



# YOUTH WORKFORCE TOOLKIT:

## A STANDARD EMPLOYER GUIDE TO SUPPORT YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS IN THE WORKPLACE





**New York State  
Office of  
Children & Family  
Services**

[www.ocfs.state.ny.us](http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us)

August 24, 2009

Dear Employers:

**David A. Paterson**  
*Governor*

**Gladys Carrión, Esq.**  
*Commissioner*

I extend congratulations and a heartfelt thank you to the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies, its Youth Employment Project committee, and all who worked tirelessly to pull together this creative Youth Workforce Toolkit for employers in the greater New York area.

In these challenging times, there are too many youth and young adults without meaningful work, direction, or the means to support themselves. At the same time, there are employers struggling to find qualified workers. Collaborations such as the one that created this toolkit will help find the solutions to meet the needs of both groups. It will take all of us working together to provide the training, mentoring and opportunities needed to fill the workforce needs of today and the future. The well-being of our children, families, and communities depends on it.

Sincerely,

Gladys Carrión, Esq.  
Commissioner

New York State Office of Children and Family Services

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52 Washington Street  
Rensselaer, NY 12144





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August 24, 2009

Dear Employers:

I'm proud to share with you *The Youth Workforce Toolkit: A Standard Employer Guide to Support Youth and Young Adults in the Workplace*. This is the result of the efforts of many committed individuals sharing a belief that, with the proper guidance, motivation and tools for success, youth can be a valuable resource to our city's diverse workforce.

The idea for a consolidated source of standard information for employers about best practices to support young people in the workplace was conceived in June 2008 at FPWA's "New Directions for Disconnected Youth" forum. Our goal was to help employers groom young people in core workplace competencies as well as effectively integrate them into various work settings. Ultimately, we want you to be able to appreciate the benefits of using young people to fill positions and recognize your ability to help them in realizing their career potential.

I'd like to extend very special thanks to the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, the Youth Employment Project Committee, the Youth Employment Project Working Group and others who gave selflessly of their time and talents to bring the vision to reality. It's this kind of collaborative effort that benefits children and families and keeps our city strong and viable.

We hope that you'll refer to it often, share it, and please let us know your thoughts and suggestions.

Sincerely,

Fatima Goldman  
Executive Director/CEO  
Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies

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## INTRODUCTION

Young people are a valuable resource for employers. They have flexible work styles, bring innovative ideas and a strong work ethic into the work environment, and can be molded to fit with the philosophy and culture of their employer. Motivated and focused youth can greatly bolster the productivity levels within a company, and with the right encouragement and training, can become valuable members of a corporate team.

Yet, many employers are reluctant to hire youth and young adults, as evidenced by the youth unemployment rate which is traditionally one of the highest in the nation. One reason for this reluctance may be a lack of knowledge about resources available for employers who hire young workers, which is why this Toolkit was created.

The *Youth Workforce Toolkit: A Standard Employer Guide to Support Youth and Young Adults in the Workplace* is designed to help employers of all types and sizes recruit and train youth for employment. It provides concrete steps that business leaders can use to engage and successfully work with young people, and contains information on a variety of topic areas, including:

- Components of a youth career development model to assist employers in directing young workers so they will have the tools to succeed within a company.
- State and federal guidelines for employing minors.
- Compensation information for key types of positions for youth and young adults.
- Information about partnerships between employers and community-based organizations that support youth as they progress through internships, training and/or various careers.
- Sample forms that can be used when employing youth and young adults.
- A helpful orientation checklist for employers to utilize for new staff in their companies or businesses.

The idea for this Toolkit emerged from a recommendation made at the “New Directions for Disconnected Youth” forum, which was held at the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies in June 2008. The presenters and participants believed that employers would benefit from receiving standard information to assist them in recruiting and training youth for employment in their companies.

