



# Federal Programs And Youth Workers: Opportunities to Strengthen Our Workforce

By Patty Cole with Katie Ferrier

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nextgeneration

**YOUTH  
WORK  
COALITION**

## About the Next Generation Youth Work Coalition

The Next Generation Youth Work Coalition brings together individuals and organizations dedicated to developing a strong, diverse after-school and youth development workforce that is stable, prepared, supported and committed to the well-being and empowerment of children and youth. The primary role of the Coalition is to inform and support ongoing discussions about the public policy, institutional, organizational and individual changes needed to create a stable, prepared and supported workforce. The Next Gen Coalition is supported by Cornerstones for Kids, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the Lilly Endowment. The Coalition is currently housed within the Forum for Youth Investment.

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# Executive Summary

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## Introduction

Federal policymakers often view youth development and after-school programs as solutions to a host of problems confronting youth, communities, and our country overall. Yet, funds for these programs as a whole are scarce and what limited resources are devoted to training or workforce development appear to be included as afterthoughts or minor priorities.

To understand the scale of this dilemma, the Next Generation Youth Work Coalition undertook a policy scan of a broad range of federal programs to determine how federal funds are being used to support youth worker development. With this knowledge, the authors make recommendations for increasing support for this workforce we trust to foster the positive development of our nation's young people.

## Key Findings

This scan was intended to be a broad first look at programs that might hold potential to strengthen workforce supports for youth workers. The federal programs we examined as possible sources of support fall roughly into four categories:

- A. **State formula grants that fund direct services to youth** during out-of-school time and may include a focus on providing training to youth workers;
- B. **Other state formula grants** that can fund youth programs to achieve specific goals such as reducing juvenile delinquency;
- C. **Discretionary grant programs** that fund specific types of youth services but are not available in every state; and
- D. **General employment and training programs** that provide general workforce services that

can be accessed by individuals and programs providing youth services or provide temporary workers in some way who could receive on-the-job training in a youth program.

In examining the status of existing youth worker support, we found:

- **State formula grants that fund direct services to youth**, most prominently after-school and school-age child care, have set-asides that may form a nucleus of a system of workforce support for youth workers, but the amount of funds for this purpose remains modest.
- A number of **other state formula grants** may potentially help support workforce development for youth workers. Some of these funding streams are devoted to specialized services such as education, and are not necessarily able to provide support to youth workers. Other more flexible programs, such as juvenile justice or human service grants to states, treat youth services as only one of several means to reach their goals and address training needs in the most perfunctory way with minimal set-asides.
- **Discretionary grant programs** sometimes allow for training, but it is narrowly focused on the problem at hand and is open only to grantees. In other cases, some discretionary programs assume an existing expertise for potential recipients to qualify for funding and therefore do not allow support for training.
- **General employment and training programs** can be used for educating and training youth workers, if state and local youth programs are creative about accessing them. However, they have significant limitations in terms of whom they may serve and what services they can offer to different populations.

It is clear that while many federal programs have provisions that allow for training and other youth worker supports, only a handful actually require that program staff receive training. In general, training provided seldom appears to feed into an overall framework of competencies and certification, in part because there are few programs with minimum staff qualification requirements. Yet, funds for these programs as a whole are scarce and when resources are devoted to training or workforce development, they appear to be included as afterthoughts or minor priorities.

Funding levels are also a concern, for the programs overall and specifically in terms of amounts available for workforce support. Most of these programs have grown very little over the past few years. Many have seen their funding stagnate or even decrease. Policymakers and program administrators are under increasing pressure to direct as much funding as possible to services for individuals, rather than allocating resources for workforce support and other systems-related purposes. Individually, the amounts available for training or other support, where they are possible to estimate, are small considering the size and breadth of the youth-serving workforce.<sup>1</sup> In the midst of worsening economic conditions, leaders seek tools to contribute to job creation and economic growth.

The economic recovery package Congress was considering as this report went to press will likely channel significant funding to states for education, prevention, and employment and training programs. Using funds for youth programs provides opportunities for job creation as well as needed services for youth. Any effort to strengthen supports for youth workers can be seen as a positive investment in our young people and families, and in our economy.

<sup>1</sup> The Annie E. Casey Foundation estimated in 2003, prior to the recent major expansion in after-school programming, that there were between 2-4 million frontline youth services workers.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations lay out some steps that could help support the development and retention of youth workers.

1. Federal policymakers should develop a strategy to support the youth work workforce, using the Federal Youth Development Coordinating Council as a vehicle.
2. When reauthorizing relevant programs, Congress should consider establishing, expanding, or improving current supports available for workforce development.
3. Policymakers at all levels should examine ways to remove legislative or administrative barriers to supporting youth workers and create workforce supports where they do not exist.
4. Youth workers should become engaged in decisions regarding the use of government funding for workforce developments.

## Overview and Methodology

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Federal policymakers often view youth-serving programs as a solution to a host of problems confronting youth, communities, and our country overall. If, however, these programs are to meet expectations and successfully contribute to young people's development; they need strong, stable, prepared staff. Many youth programs target the most at-risk young people; connecting with and motivating these young people to reach their full potential is no easy task.

Regardless of their potential to address many societal challenges, funds for these programs as a whole are scarce. Additionally, what limited resources these programs devote to training or workforce development for staff of youth services appear to be afterthoughts or low priorities. While the path connecting the workforce with youth outcomes is complex, staff performance is a key ingredient of successful youth programs.<sup>1</sup> Yet, most programs in the field report that they scramble to adequately attract, train, compensate, and retain workers.

While many federal programs have provisions that allow for training and other youth worker supports, only a handful actually *require* that staff receive training. In general, training provided seldom appears to feed into an overall framework of competencies or certification, in part because there are few programs with minimum staff qualification requirements. A few programs have resources that could form the nucleus of a systematic effort to build a youth work workforce, but these do not appear to have the financial support needed to make an impact.

The lack of an overall approach to supporting youth workers is not surprising given the sprawling, uncoordinated nature of federal youth programs themselves. They are spread over multiple

<sup>1</sup> National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. (2002). *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development*. Eccles, J. & Gootman, J., eds. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

departments and are meant to address a variety of needs and issues, from enrichment in out-of-school time to juvenile delinquency prevention. While some programs are based on a positive youth development approach, others are focused on addressing specific deficits or problems.

States, communities, and individual youth-serving organizations are left to piece together funding from multiple funding streams. Unfortunately, federal funding does not always lend itself to the creation of flexible financing strategies to support youth workers, and organizations must supplement their needs with state and local government funds and private resources.

Current budgetary constraints add to the challenges of strengthening the youth work workforce. Increasingly, state leaders and policymakers are confronting difficult decisions about which priorities to pursue and which to abandon due to the effects of the national financial crisis on state budgets. Youth services generally, and training and professional development for youth workers, specifically, are feeling the burden of that prioritization. As funding for human services stagnates and even declines, pressure increases to put available dollars into service delivery rather than workforce development efforts that could help ensure the effectiveness of existing services.

How can we ensure the development of a high performing workforce and in turn, improved outcomes for youth? What resources are available, through the myriad of federal programs directed at youth, to train and support these workers, who play such an important role in the lives of so many youth?

To begin to answer these questions and identify opportunities for improvement, the Next Generation Youth Work Coalition undertook a scan

of a broad range of federal programs, looking at whether training, professional development, or other worker supports were required, recommended, or allowed in programs' statutory authorization and/or implementation. The study also looked at how youth programs at the state level might be using federal funds to support youth worker development.

Finally, we make recommendations for putting in place the kinds of systemic supports necessary to strengthen this valuable workforce that is charged with fostering the positive development of our nation's young people.

## Methodology

The study examined a pool of approximately 70 federal programs, using as a starting place the programs identified in The Finance Project's report *Finding Funding: A Guide to Federal Sources for Youth Programs*, coupled with the *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance*, agency websites, and other available information.

