reminder, retention services is a voluntary program that can assist you in obtaining and maintaining your employment goals. I want the best for you and your family; you just need to let me know what I can do to help!

Sincerely,

Leslie Wojtowicz - Youth Specialist
 763-271-3723 or 1-800-284-7425
lwojtowi@ngwmail.des.state.mn.us

I look forward to your response!



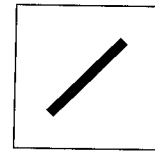
RISK FACTOR	FOLLOW-UP SERVICES
<p>Low Risk</p> <p>Characteristics—Stable family situation, good housing, adequate transportation, adequate day care, no history of medical problems or drug or alcohol abuse.</p>	<p>Monthly telephone follow-up to customer.</p> <p>Quarterly follow-up with employer.</p> <p>Provide youth with documentation of credentials gained</p> <p>Job replacement if needed</p>
<p>Moderate Risk</p> <p>Characteristics—Some problems in only one of the following areas: family situation, housing, transportation, day care, or medical. No history of drug or alcohol abuse.</p>	<p>Monthly follow-up to customer, half home visits and half telephone contacts.</p> <p>Monthly telephone follow-up with employment assistance staff of employer</p> <p>Provide youth with documentation of credentials gained</p> <p>Limited access to support services paid by program</p> <p>Enrollment in peer support group</p> <p>Job Replacement if needed</p>
<p>High Risk</p> <p>Characteristics—Significant problems in one or more of the following areas: family situation, housing, transportation, day care, or medical. May have a history of drug or alcohol abuse.</p>	<p>Bimonthly home visits to youth. Contact with employing supervisor.</p> <p>Biweekly telephone follow-up to youth.</p> <p>Provide youth with documentation of credentials gained</p> <p>Open access to support services funded by program and assistance in continuing learning experiences.</p> <p>Monthly telephone follow-up with employment assistance staff of employer.</p> <p>Enrollment in both peer support group and other support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous (as appropriate)</p> <p>Enrollment in company employment assistance program (if employed)</p> <p>Job Replacement if needed</p>

References

Robbin, Larry and Associates. *Radar Approach to Job Retention*. Oakland, CA.

Proscio, Tony and Mark Elliott. *Getting In Staying on Moving Up*. Philadelphia, PA. Public/Private Ventures.

John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development in cooperation with Sar Levitan Center for Policy Studies at Johns Hopkins University and the National Youth employment Coalition. *Recipes for Success Youth Council ... Guide to Creating a Youth Development System Under WIA*. May 2000.



MEMORANDUM FOR YOUTH OPPORTUNITY GRANTEES

FROM: LORENZO D. HARRISON
Administrator
Office of Youth Opportunities

SUBJECT: Follow-up and Retention Strategies

I. BACKGROUND

Follow-up services facilitate and support youth development and retention in long-term employment and education placements.

In the past, young people placed in jobs have frequently lost or prematurely lost those jobs. The job departure has often occurred very quickly in the first week or first 30 days of employment. This creates a lose-lose situation for both the young person experiencing failure and the employer faced with the disruption and cost of staff turnover. Similarly, many young people enrolled in community colleges, 4-year colleges or specialized training programs have left those programs before completing the course of study and obtaining a degree.

Effective follow-up services can reverse these patterns, increase the return on the investment of time and money in pre-placement and placement services, and create win-win situations for young people, employers, and educational organizations.

The two years of follow-up required by the Youth Opportunity Grants enable Centers to help each enrollee:

- work steadily and advance to better jobs
- attend post-secondary education and/or training classes regularly
- continue to grow, mature, and acquire adulthood competencies through participation in youth development activities for a longer period of time.

Through follow-up services, Youth Opportunity Centers can also meet employers' needs for reduced turnover and a skilled, reliable workforce, and thus generate increased public support for youth programs and services.

There are two purpose for doing of follow-up:

- Follow-up for reporting and tracking purposes.
- Follow-up services and activities after placement in a job or educational program to facilitate retention. These follow-up services are an essential and integral part of the goal directed, youth development continuum of program services from program entry to program exit.