The Toolkit was developed by a working group whose members include representatives from government, community-based organizations and workforce development programs (who are listed on pages 29-30). Its contents were informed by the results of a survey conducted to learn what qualities, background and experience businesses were searching for in the youth they employ; what internship and employment opportunities were available for youth; and how youth are recruited for these opportunities. The survey results indicated that while some companies have partnerships with community-based organizations that guide youth through the employment experience, more partnerships could be developed; therefore, information on identifying and working with community-based organizations is included.

It is hoped that the information and resources provided in this guide will encourage businesses to invest time and resources into tomorrow’s workforce by recruiting and employing young workers today.

Throughout this guide, the term “youth” is used in reference to young people aged 14-17 years, and “young adults” is used in reference to individuals aged 18-24 years.

## YOUTH CAREER DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Youth employment programs and those specializing in workforce development activities utilize a variety of models to prepare and help their participants succeed in the workplace. There are several common elements shared by these programs that have been found to help youth progress, develop and mature in the workplace. The following youth career development model includes several recommended steps<sup>1</sup> that employers are encouraged to follow as they employ youth and young adult workers:

- Interview the youth/young adult for the position.
- Develop an employment action plan that sets out the employment agreement between the youth/young adult and the employer; it should be signed by both parties and complied with. (A sample employment action plan is provided later in this guide.)
- Provide a work experience that supports the youth/young adult worker's educational and career goals.
- Facilitate exposure to all aspects of the field.
- Orient youth/young adults to all aspects of the worksite, including business operations, performance expectations, administrative policies, and job-specific training. (A comprehensive orientation checklist is provided later in this guide and can be tailored to fit your company's needs.)
- Inform staff about the youth/young adult's employment and enlist their support and help.
- Arrange for a mentor.
- Assist youth/young adults in their efforts to accomplish personal and professional goals.
- If you're working with a community-based organization, meet with the organizational liaison to assess progress and address problems that arise.
- Complete formal evaluations of the youth/young worker's job performance and work-based learning experiences.

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<sup>1</sup> Youth Employment and Job Training Programs, <http://www.solutionsforamerica.org/livingwage/youth-employment.html>, page 1.

## GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYING MINORS

There are a variety of laws and guidelines governing the employment of minors in the State of New York. Key sections of the Department of Labor website concerning the employment of youth are referenced below:

- **Minimum Age for Employment:** Minors under the age of 14 may not be employed at any time, neither after school nor during vacation. Exceptions to this policy include minors 12 years of age or older who may be employed in the hand harvest of berries, fruits and vegetables. In addition, minors 11 years of age and older may work outside school hours in duties such as delivering newspapers. More details may be found at:

<http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workerprotection/laborstandards/workprot/schlatttd.shtm>

- **Employment of Youth 14 or 15 years of age:** When a youth's attendance at school is not required, the youth may work in stores, offices and other places, except in a factory workroom. Youth may do delivery or clerical work in an enclosed office of a factory, as well as in dry cleaning stores, shoe repair shops and similar service stores. During the school year, youth in this age range may work up to 18 hours per week between the hours of 7AM and 7PM; when school is not in session, youth may work up to 40 hours per week between the hours of 7AM and 9PM. Complete guidelines concerning hours and other requirements may be found at:

<http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workerprotection/laborstandards/workprot/wp14or15.shtm>

- **Employment of Youth 16 or 17 years of age:** Youth in this age range may work in a factory as well as other places. When school is in session they may work a maximum of 28 hours per week. Further specifications are detailed in the link below, which includes guidelines concerning hours, parental consent and other information.