### Limitations and definitions:

- We limited our study to programs serving school-aged children and youth up to age 21. While early childhood programs also have workforce issues that need to be addressed, those issues might best be examined in their own context.
- We defined "youth programs" broadly, as those that in any way provide services or activities directed toward the youth population as we defined it, either as a central purpose or as one of a number of activities that can be undertaken with program funds.
- In this document, we refer to the staff in these programs as "youth workers,"<sup>2</sup> not to be confused with young people who are working.

- In reviewing programs for workforce-related supports we looked for training, professional development, human resources support related to recruitment and retention, youth worker support or networks, certification and credentialing, stipends for education or training, loan forgiveness, career ladders or pathways, and compensation support or guidelines.

For each program examined, we sought to determine whether:

- funds were used to support youth activities;
- community youth organizations were eligible to apply or join a partnership that could apply for funds;
- workforce supports were provided and, if so, what kind and what staff were eligible; and
- youth-serving organizations might be able access these services for staff development.

In addition to our scan of federal program authorizations and guidance, we attempt to describe how 15 states approach supporting youth workers and what federal programs they may be accessing. (We reviewed information about California, Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Washington, and West Virginia.) While not exhaustive in our efforts, we sought the inclusion of any workforce-related supports in state plans and proposals submitted in response to federal funding requests. We also examined states whose leadership in youth services expressed a desire to understand broader funding opportunities to support youth workers. Encouraging models were found in states that already found success in strengthening their early childhood workforce, and some are shared in this report.

<sup>2</sup> A youth worker is an individual who works with and on behalf of children and youth to facilitate their personal, social and educational development and enable them to gain a voice, influence and place in society as they make the transition for dependence to independence.

For the programs identified, we reviewed and analyzed authorizing legislation, agency guidance, and a range of other documents as needed, including descriptions of grant projects, reports on program data, fact sheets, grant announcements, appropriations and budget documents, and reports and studies from the Government Accountability Office, the Congressional Research Service and other organizations. In some cases, we looked at state plans and requests for proposals. We note that the absence of specific provisions for workforce support in a program at the federal level does not mean that a state or local program administrator is not providing such supports in practice. However, the nature of this scan precluded following every funding source to the local level. Additionally, while in some cases we sought clarification of policies from federal and state agencies administering programs, extensive interviews were outside the scope of the data gathering effort.

This scan was intended to be a broad first look at programs that might hold potential to strengthen workforce supports for youth workers and to identify policy issues that might help youth workers gain access. It was not intended to be an in depth study of how particular programs are using funds to support workforce development. Programs that clearly would not provide youth workers access to workforce supports or those whose funding levels were so small that they were unlikely to be accessible to more than a few youth programs were omitted from the analysis.

# The Federal Program Landscape

The federal programs we examined as possible sources of support for the development of the youth work workforce fall roughly into four categories:

- A. **State formula grants that fund direct services to youth** during out-of-school time and may include provisions for training youth workers;
- B. **Other state formula grants** that can fund youth programs to achieve specific goals such as reducing juvenile delinquency;
- C. **Discretionary grant programs** that fund specific types of youth services but are not available in every state; and
- D. **General employment and training programs** that provide general workforce services that can be accessed by individuals and programs providing youth services or provide temporary workers who could receive on-the-job training in youth development.

## A. State Formula Grants That Fund Direct Services to Youth

Three relatively large programs fund direct services for youth in out-of-school time. They are:

- 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC),
- Child Care Development Fund (CCDF), and
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

All are state formula grants and are available in every state. An additional program, the Cooperative Extension/4-H Youth Development Program, is a resource for youth programs and provides training to youth development staff.

These programs have set-asides for, or a mission that includes, training and other supports for

youth workers, but they do not actually require that program staff receive training or other supports. Nevertheless, these set-asides could form the nucleus of a workforce development system for youth workers, not only in those programs but in other settings as well. In fact, our scan suggests these sources are the most likely to be tapped for providing workers with the comprehensive training they need to provide youth services.

Regardless of that potential, the resources these programs dedicate to training and professional development are relatively modest. For example:

- Each state may use up to 3 percent of its 21st CCLC allotment for activities that include capacity building, training, and technical assistance. At the 2008 funding level of \$1.081 billion, approximately \$32 million would be available for training and technical assistance nationally.
- In CCDF, an appropriations set-aside guarantees about \$18 million specifically for school-age and resource and referral quality-improvement activities. Staff in programs serving school-age children may also access services from the general quality set-aside, required by law to be at least 4 percent of total funds, which were \$4.98 billion in 2008. In some states, there are concerns that these general quality funds mainly benefit early childhood programs.

### 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Little information is available nationally on exactly how 21st CCLC training and technical assistance funds are used and who has access to sponsored professional development activities. These decisions are made primarily at the state and in many cases, local levels. States sometimes establish minimum training requirements or guidelines for local programs to follow.

Several states maximize their 21st CCLC allotment for training, technical assistance, and capacity building. With ever increasing demand for quality programs with strong staff, they supplement their efforts with state funds. For example:

- Through state legislation passed in 2006, Washington State designated funding through the 21st CCLC grant program to communities across the state. Specific investment areas include professional development for program staff, funding to support the statewide infrastructure, and raising public awareness of the impact of after-school programs. Washington's Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction provides professional development opportunities year-round to 21st CCLC staff from across the state. The 2007-2009 State Budget includes \$3 million for an initial investment in implementation.
- The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education supplemented federal funds with state resources to provide guidance and assistance for the enhancement and sustainability of Massachusetts 21st CCLC programs. With research-based evaluation tools, site visits, and customized training, Department staff build the capacity of the state's 21st CCLC programs to implement innovative teaching approaches and conduct quality improvement. Department staff have also compiled bibliographies of online resources that can be utilized by local providers for their own professional development.
- The California Department of Education also provides support and technical assistance for 21st CCLC providers across the state. This activity establishes a knowledge base for school-age program professionals, supports the retention of trainers for state-funded training-of-trainers, and provides community-

based training to staff working in out-of-school time programs. Using state funds, the Department also provides stipends for endorsed trainers to conduct local training sessions and provide on-site consultation for the enhancement of quality in school-age and after-school programs.

All three of these states have strong coalitions of advocates who focus on strengthening support for out-of-school time services and are able to educate policy-makers and funders on the importance of investing in staff development to ensure program quality.

#### Child Care Development Fund

States must discuss their use of CCDF quality funds in their state plans, which indicate that they fund a variety of activities that support the after-school workforce (see pages 13-14). These activities include professional development and training opportunities, support in obtaining certifications or credentials, and stipends or scholarships to attend training or professional development activities. Activities funded through CCDF quality funds are not limited to staff in programs serving children who receive CCDF subsidies, but are open to the child care workforce as a whole.

Although the 21st CCLC and CCDF programs may often support similar services, their structure and administration by different federal and state agencies may hamper coordination of their workforce support activities. In some cases, states do hold joint training for 21st CCLC and staff in other after-school programs, but it is not common due to different revenue sources.

Promising examples of state-supported efforts to strengthen workforce supports for youth workers appear to occur where strong infrastructures for early childhood workers are already in place and have been expanded to include professionals who work with school-age or older youth. The states

we examined often work to ensure the quality and value of the training after-school staff are receiving by such means as developing trainer registries and connecting with institutions of higher education. The states also seek to ensure that training is purposeful. Most connect training with the core competencies after-school staff need.

Our examination of state programs confirmed that they often use their CCDF quality funds, at times blended with other funds, as the basis for systematic approaches to quality and workforce preparation.

#### Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

TANF funds can be transferred to CCDF and would thus be subject to the quality set-aside requirement. TANF funds also may be used to directly fund child care and youth programs, such as counseling or after-school programs to promote teen pregnancy prevention. Program information provided by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) suggests that states can treat the costs of training staff to provide services as program costs, and at least one state does. However, it is difficult to tell how much funding in most states is directed to this purpose. Further, states are not likely to devote these limited funds specifically for training youth workers, except in prioritized social service areas. For example, West Virginia uses TANF funds to train youth service providers in the area of adolescent pregnancy prevention as part of its statewide Adolescent Health Initiative.