This memo focuses on follow-up services and activities to achieve youth development, education, and employment goals and presents a brief description of principles and best practices developed by service providers such as Vocational Foundation Inc., STRIVE, MY TURN, JUMA Ventures, and other PEPNET awardees. The examples and ideas presented in this memo are by no means exhaustive. We urge everyone to send us additional information about follow-up and retention strategies that we can share with others in our field.

II. DEFINITIONS

The definitions of some of the key words in this memorandum are as follows:

- **Follow-up Services:** intensive mentoring provided by full-time staff (i.e. youth development practitioners, youth development specialist, case managers, etc.) after placement to support and facilitate: 1) sustained employment and educational achievement; 2) advancement along a job and/or educational ladder; and 3) personal development.
- **Retention:** sustained employment and connection to the workforce and/or continued participation in a long-term education or job training program until completion.
- **Advancement:** higher wages; benefits; better position; degree or certificate obtained.
- **Contact:** personal interaction / mentoring between the young person and the individual providing follow-up services with direct or indirect job and personal counseling through phone calls, social, and recreational activities, meetings, etc. [See page 4]
- **Advisor:** the youth worker, youth development practitioner, or case manager providing follow-up services.

III. FOLLOW-UP & RETENTION: PRINCIPLES & BEST PRACTICES

A Close Mentoring Relationship Before and After Placement

Both research and practitioners' experience indicate that continuity of contact with one or more caring adults can be the single most important factor in helping young people make a successful transition to adulthood. An Advisor can help a young person successfully negotiate the world at large by: 1) listening; 2) providing the right balance of autonomy and support; 3) offering friendship, guidance, and instrumental assistance (referrals, information, etc.), and 4) showing interest, caring and concern. The establishment of this close mentoring relationship and strong personal bond between the Advisor and the young person prior to placement and follow-up services will play an instrumental role in helping a young person succeed in the workforce and /or school and college.

Relationship-formation studies indicate some of the keys to creating effective mentoring relationships with young people include:

- Establishing trust through a gradual process of interaction over time;
- Involving youth in deciding how to spend time together;
- Maintaining a steady presence in the young person's life;
- Taking responsibility initially for keeping the relationship alive and active;
- Understanding and accepting silence and unresponsiveness from the young person at times;
- Paying attention to a youth's need for fun and using fun activities for relationshipbuilding as well as to provide opportunities not otherwise available; and
- Respecting the youth's viewpoint.

By building a strong mentoring relationship with each young person in incremental stages during preplacement and placement activities, the Advisor will be in a position to be very effective in providing follow-up services that will help the young person keep their job and stay in school.

High Expectations and Lots of Support

Setting high expectations and providing lots of support strengthens the mentoring relationship between the Advisor and a young person and facilitates the achievement of the youth's long-term goals. However, after young people have achieved their objective of getting a job or enrolling in college and are quite busy eight hours a day, they frequently lose interest in remaining connected to the Advisor and receiving follow-up services. Listed below are:
1) some engaging types of follow-up activities that will keep

young people connected to the Advisor and provide the opportunity for continued support and counseling to facilitate retention; 2) questions to ask during follow-up activities that will help the Advisor pinpoint areas for mentoring; and 3) schedules to provide a structure for lots of support.

Engaging Types of Follow-Up Activities

- Evening and weekend social, recreational and cultural activities for small groups of individuals on the Advisor's caseload to provide opportunities for informal job counseling, development of peer support groups, and networking activities. Such activities can include a movie, basketball game, dinner, picnic, hike, concert, play, introduction to a new sport--golf, lacrosse, soccer, etc. These "fun", youth development activities serve multiple purposes: 1) get young people to the table; 2) broaden their horizons and help them find areas that match their interests and skills; 3) build positive peer relationships and strengthen the relationship with the Advisor; 4) offer opportunities to plan activities and make decisions and 5) provide a vehicle for employment and education related mentoring. To derive all these benefits, an Advisor should participate in the activities rather than simply refer the youth to the activities.
- Meeting for a "business lunch" during the workday.
- Skills upgrading classes and workshops in the evening, i.e., computer skills, GED, scholarships/college loans, job networking, job advancement.
- Phone calls before and/or after work or on Saturday.
- Home visits (accompanied by another staff person).
- Birthday and holiday greeting cards.
- Newsletters designed and produced by youth (achievements of graduates, tips/comments from graduates who are working or in college).
- Peer tutoring and mentoring (Youth who are working can tutor or mentor youth in preplacement activities and serve as guest speakers during evening workshops).
- Alumni activities (Hold monthly or quarterly "class reunions" for groups who completed certain preplacement activities such as short-term skills training together. Ask each group to elect 2 or 3 class representatives before completion of the group activity and encourage the representatives to take responsibility for notifying everyone of scheduled events and assist in planning the events).
- Support group meetings (i.e., young mothers and young fathers).