<http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workerprotection/laborstandards/workprot/wp16or17.shtm>

- An employment certificate known as **working papers** is required for minors under 18 before they may begin employment. High school graduates, minors who work for their parents and minors who do industrial work are included in this group. The signature of a parent or guardian is required on the working paper application form. For youth who wish to obtain a full-time employment certificate, their parent or guardian must appear in person before school authorities to give consent. In addition, youth must provide proof of age, a certificate of physical fitness and a schooling record. Further information on how to obtain working papers, types of working papers, and special occupation permits may be found at:

<http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workerprotection/laborstandards/workprot/wphmpg.shtm>

<http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workerprotection/laborstandards/workprot/wptypes.shtm>

<http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workerprotection/laborstandards/workprot/wpobtain.shtm>

There are special laws relating to the health and safety of youth and young adult workers that are regulated by the US Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Guidelines, recommendations and other resources are available at

<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/teenworkers/employers.html>

## COMPENSATION: WAGES FOR KEY YOUTH POSITIONS

Depending on their education and experience, youth and young adults work in a variety of fields, including traditional entry-level jobs and other types of employment that require specialized skills and training. Table 1 provides a list of positions with average wages for jobs that youth and young adults often fill.

**Table 1: Average Hourly Wages for Various Youth Employment Opportunities**

Title	Average Hourly Wage
<b>Construction/Repair/Maintenance</b>	
Automotive Body and Related Repairers	\$15.71
Construction Laborers	\$20.54
Electrician Helpers	\$15.18
Carpenter Helpers	\$11.63
Painter/Paper Hangers/Plaster Helpers	\$11.03
Plumbing Helpers	\$13.98
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	\$12.29
Janitor/Cleaners	\$12.26
Painters, Construction, and Maintenance Workers	\$19.83
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Helpers	\$12.85
Pest Control Workers	\$15.85
<b>Food and Beverages</b>	
Bakers	\$11.63
Cooks (fast food)	\$8.62
Cooks (institutional)	\$13.19
Cooks (restaurant)	\$12.51
Food and Drink Preparation	\$9.45
Hosts/Hostesses	\$9.79
Managers	\$13.84
Waitstaff	\$10.59
<b>Hospitality</b>	
Baggage Porters and Bellhops	\$11.62
Concierge	\$18.56
Hotel Desk Clerks	\$11.48
Locker Room, Coat Room, and Dressing Room Attendants	\$9.68
Tour Guides	\$13.00
Ushers/Lobby Attendants/Ticket Takers	\$11.05
<b>Hospitals/Medical Offices/Healthcare</b>	
Bill and Account Collectors	\$15.61
Medical Assistants	\$14.66
Medical Records Assistants	\$17.33
Nurse's Aide, Orderlies, Attendants	\$14.74
Pharmacy Aides	\$11.18
Emergency Medical Technicians	\$18.88
<b>Offices</b>	
Couriers and Messengers	\$10.99
Computer Programmers	\$33.67
Computer Support Specialists	\$23.29
Data Entry Keyers	\$13.29
Executive Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	\$22.48
Mail Clerks	\$13.08
Office and Administrative Support	\$13.02

Receptionists	\$12.90
Security	\$12.50
Personal Care	
Barbers	\$10.22
Hairstylists, Cosmetologists	\$12.28
Manicurists and Pedicurists	\$9.76
Retail	
Cashiers	\$8.53
Customer Service Representatives	\$15.50
Managers of Retail Sales Workers	\$18.91
Sales Representatives	\$10.43
Telemarketers	\$11.24
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	\$9.44
Social Services	
Childcare Workers	\$11.16
Home Health Aides	\$10.44
Recreational Assistants	\$11.38
Social and Human Services Assistants	\$13.49

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics May 2008 State Occupation Employment and Wage Estimates  
[http://www.bls.gov/oes/2008/may/oes\\_ny.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/2008/may/oes_ny.htm)

“At NPower NY, we pay our interns enrolled in the Technology Service Corps Program \$8.33 per hour. After completion of the program, they are qualified to earn an hourly rate between \$15 and \$20 per hour depending on the company’s budget and the intern’s skill set. Once in the IT workforce, the graduates assume the title of Junior IT Technician. Their salary ranges from approximately \$26,000 to \$40,000.” **Patrick Cohen, Senior Program Manager, Technology Service Corps**