#### Cooperative Extension System/4-H Youth Development Program

Another federal youth program that can help support youth worker development is the Cooperative Extension Service/4-H Youth Development Program. The Cooperative Extension System (CES) is a partnership of

county, state, and federal governments, the land-grant universities, and private sector partners. Youth in the 4-H program are encouraged to participate in a variety of activities that emphasize the “learning by doing” experiential learning approach. In addition to providing youth activities, the program emphasizes providing training and professional development experiences for providers, staff, and youth development professionals in other youth programs to secure credentials, academic degrees, and continuing education requirements. Most information and resources are available at no or minimal cost. The 4-H After-school Program also includes a training focus. By working with local 4-H professionals, after-school staff can design training programs that meet their individual and program needs.

An invaluable and widespread resource, 4-H has a presence in or near all 3,150 counties in the United States. Yet 4-H programs may not have the resources to accommodate large numbers of youth workers and programs seeking their services. Moreover, the ability to respond to training requests, particularly for youth workers employed outside of 4-H, varies by state and county.

## B. Other State Formula Grants That Can Fund Youth Programs

Apart from the direct funding of 21st CCLC, CCDF, and TANF, other federal funding streams related to youth programming also are allocated to every state through funding formulas. Some of these funding streams are directed at specific systems, such as education or child welfare. Others have broader purposes and may allow states flexibility to fund youth programs as one of several means of achieving their goals.

We identified 17 such formula grants that have the potential to support youth workers in some way.

## State Uses of CCDF Funds for Workforce Development

**Florida:** CCDF earmarks are implemented at the county level by quasi-governmental organizations. Most of the organizations use the funds for early childhood services, but Palm Beach County has elected to build a system of supports for school-age care. Through partnerships with the community college system and across the child care community, they are gradually building a school-age care professional development system. While the county requires all school-age workers take 10 more hours of training than child care workers, the county offers scholarships and courses are available at Palm Beach County Community College. Negotiations are underway with other higher education institutions. Similar to the other examples, federal resources are supplemented with county and private funds in order to develop the system.

**Maine:** Maine's professional development system for school-age care providers, funded by the CCDF quality earmark, includes training, a provider registry, a trainer registry, and an accreditation facilitation project. The 180 hours of core knowledge training are articulated to community colleges for nine credits with submission of an acceptable portfolio. The training is developed by Maine Roads to Quality, the Career Development System, and delivered by Child Care Resource Development Centers statewide.

**Maryland:** Using CCDF quality set-aside funds, Maryland contracts with a variety of nonprofit and for-profit organizations to deliver training to providers operating before- and after-school programs for school-age children. Regional conferences and training help providers improve their skills in using the Core Knowledge Curriculum approved by the State Credentialing Branch.

**Minnesota:** With experience in growing their early childhood services, the Minnesota Department of Human Services uses the CCDF quality earmark to fund the Child Care Resource and Referral Network to develop and implement training throughout the State to raise awareness of the natural integration of practitioner core competencies, Minnesota's early learning guidelines and tools for assessing the quality of both early childhood and school-age care environments. In addition, all approved trainings delivered through the child care resource and referral system are indexed to the Practitioner Core Competencies, which define what adults who work with children of all ages need to know, understand, and be able to do to support children's development and school readiness.

**Missouri:** According to Missouri's CCDF state plan, participation in the Professional Achievement and Recognition System is open to any provider who works with children birth through school-age in center-based, community-based, faith-based or license-exempt, Head Start, home-based, school-based (before- and after-school), or unregulated settings. Missouri's Trainer Registry collects and verifies trainer education and experience, and assists in developing trainer criteria for a trainer approval system through the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. The Opportunities in a Professional Education Network administers work on the recognition systems and the Trainer Registry, core competencies and finance and compensation.

**New York:** The State of New York uses CCDF quality set-aside funds to contract with nonprofit organizations to deliver training for school-age child care providers. Targeting individuals looking for advancement, providers are encouraged to take a year long course that varies between classroom-time, independent study, and community training to meet competencies. The state also sponsors an annual Quality Advisor Training to train practitioners as accreditation endorsers.

New York specifies several anticipated outcomes of its State professional development efforts in its CCDF state plan, including continued professional development through scholarships courses from the Educational Incentive Program for more than 7,500 child care providers. Additional outcomes include an estimated 80,000 providers participating in video conference training featuring best practices in early childhood; an estimated 100 candidates completing the School-Age Care Credential and an additional four host agencies providing the School-Age Credential to expand statewide coverage.

**Pennsylvania:** This State created a grant program with a blend of state funds and the CCDF set-aside, known as the Keystone STARS (Standards, Training, Assistance, Resources, and Support) Quality Improvement Initiative. It includes financial support and assistance grants to improve providers' physical and learning environments, professional development educational opportunities for staff members as they seek quality designation, merit awards to providers that achieve quality designation, and education and retention awards to assist programs in maintaining qualified staff. Linking staff retention grants to Keystone STARS is designed to reduce staff turnover, which can help providers meet higher performance standards and achieve higher quality designations.

Incorporating feedback from practitioners involved in the quality improvement initiative, Pennsylvania is creating a career lattice for staff, with a focus on more credit-bearing training, and is working towards a complete reorganization of the State's quality improvement and professional development system for early and school-age child care.

**Vermont:** According to Vermont's CCDF state plan, the Vermont Department of Education works with community child care resource development specialists, Community Colleges of Vermont, the Northern Lights Career Development Center and the Professional Development Committee of the Early Childhood Work Group to strengthen accountability measures including developing a more consistent approach to measuring the effectiveness of training. They are moving toward a mentoring model to assess provider ability to apply what is taught to the early childhood community. The collaborative strives to promote the use of competencies in the field, develop a credential for after-school professionals, strengthen the relationships with higher education partners, and expand outreach strategies to inform more youth workers of professional development opportunities. Funding blends CCDF with resources from private foundations, the Vermont Out-of-School Time Network, and the Vermont School-Age Care Network. Vermont regularly invests more than the federal requirement in quality set-aside funds for school-age care, funding a full-time after-school systems director and a consultant, as well as college tuition scholarships for after-school providers.

- Chafee Foster Care Independence Program
- Child Welfare Services State Grants
- Community Development Block Grant
- Community Services Block Grant
- Education for Homeless Children & Youth
- Enhancing Education Through Technology
- Even Start
- Edward Byrne Memorial Formula Grant
- Improving Teacher Quality
- Indian Education Grants to Local Education Agencies
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Grants
- Juvenile Accountability Block Grants
- Safe & Drug Free Schools & Communities
- Social Services Block Grant
- Title I Education for the Disadvantaged
- Title V Delinquency Prevention Grants

These programs vary in how they address workforce issues. Systems-oriented funding streams typically have measures to help fund the training of the workers delivering their services. A few of the smaller funding streams in these systems also require training. Some of the broader formula grants have set-asides for training and technical assistance, but such activities are not a high priority and training is not required.

### Funding for Specialized Services

Education funding is the largest area of federal investment in children and youth other than health care. The federal government provided \$14 billion in 2008 to states for the improvement of education for disadvantaged children under

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. These funds can be used for supplementary programs such as after-school and also may be used for professional development for teachers and other staff. Another \$2.9 billion was provided to the states for improving teacher quality. Education programs for children with disabilities received \$11 billion. States can use funds for training and technical assistance, primarily directed at teaching staff, but which might include other personnel involved with the children during the day.

While funding for professional development in the education field remains firmly focused on school personnel, school leaders increasingly recognize the importance of youth programs that reach young people during their out-of-school time in complementing, supplementing, and generally rounding out in-school learning. Local education officials may have the flexibility to include staff from these programs in professional development opportunities their districts or schools offer using Title I or teacher quality funds, and some already may be doing so.