Work Related Questions to Ask During Follow-Up Activities

Some types of work-related questions that can be asked during the follow-up activity that will help the Advisor pinpoint areas for counseling and advice are as follows:

- Do you get along with your supervisor? Your co-workers?
- What part of your job do you enjoy the most? Which tasks are the easiest? The hardest?
- Do you have a copy of your employer's personnel policy manual?
- What time did you arrive?
- Did you take a cigarette break? If so, at what time?
- When did you eat lunch?
- What did you wear?
- Were you busy all the time?
- When things got slow, did you ask for more work?
- Did they ask you to do things you didn't know how to do?
- Did you use the phone for any personal phone calls?
- Are there other jobs within your company that you'd like to have? Why? What is required to get those jobs?
- Are you having any problems with your personal life?
- What is your employer's policy on drug testing?
- How do you get to work each day?
- Is the work / job what you expected?
- How do you feel at the end of the day?
- When you don't understand how to do something or what to do, who do you ask?
- Have you made any new friends at work? Who do you eat lunch with?
- What have you learned about yourself?
- What do your parents think about your job?
- What do your friends think about your job? Your boyfriend or girlfriend?
- Did you accomplish anything today?
- What worked well today? How would you rate your day?

Education-Related Questions

Some types of education-related questions that can be asked during the follow-up activity that will help the Advisor pinpoint areas for counseling and advice are as follows:

- Tell me about your instructor(s) and the people in your class(es).
- Do you get along with your instructor? Your classmates?
- Which class do you enjoy the most? Why?
- Which class is the hardest? Why?
- What grade(s) do you think you'll receive? Why? What will you need to do to get an A?
- How will your grade be determined? (class participation, quizzes, papers)
- What time does class start? When do you arrive? How do you get to class?
- Have you received any assignments you didn't know how to complete?
- When you don't understand how to do something or what to do, who do you ask?
- Have you made any new friends in your classes?
- Is college or training what you expected?
- How do you feel at the end of each day?
- What are you learning about yourself?
- What do your parents think about your attending college/training?
- What do your friends think about your attending college/training?

- What does your boyfriend/girlfriend think about your attending college/training?
- What courses do you want to take next semester?
- How can you get information about the best courses to take next semester?

Schedule for Follow-Up Services

The Advisor providing follow-up services must maintain frequent, systematic contact and interaction with each young person after placement in a long-term job, education program, or occupational skills training program. Job loss frequently occurs rapidly (the first day, first week, or first month of employment). Similarly, the decision to dropout of an educational or skills training program may also be made quickly during the first weeks. Thus, Advisors need to provide particularly intensive support and mentoring during the first part of the follow-up period. One recommended schedule for interaction/contact between the Advisor and the young person is listed below:

- § Each day via a phone call before or after work for the first 5 days of employment or enrollment in college or a training class. Talk over everything that happened.
- § Once a week for the next six months.
- § Once a month after the first six months unless a personal crisis requires intensive contact.

Staff Schedules

Advisors will need to have non-traditional work schedules in order to use the various follow-up methods and provide services for youth who are usually working from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. or attending college classes. Two possible staff schedules are listed below:

- 12:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Tuesday – Friday
- 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Saturday

or

- 12:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday
- 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Thursday and Friday
- 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Saturday

These schedules provide time for the Advisors to make job site visits during typical work hours and have time after a typical workday or on weekends for individual counseling and small group activities. Whenever possible, individuals providing follow-up services should be informed of the non-traditional work schedules at the time the position is advertised or prior to the time the individual accepts the position. It is even advisable to include the possible schedule in the letter confirming the job. Organizations that will have existing staff providing follow-up services may want to offer some incentives (monetary and/or otherwise) for staff on the non-traditional schedule.