## CONTEXTUALIZED OR WORK-BASED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

The need for work experience or work-related learning opportunities for youth and young adults is greater than ever before with career pathways being less straight-forward and with more people holding a number of different jobs in a lifetime. Reading, writing and mathematics are no longer enough when young people look for jobs and careers in today's workforce. The types of skills required to achieve success and function effectively in the workforce now include communication, problem-solving, risk-taking, and teamwork as well as the ability to acquire and use information to get the job done, use appropriate technology, demonstrate responsible behavior at work, and learn new skills to meet new challenges.

In a contextualized work experience, the employer intentionally provides project-based assignments and simulated learning opportunities that allow young people to apply what they have learned from school and other work-based learning opportunities and experiences. This leads to a better understanding and mastery of skill sets needed for a particular industry or work environment and for general life and survival skills.

In structuring a high quality work-based learning experience, employers, youth and youth services providers need to come to the table with a similar set of expectations and goals. Young people should be open and honest about the skills, knowledge and activities they want to develop. Employers should be open and honest about whether their positions can live up to the young person's expectations and help develop the skills they have identified. Youth services providers, including schools and community-based programs, can facilitate this process by ensuring that both the employer and the young worker have realistic expectations. A structured program includes a range of offerings such as program-based worksite simulations, group projects, job shadowing and site visits.

“It is important to establish a strong relationship and regular contacts with employers as part of the structure of a work-based learning program. Employers need to understand the goals of the program, the individual plan for the youth at their site, the program's expectations of the employer and the youth, how performance will be measured, and the feedback mechanisms available.”<sup>2</sup>

Both the US Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (<http://www.doleta.gov>) and the New York State Department of Labor (<http://www.labor.state.ny.us>) provide information on promising partnerships in which companies develop work-based learning programs and employment for in-school and out-of-school youth.

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<sup>2</sup> Collaborative on Workforce and Disability, NCWD for Youth, <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/work-based-learning/youth-service-practitioner>

## EDUCATIONAL/VOCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Job training programs provide youth with education and work experience in specific fields. Many job training programs are employer-specific and are created by businesses to train young workers for employment. There are also government-sponsored job training programs, including the School-to-Work (STW) and School-to-Work Apprenticeship Program (SWAP).

Job training programs are especially important for young adults with limited educational experience. For young adults without high school diplomas or GEDs, developing a foundation of work experience is critical to career advancement – and job training programs can provide this work experience.

The best job training programs are comprehensive and emphasize long-term goals in their program planning, including retention and advancement strategies. While curricula focus on the primary task of building skills for the young adult, they also include training in leadership, responsibility, self-confidence and the importance of teamwork.<sup>3</sup>

Employers interested in developing a new training program or improving a current training program should consider the following:

- Aggressively recruiting youth through the distribution of flyers at malls, schools and community centers as well as through ads in the media.
- Conducting a thoughtful selection of youth to participate in the training program, choosing those who are truly dedicated and committed to completing the program and who are serious about finding a job in his or her field of interest.
- Carefully selecting the appropriate staff to conduct the training. Staff should be able to act as mentors to the youth throughout the training and while they are progressing through the company.<sup>4</sup>

### School-to-Work

School-to-Work (STW) programs were created through the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 to introduce high school students to a range of skilled trade career options. Programs include school-based learning, work-based learning, and supports such as mentoring activities. Students involved in these programs spend a portion of their day in school and a portion of their day at their designated worksite. This structured schedule allows students to apply what they have learned in school to the jobs they are performing. STW initiatives give students practical, concrete experience while simultaneously blending critical academic instruction.

STW career areas include, but are not limited to: Auto Collision, Auto Technician, Health Care, Information Technology, Machining and Manufacturing, Production Agriculture and Welding.<sup>5</sup> Examples of curricula and outlines as well as guidelines and further information for STW programs can be found at <http://www.fdlac.com/school.php>.