We found two smaller, more tightly focused education programs that required staff training and development. One, the Enhancing Education Through Technology program, funded at \$268.5 million in 2008, has both a requirement that staff receive training and a set-aside of 25 percent for providing this service. While program funds go mainly to schools, they have been used for after-school projects, whose staff would be able to participate in professional development activities.

Another focused source of education support is the Even Start program that promotes family literacy. Its funding has dwindled over the years from a high of \$250 million to \$66 million in 2008. Even Start specifically provides for training and technical assistance to assist local projects

in improving the quality of their family literacy services. Program guidance requires each program train staff to ensure they have the skills needed to work with parents and young children in the literacy services offered. While the skills obtained through the training may help youth workers in their jobs in general, they are all related to the specific area of literacy education.

Our state-level analyses found that a small number of states maintain a professional development system for family literacy and adult education that may create opportunities for youth workers. Colorado used resources from the Workforce Investment Act and Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Act to supplement professional development in Even Start and other family literacy programs to create the Professional Development Resource Center. The state of New York also provides ongoing professional development for all Even Start staff, through the State Department of Education. Support is provided through content workgroups, evaluation improvements, and peer mentoring.

Child welfare is another discrete area of services to children that provides formula grants to states and allows funds to be used for training. Again, such training generally is limited to workers in child welfare programs. States can use child welfare services grants as well as matching funds provided through the Foster Care Maintenance payments program (under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act) for training and otherwise supporting child welfare staff, with some restrictions on the nature of the training. Under the Chafee Foster Care Independence program, which provides services to youth who are transitioning out of foster care, states are required to provide training to foster and adoptive parents, workers in group homes, and case managers, tapping IV-E funds to pay for the training.

### Flexible State Formula Grants

Many of the more flexible state formula grants, such as those in the juvenile justice and human services areas, allow funding of youth programs as one means of reaching their overall goals. These programs clearly have a stake in the quality of the youth programs they draw on, and by extension the quality of the programs' staff, but generally address quality in only the most perfunctory way. Their authorizing legislation sometimes sets aside funds for training and technical assistance and may allow states to use some funds for this purpose in the absence of a set-aside. Training and technical assistance often seem to be a pro forma element of federal program legislation rather than an intentional way to support the workforce that is delivering services.

These state grant programs draw on youth programs as a way to achieve a variety of purposes. The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention grants, funded at \$74 million in FY 2008, allow states to use funds for a wide range of programs to prevent delinquency and channel at-risk youth into positive activities. Such programs could include dropout prevention, after-school programs, counseling, training, and mentoring, among many others. States may use up to 2 percent of total funds for training and technical assistance – a set-aside that would have amounted to less than \$1.5 million nationally in FY 2008. The Title V Delinquency Prevention Grants, funded at \$61 million in FY 2008, have a similar provision that would direct another \$1.2 million to training and technical assistance.

Given these small funding amounts, it is not surprising that states focused on building professional development systems for youth workers in their juvenile justice system typically do not rely solely on federal funding to support those efforts.

- Maine's Division of Juvenile Services in the State Department of Corrections devotes some of the funds from the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Grant to staff development and the implementation of best practices aimed at reducing recidivism rates. With the assistance of Behavioral Health Sciences Institute (a collaborative of Spurwink Institute and South Maine Community College), the Division completed the development of the new Juvenile Program Worker's (JPW) curriculum, and the Maine Criminal Justice Academy's (MCJA) Board of Trustees approved it as the new certification training for JPWs. Additionally, the Department has entered into an agreement with its higher education partners to create a Leadership Development Program to prepare lower level staff to assume greater responsibilities as the senior managers retire.
- Communities That Care (CTC) is a delinquency and violence prevention planning model that helps the community to mobilize, identify risk and preventive factors, and develop a comprehensive prevention plan. With a JJDP grant and other funds, the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, through a contract with the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research at Shippensburg University, provides regional training, technical assistance, project sustainability, and community board development on the CTC model.
- While these states focus on training juvenile justice staff, the Alameda County School-Age Provider Professional Development Project in California is an example of expanding this focus to preventive youth programs funded with juvenile justice money. State funding from the tobacco tax and legislative efforts to build a child care workforce is utilized to implement agency-wide professional

development plans in Title V school-age child care programs across Alameda County. All counties have access to these funds, but Alameda County reserves them for school-age programs. Funds for the project are also used to pay for substitutes, job coaching, and online peer learning.

Another flexible funding source, the Community Services Block Grant, provides funds to Community Action Agencies to promote a variety of initiatives to reduce poverty, including out-of-school time programs and other youth development services. States may set aside up to 10 percent of their grants for administration and training and technical assistance, which would have totaled \$65 million in FY 2008. The Division of Community Services (DCS) administers the Community Services Block Grant program in New York State. Through this program, DCS created the Family Development Credential in the 1990s as an interagency training and credentialing program. It also established a standard, professional certification for frontline family service workers.

Programs as diverse as the Community Development Block Grant and the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities grants allow funding to be channeled to youth programs, but have no specific set-asides for training and technical assistance. Most of the programs that are in this category, however, appear to allow funds re-granted to local programs to be used for training where necessary.

While some of these state formula grants are relatively large, the amount of funds that might be available within individual programs to support youth workers is likely to be rather small. By nature, block grants are flexible and usually can fund many types of programs in addition to those providing youth services. Where training and other

workforce supports may be allowed with local grant funds, it is impossible to tell how much is directed at this purpose. Given the fact that most of these programs have seen level funding or decreases over the past few years, a desire to maximize funding for direct services may have limited allocations for workforce-related activities.

Further complicating efforts is the fact that unlike 21st CCLC and CCDF, these block grant programs are not directed at providing relatively homogeneous services to youth, but rely on youth programs existing in the community to carry out their missions. The qualifications of or support for the workforce delivering services is not an automatic concern, and training provided is likely to be somewhat unfocused. Unless an effort is made to make program administrators understand their stake in youth program quality, these programs will likely not be great contributors to overall workforce capacity building.

### C. Discretionary Grant Programs for Youth Services

Several federal programs provide discretionary grants to address youth-related issues and may have provisions for staff development. In these programs, potential grantees must compete to obtain funds. The federal agency overseeing the program makes decisions about who receives grants, and the small size of many of the programs means the grants are not widespread. Some discretionary programs, however, assume an existing expertise for potential recipients to qualify for funding and therefore may not discuss the ability to use project funds for training and staff development.

We identified 13 discretionary grant programs that had the potential to support youth workers in some way (several programs were omitted because of their extremely low funding levels).

- Carol White Physical Education Grants
- Child Welfare Services Training Grants
- Drug-Violence Prevention Mentoring Grants
- Gang Resistance Education & Training
- GEAR UP
- Homeless & Runaway Youth – Basic Center Program
- Homeless & Runaway Youth – T & TA Centers
- Migrant Education High School Equivalency
- Professional Development for Arts Educators
- Public Charter Schools
- Reading is Fundamental
- Striving Readers
- YouthBuild

These programs often allow training and sometimes explicitly recognize the importance of qualified staff. Yet of those programs whose purpose was not training and staff development, we found only one that required staff training – the Homeless and Runaway Youth Basic Center program. As would be expected, workforce supports are usually focused on the problem being addressed and available only to program grantees.

The workforce supports available through narrowly targeted grant programs are not likely to play a significant role in building a broad workforce development system for youth workers. First, because youth program leaders cannot count on such funds coming into their states, they cannot include them in workforce development strategies. Second, programs that provide training in a specific area could augment basic youth work competencies, but would not help ensure staff has access to training in those competencies. Programs that do fund training in broader competencies will reach a relative handful

of staff. Finally, some programs expect that youth programs applying for grants already have staff on board with the required qualifications to deliver the services being funded.