A Focus on Retention From Day One

During intake and orientation, emphasize the follow-up services that will be provided after placement to: 1) help the young person keep a job and then get a better job; 2) gain additional skills; 3) successfully complete any educational program; and 4) develop a career. If possible, introduce the young person to the staff member who will provide the follow-up services. From Day One, send the message that you will "stick with them".

Also include "soft skills" and life skills training as a part of pre-placement services. Employers value highly the interpersonal and problem solving skills that are a part of soft skills training, and a lack of soft skills among entry-level workers often contributes to job loss. Life skills such as money management, contingency planning for child care and transportation, and goal setting prepare young people in advance to cope with some of the challenges of going to work and completing post-secondary courses of study.

Smooth Transitions: Pre-placement Activities à Placement à Follow-Up

Structure staff assignments, schedules, and activities in a manner that will facilitate the establishment of **a strong personal bond** between the young person and the staff member providing follow-up services **before completion of pre-placement activities** and job placement. For example, at Youth Opportunity Centers, the Advisor can lead the orientation sessions for a group of 10 new enrollees; have that group assigned to his or her caseload; develop the individual service strategy for each young person; provide counseling and support during pre-placement and placement activities; and then provide follow-up services after placement. Another Advisor can then conduct the orientation session for the next group of 10 enrollees and follow the same sequence of activities.

Alternatively, if all orientation sessions are led by one person, the Advisor can meet the young person to be assigned to his or her caseload during or immediately after orientation.

Meeting Physical and Emotional as well as Vocational Needs

In providing follow-up services to facilitate retention, it is important to maintain a network of services that support the whole person and then help youth access those services. The network of support services should include:

- medical services
- housing
- transportation
- child care
- workplace clothing supplements

For example, good health is clearly linked to the ability to complete a job training course and keep a job. Yet many young people – particularly those who have dropped out of school – have not had a recent physical examination to identify any health problems (even poor vision) or health care to address them. An Advisor can play an important role in helping youth identify and access health services that are available.

Many crises that cause job loss or poor attendance in post-secondary educational programs occur suddenly on the weekends or at night. If follow-up staff have beepers and are "on call" for **crisis management** 24 hours a day, this will help strengthen the personal bond between the young person who turns to the Advisor at the time the crisis occurs. It will also prevent job loss and the need for replacement in another job as well as poor attendance which may lead to dropping out of college or post-secondary training.

A Culture of Employment

Within at least one area in a Youth Opportunity Center, create a "virtual workplace."

Replicate a workplace environment and maintain a culture of employment during orientation, job readiness training, skills training, and educational classes. Create the virtual workplace by asking youth to:

- Attend preplacement classes/workshops eight hours a day, five days a week. This schedule will help young people grow accustomed to working for this period of time and making any required arrangements such as child care, transportation, etc.;
- Dress for work. Shirt and tie for the young men; a blouse and skirt or slacks for the young women; no blue jeans or exceptionally short skirts. The Center may establish a Clothes closet and provide donated or purchased clothing as necessary. Area merchants are frequently willing to contribute clothing and even send staff to lead workshops on "dressing for success";
- Use a time clock to check in and out each day; and
- Use only workplace vocabulary and manners.

Additional strategies that promote a culture of employment include maintaining clean, well-organized, professional-looking facilities and treating youth as colleagues and adults.

Non-Intrusive Contact with Employers

Follow-up job retention services must be incorporated into the rhythm of the workday and avoid disrupting the job.

The Advisor should visit the job site the first week of employment and meet the employer and/or supervisor. During the initial call to arrange a visit or during introductions at the job site the Advisor can present his or her role as a career specialist who will help the young person succeed on the job and acquire new skills and

education as needed. During the meeting, the Advisor should leave a phone number and beeper number for the supervisor to use. This interaction and all conversations with employers should be very brief.