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<sup>3</sup> Youth Employment and Job Training Programs, <http://www.solutionsforamerica.org/livingwage/youth-employment.html>, page 1.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, pages 1 & 2.

<sup>5</sup> School to Work Program, Fond Du Lac Area Association of Commerce, <http://www.fdlac.com/school.php>, page 1.

## School-to-Work Apprenticeship Program

The New York State Department of Labor oversees the School-to-Work Apprenticeship Program (SWAP). This program combines on-the-job training with specific instruction in an academic setting to prepare secondary students for skilled employment. Through the coordinated efforts of local school districts, sponsors and the State Education Department, students are enrolled in apprenticeship programs that are registered and monitored by the Department of Labor.<sup>6</sup> The program's intent is to transition students, upon graduation, into full-time apprenticeship programs leading to a journey worker certification in the occupation. Guidelines and further information on SWAP can be found at <http://www.labor.state.ny.us/apprenticeship/contactus.shtm>.



"My mission is to always do my best and settle for nothing less. My goals in life are to find out who I am and to be able to help others. This program has helped me find the person I am now and who I wish to become." **Claudia G. 16, Intern**

<sup>6</sup> The New York State Department of Labor, School- to-Work Apprenticeship Program (SWAP); <http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workerprotection/laborstandards/workprot/schlwork.shtm>, page 1.

## PARTNERSHIPS: COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS AND BUSINESSES

The goal of any effective internship or work experience program is to match youth or young adults to internships and other workplace experiences that provide the young person with a challenging and rewarding experience, and the employer with a qualified and talented individual to fulfill their business needs. Community-based organizations with youth employment services can play an important role in both the recruitment and training of young adults, and match their skills and interests with appropriate internship placements.

Training is critical to prepare youth/young adults for their internship or work assignment. To increase the likelihood of success, a community-based organization will educate the youth/young adult about the employer's business needs (i.e., administrative, database, spreadsheets, or technology assistance) and provide training so that they can perform well when placed at the business site. An effective training program includes the development of positive and professional attitudes and behaviors, and good communication skills. Youth need to learn to follow instructions, take initiative, be a team player, dress professionally, and be willing to accept and apply feedback given to them so that they can improve performance. When a youth/young adult comes to a job with this type of preparation, the employer can then build on their skills and knowledge of company processes and other aspects of the actual work.

Partnerships among community-based organizations and businesses are successful when collaboration exists on many levels:

- ***Finding the right partner:*** Community-based organizations provide training in a variety of fields (information technology, database management, green jobs, office support), and productive partnerships develop when a community-based organization's training program can provide trainees that match a company's employment needs. To effectively support employers working with young people, community-based organizations learn about the employer's needs and their workplace operations, expectations and conditions. Once this is accomplished, the community-based organization is more likely to successfully match youth/young adults to work experiences that meet the young person's goals and the employer's needs.
- ***Devoting time for engagement:*** Representatives of the community-based organization's training program and the employer (usually someone from Human Resources) work together to identify appropriate internships or work assignments. The training program liaison will want to learn about the company culture and department in which the youth/young adult will be working, and identify key point persons, such as day-to-day managers. Once there is an understanding and agreement on what the company needs, the training program liaison can recommend potential candidates who match the company's needs and culture.
- ***Consistent and regular communication:*** Once the youth/young adult begins the internship or work experience, ongoing communication between the youth/young adult and their manager should be encouraged. The training program liaison will visit and communicate frequently with both the youth and their manager so that any issues that may arise can be quickly resolved.
- ***Performance appraisal:*** A performance evaluation is critical so the youth/young adults can receive feedback about their performance, can improve areas of growth, and feel good about the work they are doing. The training program liaison should receive copies of evaluations to help the employer develop performance improvement plans.