The largest discretionary programs are education-related and include GEAR UP (\$303.4 million), Public Charter Schools (\$211 million), and the Carol White Physical Education Program (\$75.7 million). GEAR UP and Charter Schools may involve community-based organizations as partners or founders and therefore may—but are not required to—allow staff from such organizations to participate in professional development and training. Youth-serving programs are eligible to apply for Carol White PEP grants, but a quick inspection of program abstracts suggests that most grants are awarded to schools.

Often statutory language related to professional development in discretionary education programs suggests such activities be directed at classroom teachers, even when grants are open to community organizations. This can be due to unclear intent by legislative authors, or to limited funding and tightly focused outcomes. Sometimes youth workers who could clearly benefit from professional development in a specific topic are not eligible to participate. In the small Professional Development for Arts Educators program, for example, Department of Education guidance specifically notes that after-school staff can participate only if they are providing instruction in school classrooms in addition to their after-school work.

Sometimes discretionary programs make broader training opportunities available, but these would be open only to the relatively small number of program grantees. The Homeless and Runaway Youth Programs, which receive funding totaling \$113 million, provide a variety of services to homeless youth through short-term centers, street outreach, and longer-term residential

arrangements. Grantees in the Basic Center program are required by law to provide initial and periodic training to staff as well as to maintain a plan for staffing and staff development. Grantees in all of the Homeless and Runaway Youth programs may access training through the Runaway and Homeless Youth Training Center, which provides national meetings and conferences for grantees as well as skill-based training sessions and distance-learning training that focuses on core competencies for youth workers. Given the Center's contract of \$1 million per year, this training must be limited only to program grantees. Other youth workers can participate in fee-based training offered by the vendor to obtain certification in residential youth work, but must find funds to pay for it.

## D. General Employment and Training Programs

Federal programs offering general employment, training, or service-related opportunities are another source youth programs could tap for supporting workforce development. We examined seven such programs:

- AmeriCorps
- Job Corps
- Learn and Serve – Higher Education
- Learn and Serve – School & Community-Based Programs
- Volunteers in Service to America
- Workforce Investment Act – Adult
- Workforce Investment Act – Youth

While the purpose of these programs is training, youth programs have to be creative and persistent to effectively utilize these sources to strengthen their workforce as they are often limited in terms of who they can serve and what services

they can offer different populations. Their paths may sometimes intersect with those of youth programs, but none has a principal focus on building a youth-serving workforce. Additionally, as workforce development funds become more limited, Governors are likely to direct programming to revenue generating fields and occupations that will yield higher wages.

Generally, employment and training programs seek to increase the employability of disadvantaged population groups, such as youth or adults on public assistance, and connect these workers with jobs that have a future. The programs under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) address the needs of these groups and offer some flexibility in putting together training packages, often targeting employers with similar flexibility in how their workers are trained. For example, on-the-job training combined with classroom training or a cooperative agreement with a community college could help subsidize training while providing a career opportunity. In WIA's youth program, participants can receive ongoing mentoring and other support to help ensure a successful launch in the working world.

Sometimes there is not direct support of professional development with federal funds, but the funding stream brings together professionals who maximize the opportunity.

- State reserve funds are used to support the Maryland Institute of Workforce Excellence (MIWE). MIWE is developing integrated professional development training specifically targeted at multiple agencies involved in workforce and career preparation, and helped drive the creation of the Youth Affinity Group, a networking group of youth program professionals that develop innovative program models and share best practices.

- The Iowa Collaboration for Youth is an evolving partnership of state and local entities designed to better align state policies and programs and to encourage coordination among multiple state and community agencies on youth-related issues. Workforce funds are blended with other state resources to offer staff of youth-serving agencies in Iowa and are encouraged to connect with each other to develop individual education plans for youth.

Youth programs can also approach their local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) to make the case for youth work and create innovative programs.

- The California School-Age Consortium (CalSAC) has a pilot project, called PATHWAYS (Partnering to Advance Training and Hiring Workers in Afterschool Youth Services), to partner with local Workforce Investment Boards and community colleges to connect young adults in the community to jobs in after-school and opportunities for continuing education. Participants first go through a Bridge Program at a local community college for skills remediation and training in child and youth development. They are then recruited by local after-school programs and enroll in a career path program at the community college leading to a degree or certificate.

There are several barriers to widespread use of these types of programs in building a youth work workforce. One is the declining funding for WIA programs as well as the decline in the proportion of workers in the adult program who receive training. Another is the fact that local WIBs often seek to channel workers into higher paying occupations, which may make youth programs less attractive. No on-going wage subsidies are available through these programs to help boost the wages of employees.

Service programs that provide volunteers for local organizations, including youth-serving organizations, represent another type of employment and training program to consider. National and Community Service (NCS) programs such as AmeriCorps and Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), in which individual Americans volunteer or provide service in some way to meet critical community needs, have long been a source of support for youth-serving organizations. Participants in service programs usually receive work supports such as stipends, child care, and transportation as well as awards to further their education.

These programs can affect the youth-serving workforce in two ways. First, individuals from a NCS program can provide or be trained to provide direct services or capacity-building activities for youth programs, thus aiding the workforce by adding to it temporarily. Second, participation in NCS programs may function as an effective recruitment pipeline if training and exposure to youth work leads NCS participants to continue in the field either immediately or after completing their education. While the training and overall experience in performing youth work may lead some participants to choose this career path, specific sponsoring organizations will not necessarily benefit unless they are able to offer service participants paying job.

The development of training and other workforce supports for youth workers can benefit from intentional structure. One such structure developed through the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) is the Youth Development Practitioner Registered Federal Apprenticeship. A Registered Apprenticeship recognized by DOL combines learning on-the-job with related technical and theoretical instruction in a skilled occupation. DOL awarded seed money to YouthBuild USA to develop a Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship, designed to adhere to both the basic guidelines

governing all DOL-approved apprenticeships and to widely-accepted “best practices” of effective youth work. The YDPA was added to DOL’s list of “apprenticeable” occupations. Upon completion of the program, participants receive a United States Department of Labor certificate as a Youth Development Practitioner.

Organizations such as 4-H, Job Corps, and the National Training Institute for Community Youth Work/AED have developed initiatives to implement these apprenticeships in local youth programs. Because the DOL program only promotes the development of apprenticeships but does not fund them, industries or employers must find funding for the components of the training program. However, the apprenticeship program does represent an existing structure for attracting and embedding resources.

## Requirements for Staff Qualifications

Another structural component of professional development efforts in many fields is requirements for staff qualifications. A cross-cutting issue for youth programs is that of minimum requirements for specific qualifications or credentials in programs receiving federal funds. On the whole, few programs appear to have such requirements.

Neither of the large federal programs providing out-of-school time services, 21st CCLC and CCDF, establishes minimum qualifications for staff delivering these services, which may contribute to an unfocused training effort. Under both these programs, state or even local officials address staff qualifications.

A few states have developed structures such as credentialing for workers serving school-age children and youth in order to create a more purposeful use of training funds. As discussed

earlier, CCDF quality funds have helped underwrite some of these efforts. Often these credentials go hand in hand with Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) that seek to promote higher quality early childhood and school-age services. For example, Missouri has a youth development credential built into its QRIS, and North Carolina has a school-age credential through its community college system, also linked to its QRIS.<sup>2</sup>

Other states have developed training programs that include a track for school-age program workers to help programs meet QRIS standards.<sup>3</sup>

Schools receiving federal funds for the education of disadvantaged children have requirements for the qualifications of paraprofessionals employed with these funds. In cases where a youth program, such as a 21st CCLC, also receives funds from this source, these requirements would also apply. Basically, paraprofessionals employed after January 2002 must have at least two years of education in an institution of higher education and an associates degree or higher. They also must demonstrate proficiency in assisting in the instruction of academic programs appropriate to the age group with which they are working. Federal education funds may be used to help individuals meet these requirements.

A few more narrowly focused youth programs also have staff qualification requirements. Even Start has degree requirements for professional staff and educational levels for paraprofessional staff as well as training in family literacy services for project administrators. These requirements only apply to staff paid with federal funds for the project. Job Corps, which offers a comprehensive array of career development services to at-risk young women and men ages 16 to 24, has an initiative to establish

a Youth Development Practitioner Certification program using the DOL apprenticeship model for all its Residential Living and Recreation staff that will eventually be extended to all Job Corps staff.