After the first visit, the Advisor should visit the job site once a month, meeting first with the employer and then the young person. Any contact with the young person during the workday should occur during lunch or a break period.

Management By Outcomes

Through an MIS system that tracks both pre-placement and post-placement results for each young person and reports the results for each individual Advisor as well as the organization or project as a whole, invaluable information can be obtained to hold the Advisor accountable for results. Goals can be set for each Advisor's caseload that are similar to the goals for the project, i.e.,

80% of enrolled youth graduate

80% of graduated youth placed in jobs, the military, or post-secondary school

80% of placed youth retained for one year

75% of placed youth retained for two years

The results or outcomes achieved by the Advisor can then be considered as part of the annual performance evaluation to determine: 1) continuation in the position, 2) salary increase, or 3) promotion. An example of a staff performance evaluation form that can be used as part of such an approach is attached. [This is an example for discussion, consideration, or modification, but it is not a requirement.] The performance evaluation data can also be helpful in the development of customized staff training and identification of effective practices.

Selecting Staff with Experience, "Passion and Compassion"

Whenever possible, when selecting staff to provide follow-up services hire individuals with: 1) some private sector work experience; and 2) interest in and demonstrated ability to mentor youth (i.e. volunteer leader for faith-based youth group, sports team, Boys & Girls Club, etc.) Select caring adults on whom participants can rely for guidance, good example, or friendship – adults with a "whatever it takes" approach to keeping individuals at work and focused on advancement and achievement of goals.

IV. ADDITIONAL FOLLOW-UP BEST PRACTICES

Some additional strategies that can be used when providing follow-up services include:

§ Financial and non-financial incentives

Provide financial incentives such as cash or gift certificates for needed products as well as incentives that build self-esteem such as personal recognition awards or certificates of achievement for milestones such as 6 months of employment or skills upgrading.

§ Emergency financial assistance

Offer access to short-term financial assistance for emergencies such as care for a sick child, temporary housing, etc.

§ Rapid re-employment assistance

Help youth understand and address the reasons for their job loss and move on quickly to job placement assistance.

§ Job upgrading

Help youth change jobs to enhance their skills and advance. Link with one stop career centers.

§ Volunteer mentors at the job sites

Each Advisor can work with the young person and his or her supervisor to identify someone at the youth's job site who is willing to serve as a volunteer mentor.

▪ Food

Food works with young people. Pizza and hamburgers are always a hit and can add motivation to attend evening workshops, peer support groups, etc. As part of a youth development approach that includes developing good eating habits, try serving salads and fruit as well.

§ Money Management Skill Development

Teach youth about saving and acquiring other assets as a means of advancement.

Establish Individual Development Accounts and match on a 3 to 1 or 2 to 1 basis the money a young person saves towards education or other approved uses.

§ Obtaining 5 contacts for each young person during orientation

Simply maintaining contact with young people after placement is one of the most challenging parts of providing follow-up services. The establishment of a strong personal bond between the Advisor and the young person and the engaging personalized, creative types of contact listed on page 4 will help address this challenge.

However, during orientation or preplacement activities, it is also helpful to ask each young person to provide the names, addresses, and phone numbers of five individuals to be contacted in case of emergency (i.e. relatives, friends, neighbors). Also, if you are unable to locate a young person during the follow-up stage (moved, no longer working, etc.) try contacting other young people in the youth's orientation or skills training class and requesting information.

§ Teaming of staff

Teaming of staff may minimize the effect of any staff turnover on the young person's connections to the organization providing follow-up services. Frequently, if a staff member providing follow-up services leaves the organization, the group of young people with whom he or she was working breaks off contact with the organization because their friend and mentor is no longer there. The personal bond connecting the youth to the organization has been broken. However, if two Advisors team up

for small group activities after work with each Advisor inviting two or four youth to join the activity, then the young people form personal ties to a second staff member who can step in if the other individual leaves the organization. In such a situation, the caseload of the former Advisor can be assigned as feasible to the second Advisor while new enrollees are assigned to other Advisors.

