

Youth Re-engagement Programming

Jurisdiction: Manitoba

Contact: Veronica Dyck

Level: Transitions

Theme: Transitions and Linkages

Description of Practice:

Manitoba has a low youth unemployment rate. However, there remains a large population of youth who are unemployed as a result of personal life challenges, lack of appropriate employment skills or poor educational attachments. A significant number of these unemployed youth are of Aboriginal decent.

Youth NOW, *Partners With Youth* and *Youth Build* are programs that offer project-based programming for youth. The aim of these programs is to assist youth to gain the necessary life skills and develop personal development plans that will lead to employment or educational reattachment.

Manitoba contracts with external service providers to deliver a continuum of programs and services to youth clients. Projects assist unemployed individuals to prepare for, find and keep jobs by providing a variety of employment-related services. Specific outcomes for the projects will depend on the individual project goals, but it is expected that they will lead to sustainable employment for participants by improving their general employability, preparing them for further training, preparing them for successful job search, facilitating an employment placement, or providing employment maintenance support services.

Typical project activities include:

- employment plan development;
- employment counselling;
- personal development and employment preparation activities that increase the employability of project participants;
- academic upgrading;
- short-term specific occupational skills training;
- job search assistance;
- job referral and/or direct placement;
- workplace safety awareness;
- wage incentives to encourage private sector employers to hire project participants;
- unpaid work experience/internship placements; and
- employment maintenance services.

Background:

In 1996, Manitoba introduced the first of three programs aimed at re-engaging youth into the workforce or the educational system.

In 2000, *Partners With Youth* was reprofiled to better serve youth through a project-based model. In 2002, Manitoba introduced the *Youth Build* program to provide youth with a building construction focused program.

Development:

Youth NOW was introduced in Winnipeg to serve as a welfare reform program. Targeted at youth on Employment and Income Assistance, the program works closely with the Department of Family Services and Housing that coordinates the Provincial assistance program. Employment and Income Assistance clients continue to be a key focus, but the program eligibility has been expanded to include more youth aged 18-29 that face multiple barriers to employment.

Partners With Youth was developed as the rural equivalent to the Youth NOW program. This program provides programming outside of the capital region in Manitoba.

The Housing and Homelessness initiative introduced by the Federal Government five years ago enabled Manitoba to seek partners to deliver the Youth Build program within this jurisdiction. The Youth Build model has been highly successful in the United States where it is rebuilding the lives of youth while building housing. There are currently two project sites in Manitoba, one in the Winnipeg core area and one in northern Manitoba.

Evidence:

Generally, projects are able to identify eligible youth participants through advertising, referrals and community contacts. There are a number of projects that have a greater demand for service than they have capacity for. Projects will work with clients for periods from a few weeks to a full year.

Participant information is collected and updated at three critical points; project arrival (intake), project leaving, and 90 days after leaving. Data collected include source of income, employment status, employer and earnings information, and future training or educational plans.

The outcomes of participation are measured by evaluating the number of youth who have improved their educational and/or employment position through participation in the projects. Personal development, life stability and personal and career plans are also used to evaluate the progress of participants, and the ability of a project to meet and address the needs of the youth participants.

Adaptability:

All projects must submit a proposal for funding consideration. As project funding is negotiated for up to 52 weeks, existing projects must also submit request for project renewal. Annually, the programs will review and update program documents that will communicate current priorities and needs identified by projects to service the client group.

Information sharing sessions with service providers, funding partners and government staff acting as project officers has ensured that new ideas and innovations are being shared within the region.

Further information:

Laurie E. Unrau, MB4Youth Division
Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, Province of Manitoba
lunrau@gov.mb.ca (204)-945-5396

Date: 2006.05.26