The block grant programs directed at youth problems or reducing poverty do not address staffing qualifications in their statutory language. Again, as states determine how to distribute funds through their own grant processes, they may include requirements for staff training and qualifications.

It is important to note that federal programs funding services for children and youth in areas with widely recognized professional requirements for staff do support training and professional development. Education is the most obvious of those services. Another is child welfare, where degrees in social work or related areas are recognized as necessary for the provision of quality services. Where a degree from an institution of higher education is recognized for a profession, the federal government may also have additional programs such as loan forgiveness or recruitment to attract people into those professions.

As a profession whose practitioners work in a diverse array of settings and services and where widely accepted competencies and certification are still a work in progress, youth work has not reached a point where a certain level or type of education is required or supported by federal funding. Over the past 20 years, the U.S. Congress has recognized the need for certain levels of education in the early childhood education field in Head Start, but adequate resources to help staff in these programs achieve these educational levels have not been provided. Only in the Higher Education bill enacted in 2008 did Congress include early childhood and social work professionals in loan forgiveness programs, which are still dependent on the availability of appropriations.

<sup>2</sup> Afterschool Investments Project. (2006). "Using a State Child Care Quality Rating System to Promote Quality in Afterschool Programs." Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

## Cross-Cutting Observations

While a large number of federal programs fund services for youth and consider youth-serving organizations critical to addressing various social issues, overall they lack a commitment to supporting and building a youth-serving workforce. Even the dedicated after-school funding streams do not model a systematic approach to workforce development, although individual states or programs may apply funds to achieve that goal. Other federal programs seem to have training and technical assistance included in their authorizing legislation as a pro forma element with little thought as to who needs to be trained or what needs to be developed. Specialized service areas, particularly education, have professional qualification requirements and more extensive support for meeting these requirements. Overall, however, the federal programs we examined generally did not require basic staff qualifications or training.

This policy scan looked for a broad range of workforce supports – including but not limited to professional development – that might be available through federal programs. Most of the programs that do include some workforce-related supports focus only on providing workers with the skills they need to carry out the program’s purpose, whether characterized as training, professional development, or staff development. The exceptions are the handful of programs that are directed specifically at providing youth with activities during out-of-school time, improving the labor force generally, or providing national or community service opportunities. In these programs, funds might be used for purposes such as enhancing compensation, providing stipends during education or training, or helping workers obtain credentials.

While critical, professional development alone is not enough to build and retain the workforce needed to sustain quality youth services. In a survey of youth workers the Next Generation

Youth Work Coalition conducted in 2006, three-quarters of respondents cited compensation as “the primary factor influencing their decisions to stay in or leave the field.”<sup>4</sup> A systematic approach to building the youth work workforce must push beyond simply providing training and include an intentional and comprehensive set of supports.

Additionally, in the absence of federal guidance, decisions about resources for training and worker support in many of these programs are made at the state and local level. Local program leaders and advocates need to identify and build relationships with the state officials who make these decisions to secure more attention and funding for building the youth work workforce.

Finally, funding levels for these federal programs are a major concern, overall and specifically in terms of resources available for workforce development. Most of these programs have grown very little over the past few years. Many have seen their funding stagnate or even decrease. Policymakers and program administrators are under increasing pressure to direct as much funding as possible to services for individuals, rather than allocating resources for workforce development and other systemic purposes. Individually, the amounts available for training or other support, where they are possible to estimate, are small considering the size and breadth of the youth-serving workforce. In the midst of worsening economic conditions, leaders seek tools to contribute to job creation and economic growth. Any effort to strengthen supports for youth workers can be seen as positive investments in our young people and families, and in our economy.

<sup>4</sup> Elizabeth Starr, Ellen Gannett and Pam Garza with Suzanne Goldstein and Nicole Yohalem, *Clear Policies for Career Pathways: Lessons Learned*, The Next Generation Youth Work Coalition, May 2008.

## Recommendations

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While a large number of federal programs support youth programming in some way, this support does not necessarily translate into adequate funding to systematically build and retain a well-trained workforce. This is not surprising, given the fragmentation of the federal programs themselves.

To take disjointed bits of funding and build a system of youth worker support, policymakers at the federal, state, and local levels must first recognize that they have a stake in ensuring an array of high quality youth programs with well-qualified staff that they can call on to achieve broad goals. By repeatedly citing youth programs as avenues for addressing a host of issues for young people and society as a whole, federal policymakers signal that they consider these programs of value to achieving society's goals.

A critical next step is to ensure that the programs they are funding are of the highest quality and therefore likely to positively influence the life trajectories of youth participants. Program quality is dependent upon having staff that possess the knowledge and skills to work with youth effectively and are capable of building positive, supportive relationships. Without strong staff, the increasing expectations being placed on youth programs are unrealistic.

Policymakers also must recognize the need for intentional structures for workforce development. With no comprehensive approach to develop and support youth workers, whole communities suffer when lack of access to training, poor compensation, and high turnover rates undermine youth programs' ability to effectively serve young people. We need to step back, look at the resources we have, consider how they might be used more purposefully, and determine where greater investment is needed.

Youth development service providers should understand the key role they play in pushing federal and state governments to consider the importance and address the needs of the workforce. The field needs to continue its work in achieving greater consensus on core competencies and creating career pathways that provide workers with greater opportunities for growth in the profession. They must also work with both state and federal policymakers to connect these frameworks to systems of staff development and compensation.

To do this we need to build relationships and form broad partnerships across the youth serving community, employment and training systems, and the higher education system. This will create a more significant advocacy base for creating a workforce development system. These partnerships must make the case to policymakers and program administrators that they have a stake in a well-qualified, stable youth work workforce and should find creative ways to channel resources in that direction.

The following recommendations suggest some steps that could help achieve these goals.

***1. Federal policymakers should develop a strategy to support the youth work workforce, using the Federal Youth Development Coordinating Council as a vehicle.***

Legislation creating the Federal Youth Development Coordinating Council was enacted in 2006, but funding has not been provided. The Council's purpose is to improve coordination among the many federal programs that serve youth and recommend ways to achieve quantifiable goals, help programs work more efficiently and effectively, and identify unmet needs. One of the tasks for the Federal Council is to "Assess the needs of youth *and those who work with youth*; and the quantity and quality of federal programs offering services, supports and opportunities to help meet these needs." [Emphasis added.]

The Council is thus a logical vehicle to review the needs of the youth work workforce and attempt to consolidate and strengthen the current array of piecemeal opportunities for supporting this workforce. It can also identify ways in which federal resources could be better used to meet these needs. Congress should provide funding for the Council and, once the Council is operational, it should consider making strengthening the youth work workforce a major focus of its efforts.

***2. When reauthorizing relevant programs, Congress should consider establishing, expanding, or improving current supports available for workforce development.***

A number of programs that affect youth in some way are due to be reauthorized in the upcoming Congress and offer good opportunities to consider the importance of workforce development for the youth-serving sector.

- ***21st CCLC:*** As the only federal program specifically directed at providing after-school services to disadvantaged youth, the 21st CCLC program should be a leader in supporting the development of a high quality youth work workforce. The training and technical assistance set-aside should be expanded to 5 percent of a state's allocation while not reducing services to students.
- ***Elementary-Secondary Education Act:*** Congress should specify that staff in supplementary programs such as after-school should have access to professional development that would enhance their ability to support children's success in school.
- ***CCDF/CCDBG:*** Often thought of as an early childhood program, CCDF is also an important source of funds for providing services to school-age children. In reauthorizing the Child Care Development Block Grant, which

provides the substantive direction for all of the funding streams within CCDF, Congress should expand overall funding and increase the funds set aside for quality improvement in order to support states in instituting Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS). The legislation should also encourage training and compensation increases linked to the attainment of further education in youth work. Because states often look to CCDF funds to support their early childhood systems and may not use them for older youth programs, the reauthorization needs to ensure that QRIS specifically address school-age programs and that school-age providers have access to any training and compensation supports.