§ Shopping Discounts

Identify retail businesses that can provide you with discounts for your participants if they shop at the stores.

§ Driver education and licensing fees

Offer driver education training and financial assistance with licensing fees. This will be an enticing motivational strategy since many young people are eager to get a driver's license. A license also opens the door to additional job opportunities.

§ Benchmarks for successes

Identify benchmarks for success for youth after placement, i.e., employed 3 months; completed first college course; received first "A"; received all "A's".

§ Celebrations

Through phone calls, cards, parties, gift certificates, newsletters, and other strategies. Celebrate the achievement of each benchmark of success for each young person.

V. FOR MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about follow-up and retention strategies, see:

Gambone, M. & Arbretton, A., Safe Havens: The Contributions of Youth Organizations to Healthy Adolescent Development. 1999, Philadelphia: Publish/Private Ventures. 1997, available at www.ppv.org.

Hill, H., and Pavetti, L. Using Incentives to Promote Job Retention and Advancement: Guidance from the Performance Improvement Industry. Washington D.C.: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., May 2000. Available at www.mathematica-mpr.com/incentives.pdf.

National Youth Employment Coalition. www.nyec.org/PEPNET/indextoeffectivepractices/workforcedevelopment/extendedfollow-up.

Proscio, T. & Elliott, M. Getting In, Staying On, Moving Up: A Practitioners' Approach to Employment Retention, Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures, 1999. Available at www.ppv.org, www.nyec.org; www.stw.ed.gov.

Relave, N. Promoting Employment Retention. Issue Notes, Volume 4, Issue 9. July 2000. Available at www.welfareinfo.org/win.

Sipe, C., Mentoring: A Synthesis of P/PV's Research: 1988-1995. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures. 1996. Available at www.ppv.org.

Strawn, J. & Martinson, K. Steady Work and Better Jobs: How To Help Low-Income Parents Sustain Employment and Advance in the Workforce. New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, June 2000. Available at www.mdrc.org/Reports2000/SteadyWorkGuide.pdf.

Attachments

Sample Follow-Up / Retention Case Notes
Services for Out-of-School Youth: One Model
Services for In-School Youth: One Model
Annual Performance Evaluation Summary

Sample Follow-Up Retention Case Notes

Candidate: Mary Wilson

Company: General Insurance Co.

Contact Notes:

- 5/1/01 Mary started her job today at General Insurance Company as an Assistant Bookkeeper I. I met with her this morning at her job site. She was early this morning - no problems with the bus. I spoke with Mary's supervisor, Jackie Davis, who said things look good so far. - P. Jackson
- 5/8/01 I visited Mary today; she's been on the job one week. Says she likes her job - but said she forgets what Jackie tells her sometimes. I suggested she keep a notebook where she can write all her instructions. Her 2 kids are fine. Spoke with Jackie who mentioned that Mary's a bit forgetful. But, says Mary has a great attitude. Told her about notebook suggestion & we'll give it a try. - P. Jackson
- 5/14/01 Mary missed work yesterday because her daughter had a fever and she couldn't keep her in daycare. We discussed alternative daycare and Mary said her Aunt Evelyn has agreed to watch the kids on spot emergency cases. She likes job, using notebook and doing better with instructions. Said one co-worker, Tiffany, gives her a bit of a hard time, but she's just ignoring her for now. Talked to Jackie who sees improvement in Mary's mastery of tasks. No other concerns now. I mentioned Tiffany and Jackie said she'd keep an eye on it. - P. Jackson
- 5/22/01 Saw Mary today. Her daughter is fine and Tiffany hasn't been a problem. She received a notice yesterday from the electric company that they're going to cut off her service because she hadn't paid 2 previous bills. She called them and told them she could pay next week, but the electric company said because this is the 3rd time, they wouldn't give any more extensions. I called the electric company, explained situation (vouched that Mary was working) and asked for 1 week extension. They agreed. - P. Jackson
- 5/25/01 Mary called and said she wanted to quit her job. She finally told me that Tiffany has been threatening her and taking things off her desk. Mary hasn't spoken to Jackie because she's afraid. I called Jackie who said she'd switch Tiffany to another building. - P. Jackson
- 5/26/01 Stopped by to see Mary. She's still on job. We met with Jackie and discussed situation with Tiffany and that seems taken care of. We talked about possible ways Mary can learn more skills. Jackie said she would pair Mary with an Assistant Bookkeeper II because there might be some future openings. Kids are fine, bus is working out. - P. Jackson