- ***Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act:*** Although the current program statutes make little allowance for training, Congress should include provisions from the Senate reauthorization bill from the 110th Congress. These provisions clearly recognized the need for supporting the development of the broad array of professions that play a role in addressing the needs of at-risk youth, rather than focusing on training the staff of individual grantees in a narrow area.
- ***Workforce Investment Act:*** While WIA often overlooks human services jobs as low-paying, the size of the youth-serving sector, the fact that these jobs cannot be exported, and the long-term impact of youth programs on preparing future workers may offer persuasive arguments for taking a second look at WIA and other employment and training programs. Congress could make it easier and more attractive for States and local WIBs to develop apprenticeships and other means of developing youth workers.
- ***National and Community Service:*** Congress should include provisions from the House reauthorization bill in the 110th Congress to

add before- and after-school programs in low-income areas as possible VISTA service sites, which could help train and recruit additional young people to youth work.

***3. Policymakers at all levels should examine ways to remove legislative or administrative barriers to supporting youth workers and create workforce supports where they do not exist.***

Community-based organizations serving youth are sometimes included as eligible grantees or participants in partnerships in federal grant programs. In some cases, particularly in education programs, provisions allowing the use of funds for training and professional development are unclear as to whether community program staff may participate in such activities. In statutory language and in practice, professional development activities seem to be directed almost entirely to teachers and other school personnel.

Congress should ensure that where community-based youth programs are eligible to participate in federal grant programs, their staff also be eligible to participate in training and professional development opportunities related to improving the effectiveness of the projects. State and local leaders must devote more funding and other resources to the creation of professional development systems, and not limit their focus to training. Efforts to enhance compensation, link compensation with education, and create career pathways should also be considered.

Specific actions could include:

- Assist all states in establishing youth development coordinating councils that mirror the federal council to bring together the different agencies that fund youth-related programs.
- Allow states to create flexible financing strategies from various federal and state programs that can fund youth-serving organizations to provide supports for youth workers. Some block grants have set-asides for training and technical assistance while others can provide funds for this purpose. States could pool these funds to provide more systematic access to professional development and education or supplement compensation for youth workers.
- Tie participation in federally funded training to the pursuit of a degree or other certification. Workers in programs that receive small federal grants may receive training in the subject that is the narrow purpose of the grant. This training would have more meaning if it could be tied to the pursuit of a degree or credential.
- Take concerted steps to connect frameworks such as apprenticeship or credentialing with funding for employment and training services and worker compensation. Intermediaries could help connect goals and help youth programs make the case to employment and training boards that youth work represents a large, growing and promising occupation.

***4. Youth workers should become engaged in decisions regarding the use of government funding for workforce development.***

Under most large formula grants to states, state and local leaders make decisions about how to use funds. Providers and their partners should therefore create a strategy for making the case to decision makers that funds need to be invested in this workforce.

As this report went to press, Congress was considering an economic recovery package that will direct large amounts of funding into state

and local governments, particularly for education where possible uses could include after-school and supplemental education services. Smaller amounts will likely be directed at Department of Justice programs that can be used for prevention activities and at youth employment programs. This infusion of funds could help make policymakers more receptive as youth advocates make their case for directing funds to youth programs and enhancing and supporting the youth work workforce. Youth workers and their advocates should be aware of ever-changing opportunities to influence policies and demonstrate the value of workforce investment.

State and local youth workers and advocates need to:

- Know who makes the decisions for specific programs and when is the best time to have input. Many programs have formal state planning processes. In addition to this formal process, however, youth program leaders need to cultivate contacts with the decision-makers in programs that could be sources of support. Policymakers and administrators who focus on youth issues and programs are certainly important. Other crucial partners are labor and employment officials, private funders, community organizations, local officials, and educators.
- Develop and distribute information to make the case for investing in the youth work workforce. Youth work can seem like a vague category of work to policymakers and administrators. The more information available that can define and quantify the workers in this category, the stronger the case. CalSAC has been collecting data on the number of workers in after-school in California for years, and sharing it with policy makers. This helps them demonstrate that youth work employs a

significant number of individuals comparable to other occupations that have more visibility.

- Recognize that financial support for workforce development will likely have to be cobbled together from a number of sources. This report can serve as a template for documenting what relevant federal resources are coming into the state that might be used to strengthen the workforce. Youth program leaders need to learn about possible sources and think creatively about strategies they could propose to policymakers, program administrators, education officials, and private funders to link resources in their states and communities and better support workforce development.
- Develop key allies to strengthen the advocacy effort. Youth program leaders should look to those who can support their message about the need for a well-qualified youth workforce, perhaps bringing unexpected voices to the table. Law enforcement officials, judges, private business leaders, and funders, could all be strong voice in delivering this message.<sup>5</sup>

Building a system to support the development and retention of youth workers requires careful consideration and creative thinking. Action will need to take place at all levels of government, throughout the private sector, and within the youth-serving community itself. This list of recommendations is by no means exhaustive. It is meant to spark conversation and encourage more strategic thinking in your organization, community or state.

<sup>5</sup> Corporate Voices for Working Families, which represents business leaders, has argued that “An integrated approach to learning and development must recruit, train and compensate a professional staff that has the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to support young people. It should create ongoing training and professional development opportunities for educators, create a set of working conditions and compensation benchmarks that will reduce turnover and increase growth internally...” [www.cvwf.org/system/files/2008workready\\_princip\\_print.pdf](http://www.cvwf.org/system/files/2008workready_princip_print.pdf).

**Table 1: Direct Services Youth Programs**

<i>Dept.</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Funding (millions)</i>	<i>Supports Offered</i>	<i>Required?</i>	<i>Set-Aside?</i>	<i>Relevance for Youth Workforce</i>
ED	<i>21st Century Community Learning Centers</i>	\$1,081.0	Training, TA	No	Up to 3%	States may have training requirements; funds may be spent on training and technical assistance. Could form the core of a youth worker training system.
HHS	<i>Child Care Development Fund</i>	\$4,980.0	Training, TA, Stipends, Scholarships, etc.	Quality activities required	\$18M school-age; 4% quality	States may choose what quality-related activities to fund. Primary source of support for after-school staff development outside of 21st CCLC.
HHS	<i>Temporary Assistance for Needy Families</i>	\$16,489.0	Training	No	For CCDF funds	May transfer funds to CCDF, subject to quality set-aside; in youth programs funded directly, training is an allowable program cost.
USDA	<i>Cooperative Extension Service/4-H Youth Development</i>	N/A	Training	No	N/A	4-H Youth Development programs and Extension Services may make staff training available to youth programs at little or no cost.

**Key:** TA = Technical Assistance

# Table 2: State Formula Grant Programs

<i>Dept.</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Funding (millions)</i>	<i>Supports Offered</i>	<i>Required?</i>	<i>Set-Aside?</i>	<i>Relevance for Youth Workforce</i>
ED	<i>Education for Homeless Children and Youth</i>	\$64.1	PD	No	No	Community youth orgs. involved in program; should be able to participate in PD.
ED	<i>Enhancing Education Through Technology</i>	\$267.5	PD	Yes	25%	Has funded after-school projects; staff could participate in PD.
ED	<i>Even Start</i>	\$66.5	Staff Training	Yes	Up to 6% for Admin, T&TA	Has staff qualification requirements and local programs must train staff with grant funds; youth programs in collaborations eligible for training. State has set-aside for additional T&TA.
ED	<i>Improving Teacher Quality</i>	\$2,960.3	Training, PD	No	No	Paraprofessionals in schools may receive training; possibly use after-school as field placement under recent Higher Education amendments.
ED	<i>Indian Education Grants to LEA's (Federal to Local)</i>	\$96.6	PD	No	No	LEA's may use funds for professional development, as needed. Program funds can be used for after-school and enrichment; those staff may qualify for PD.
ED	<i>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</i>	\$11,042.3	TA & Personnel Preparation	No	Yes	States may use reserved TA funds for training mostly directed at school personnel, but could advocate for including after-school staff.
ED	<i>Safe &amp; Drug Free Schools &amp; Communities</i>	\$294.8	Training	No	No	Staff training is an allowable activity in SEA grants, so could include after-school staff. Governor's grants often directed at community programs, so youth programs could participate in training offered.
ED	<i>Title I Education for the Disadvantaged</i>	\$14,027.9	PD	Yes	No	LEAs can use Title I funds for after-school & extended learning opportunities; they are required to make professional development available in which after-school staff should be able to participate.
HHS	<i>Chafee Foster Care Independence Program</i>	\$140.0	Training	Yes	Use IV-E funds	States must provide training on Independent Living to foster & adoptive parents, workers in group homes & case managers.
HHS	<i>Child Welfare Services State Grants</i>	\$281.7	Training, Salaries	No	No	Targeted at child welfare workers.
HHS	<i>Community Services Block Grant</i>	\$653.8	Training, TA	No	10% for T&TA, Admin.	Program funds youth programs. States and local grantees can fund training; youth workers could make the case for workforce investment.
HHS	<i>Social Services Block Grant</i>	\$1,700.0	Training	No	No	States may fund training; no data on amounts.
HHS	<i>Title IV-E Foster Care</i>	\$4,581.0	Training; Other Work Supports	No	No	States claim matching funds for training foster/adoptive parents & staff of institutions providing care to foster & adopted children receiving services under IV-E. May not be related to providing social services, but may cover topics such as cultural competency, impact of abuse/neglect, etc.
HUD	<i>Community Development Block Grant (Entitlement Program—Federal to Local)</i>	\$2,510.0	Not specified	No	No	Some funds can be used for youth programs, others for employment & training needs; youth programs could make the case for investing in workforce.
HUD	<i>Community Development Block Grant (State Program)</i>	\$1,076.0	Not specified	No	No	Same as CDBG Entitlement program
DOJ	<i>Edward Byrne Memorial Formula Grant (Justice Assistance Grants)</i>	\$170.4	Training, PD	No	No	States may fund local youth projects in which training/PD is allowed as a use of funds.
DOJ	<i>Juvenile Justice &amp; Delinquency Prevention Grants</i>	\$74.3	Training, TA	No	Up to 2%	States required to have research, evaluation, and training system in overall juvenile justice state plan; JJDP funds many youth programs; advocates need to make the case for investing in youth workforce.
DOJ	<i>Juvenile Accountability Block Grants</i>	\$51.7	Training	No	\$987K	Program covers a range of areas, some of which specify training for personnel working with youth in JJ system.
DOJ	<i>Title V Delinquency Prevention Grants</i>	\$61.1	Training, TA	No	Up to 2%	Funds a range of youth services; federal set-aside may focus on community capacity building, but local programs may incorporate staff training.

**Key:** TA = Technical Assistance  
 PD = Professional Development

## Table 3: Discretionary/Competitive Grants Related to Youth

<i>Dept.</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Funding (millions)</i>	<i>Supports Offered</i>	<i>Required?</i>	<i>Set-Aside?</i>	<i>Relevance for Youth Workforce</i>
ED	<i>Carol White Physical Education Program</i>	\$75.7	Training, Staff Development	N/A	N/A	Program's purpose is staff development and training in physical education. Youth-serving programs are eligible to apply, but most grants appear to go to schools.
ED	<i>Drug-Violence Prevention Mentoring Grants</i>	\$48.5	PD, Training	No	No	Funds may be used for professional development of mentoring coordinators and support staff as well as for mentors.
ED	<i>GEAR UP</i>	\$303.4	Staff Development	No	No	Community organizations can be partners in grants. Their staff may be able to participate in staff development, although most activities appear directed at classroom teachers.
ED	<i>Migrant Education High School Equivalency</i>	\$18.2	Training	No	No	Existing project grants provide training. Staff in partnering organizations should be able to participate.
ED	<i>Professional Development for Arts Educators</i>	\$7.9	PD	N/A	N/A	Staff development not limited to classroom teachers, but must relate to teaching activities that take place in schools. After-school staff would have access only insofar as they were providing instruction in school classrooms as well.
ED	<i>Public Charter Schools</i>	\$211.0	PD	No	No	Funds may be used for PD for teachers and other staff. Because community-based organizations are sometimes involved in charter schools, their staff might be able to participate in PD.
ED	<i>Reading Is Fundamental (RIF)</i>	\$24.6	Training, TA	No	No	Youth-serving programs subcontracting to RIF could receive training in providing motivational reading services.
ED	<i>Striving Readers</i>	\$35.4	PD	No	No	While oriented mainly toward classrooms, some grantees deliver services through after-school programs. Staff may be eligible to participate in PD.
HHS	<i>Child Welfare Services Training Grants</i>	\$7.2	Training, Model Programs	N/A	N/A	Helps develop child welfare workforce by developing training programs at IHE's, funding traineeships, and developing models of recruitment and retention training.
HHS	<i>Homeless &amp; Runaway Youth – Basic Center Program (funds allocated by state; grants are federal to local)</i>	\$52.9	Training	Yes	No	Grantees required to provide initial and periodic training to staff and to maintain a plan for staffing and staff development.
HHS	<i>Homeless and Runaway Youth T&amp;TA Centers</i>	\$2.1	Training, TA	N/A	N/A	Provide training and technical assistance on core competencies for youth workers to HRY program grantees only.
DOJ	<i>Gang Resistance Education &amp; Training (G.R.E.A.T.)</i>	\$18.8	Training	No	No	Training provided to law enforcement officers administering G.R.E.A.T. curriculum that focuses on providing life skills to students to avoid delinquent behavior.
DOL	<i>YouthBuild</i>	\$59.0	Training	No	No	T&TA for program staff in carrying out program. Youth in the program can receive educational and employment services.

**Key:** TA = Technical Assistance  
PD = Professional Development

**Table 4: Employment and Training Programs**

<i>Dept.</i>	<i>Program</i>	<i>Funding (millions)</i>	<i>Supports Offered</i>	<i>Required?</i>	<i>Set-Aside?</i>	<i>Relevance for Youth Workforce</i>
DOL	<b><i>JOB CORPS</i></b>	\$1,610.0	YD Apprenticeships; Education, Training, SS for Youth	N/A	N/A	JOB CORPS is developing Youth Development Practitioner Certification for some staff. Youth in program could train for and enter youth work.
DOL	<b><i>Workforce Investment Act – Adult</i></b>	\$861.5	Training, SS	No	N/A	Possible source of funding for training, but targeted at disadvantaged workers. Work with WIBs to develop programs for youth workers.
DOL	<b><i>Workforce Investment Act – Youth</i></b>	\$924.1	Training, Educ. Activities, Work Experiences, SS		N/A	Avenue for recruiting and training young people in youth work.
NSC	<b><i>AMERICORPS</i></b>	\$256.8	Training, SS, Stipend, Education Awards	N/A	N/A	Members train in youth work when placed with youth organizations as sponsors.
NSC	<b><i>Volunteers in Service to America (AmeriCorps*VISTA)</i></b>	\$93.8	Education Award or Stipend	N/A	N/A	Volunteers do not provide direct services, but do receive professional development in areas that could include capacity building and youth development when placed with a youth organization.
NSC	<b><i>Learn and Serve – Higher Education</i></b>	\$9.3	Training	N/A	N/A	Training in creating service learning programs. Students may be attracted into youth work, especially if their service learning placement is a pre-service component of their field of study.
NSC	<b><i>Learn and Serve – School and Community-Based Programs</i></b>	\$28.1	Training	N/A	N/A	Provides training for program staff in creating and operating service-learning programs.

**Key:** YD = Youth Development  
SS = Supportive Services

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