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SUMMARY

NAME:				
EVALUATION PERIOD:				
CATEGORY			POINTS	MAXIMUM
PART I: WEEKLY ACTIVITY				
JOB SITE VISITS				4
YOUTH CONTACT: 80% OF CASELOAD				4
WEEKLY REPORT SUBMISSION				4
EVENING ACTIVITY				4
SUBTOTALS				20
PART II: RECORD KEEPING				
CASE NOTES				5
DATA ENTRY FORMS				5
ACTIVITY SHEETS				5
SUBTOTALS				15
PART III: PROGRESS TOWARDS GOALS OF YOUTH ON CASELOAD				
ACTIVITY	GOAL	ACTUAL		
GED / HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA RECEIVED				5
3 MO. EDUCATION / TRAINING RETENTION				5
6 MO. EDUCATION / TRAINING RETENTION				5
12 MO. EDUCATION / TRAINING RETENTION				5
18 MO. EDUCATION / TRAINING RETENTION				5
24 MO. EDUCATION / TRAINING RETENTION				5
3 MONTHS JOB RETENTION				5
6 MONTHS JOB RETENTION				5
12 MONTHS JOB RETENTION				5
18 MONTHS JOB RETENTION				5
24 MONTHS JOB RETENTION				5
SALARY INCREASE/PROMOTION				5
PARENTING DELAYED				5
DRUG ABUSE PREVENTED				5
SUBTOTALS				70
PART IV: QUALITATIVE				
COUNSELING NOTES				2
ADHERENCE TO OFFICE PROCEDURES				2
TEAM WORK				2
FLEXIBILITY				2
CASELOAD MANAGEMENT				2
SUBTOTALS				10
TOTAL POINTS EARNED				100

Supervisor's Signature _____

Date _____

Staff Signature _____

Date _____

RATINGS:

EXCELLENT

90-100

VERY GOOD

80-89

UNACCEPTABLE

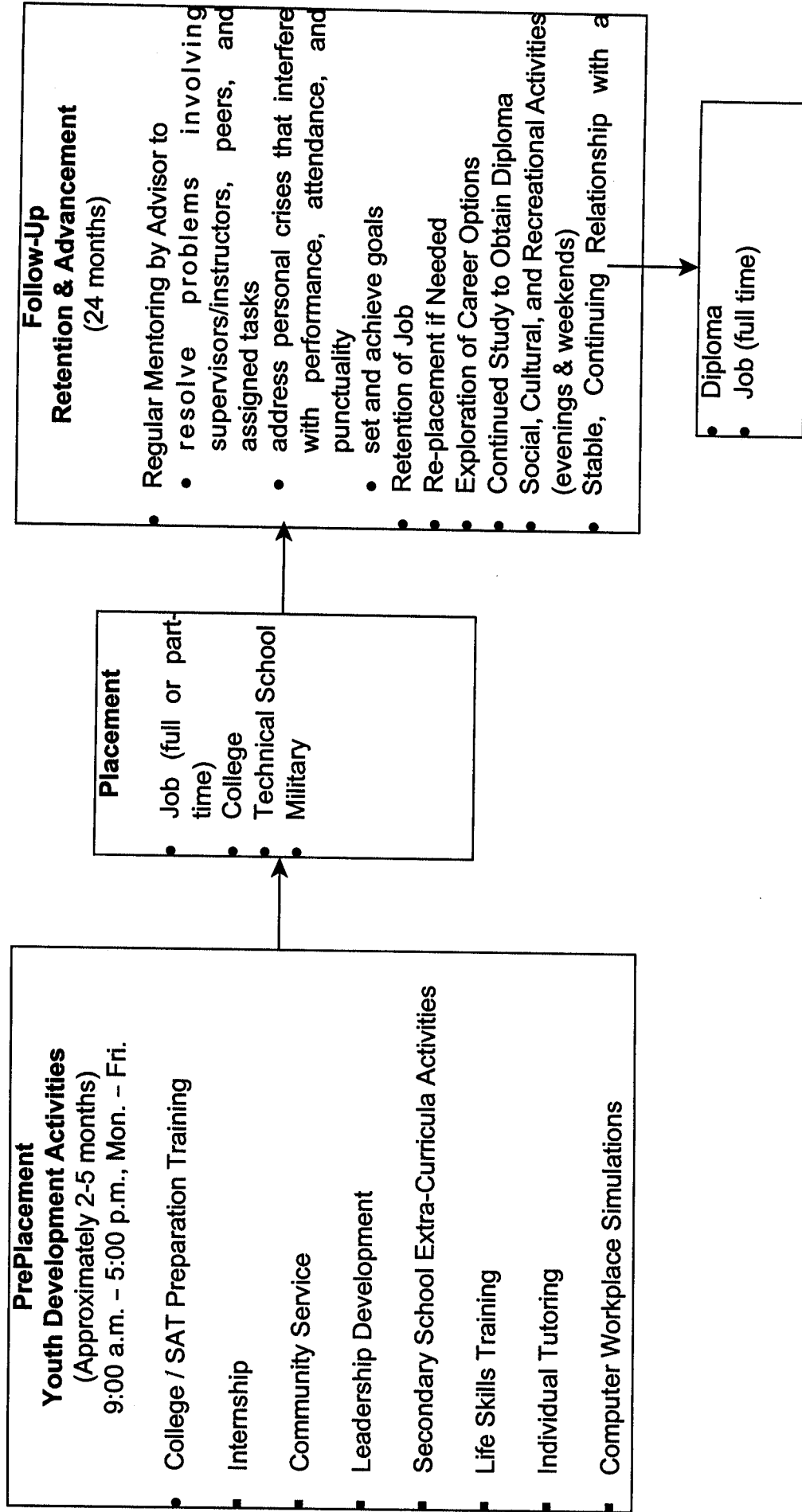
70-79

POOR - DISCIPLINARY ACTION

69 and below

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Services for In-School Youth One Model



Services for Out-of-School Youth One Model

**Preplacement
Youth Development Activities**
(Approximately 2-5 months)
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Mon. – Fri.

Career Counseling
Workshops to Develop Motivation, Attitudes, & Self-Confidence Required for Success
Job Readiness Training: Social & Communication Skills, Conflict Resolution & Problem Solving Skills, Teamwork
Life Skills Training
Leadership Development
Pregnancy – AIDS – and Substance Abuse-Prevention Workshops
Computer Workplace Simulations
Occupational Skills Training
Internship / Subsidized Employment
GED Prep Classes
Community Service Activities
Sports / Recreation Activities
Support Group Participation
Stable, Continuing Relationship with a Caring Adult

Placement

Job
College
Occupational Skills
Job Corps
CBO
Technical School
Military

**Follow-Up
Retention & Advancement**
(24 months)

Regular Mentoring by Advisor to resolve problems involving address personal crises that interfere with set and achieve goals
Retention of Job
Re-placement if Needed
Exploration of Career Options
Continued Study to Obtain Diploma
Further Skills Upgrading
Social, Cultural, and Recreational Activities

Stable, Continuing Relationship with a Caring

- Salary Increase
- Promotion
- Job Upgrade
- Diploma(s)

References

- Robbin, Larry and Associates. *Radar Approach to Job Retention*. Oakland, CA.
- Proscio, Tony and Mark Elliott. *Getting In Staying on Moving Up*. Philadelphia, PA. Public/Private Ventures.
- John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development in cooperation with Sar Levitan Center for Policy Studies at Johns Hopkins University and the National Youth employment Coalition. *Recipes for Success Youth Council Guide to Creating a Youth Development System Under WIA*. May 2000.
- Harrison, Lorenzo D. *Follow up and Retention Strategies*, Memorandum for Youth Opportunity Grantees. U.S. Department of Labor. Available at www.doleta.gov/youth_services