Many community-based organizations in New York City provide ongoing support to newly hired youth/young adults by providing:

- A job coach, case manager or caseworker who regularly communicates with the youth/young adult. Discussions focus on challenges or obstacles that may interfere with their success on the job and ways to resolve them, and other positive or negative experiences. Employers may be able to contact the job coach if there are questions or concerns about the youth/young adult. Together, the job coach and employer can develop a plan to collaboratively support the youth/young adult in the workplace.
- MetroCards to ensure that youth/young adults are able to get to and from work until they receive their first paycheck. In some cases, community-based organizations may have youth/young adults save money from a stipend, or other income, to pay for a MetroCard. Others provide MetroCards only in an emergency or on a case-by-case basis.
- Job clubs or work support groups for youth/young adults who are new to the world of work. Employed youth/young adults meet weekly or monthly to encourage and support each other, discuss their challenges, and receive suggestions from their peers.

Some community-based organizations also provide mentor training or supervisor orientation for prospective employers to assist them with the engagement process, as well as offer concrete strategies for dealing with young employees. These strategies may include motivational interviewing, restorative practices and other techniques.

Prior to receiving a youth/young adult in any work, learning or internship experience, employers are encouraged to interview the youth/young adult, and secure a resume or recommendation from the referring community-based organization. Youth/Young adults who succeed in their employment may be asked to return to the program to speak with youth/young adults still in job readiness and/or vocational training programs.

## EMPLOYER SUPPORT FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS PROVIDED BY COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

The following table lists the employer’s needs and expectations around engaging and employing young people, and corresponding strategies that community-based organizations use to support the employer and the youth/young adult in the workplace.

Employer Needs/Expectations	CBO Support Strategies
<b>Assistance with engaging/employing youth/young adults</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Obtain detailed information about employer and workplace</li> <li>▪ Develop a position description with the employer</li> <li>▪ Be a reliable point of contact</li> </ul>
<b>Work-ready youth/young adults</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide work readiness training</li> <li>▪ Thoroughly prepare youth/young adults for workforce entry</li> <li>▪ Prepare resume and/or recommendation for youth/young adult</li> </ul>
<b>Ongoing support from the CBO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain regular communication with employer</li> <li>▪ Respond to any employer inquiries or concerns</li> </ul>
<b>Additional support from the CBO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ One-on-one counseling with employer and youth/young adult</li> </ul>



“Prep for Success has given my students both the preparation and the opportunity for adult responsibility in the workplace. They carry themselves with more pride and with more grace. Even their classmates are noticing...and begging to be included.” ***Principal***

## HOW EMPLOYERS CAN SUPPORT THEIR YOUNG WORKERS

How do youth/young adults gain experience, develop skills, and build their work history? It starts with the employer's willingness to see the potential of the youth or young adult, and to invest the time and resources necessary to train and develop them into strong and skilled workers.

Employment action plans should focus on helping the youth/young adult develop competencies and learn skills in the workplace, while simultaneously achieving academic goals. Obtaining a high school diploma or GED credential is critically important to a young person's future success in the workforce, and, wherever possible, young people should be encouraged and provided with assistance to improve their literacy and numeracy skills.

A work-based approach to learning offers opportunities for young people to practice skills introduced by the employer. Proficiency in math, reading and writing are necessary qualifications for many different jobs and careers. Youth/Young adults must have the ability to listen and communicate effectively with others. Electronic communication and using word processing, databases and presentation software are also necessary skills that need to be mastered.

Training that addresses the professional development of their workforce, anticipates future needs and meets competitive challenges strengthens both the individual competence of the young employee, and the employer's workforce.

Hiring a young person is the most important thing an employer can do to help to improve the youth's career prognosis. Still, there are many more things that an employer can do once the youth/young adult has been hired:

- Upgrade their pay
- Consider them for future job openings
- Write a recommendation letter
- Serve as a reference
- Be a mentor
- Connect them to other employment opportunities

"My mission is to live outside the stereotypes through leadership and help others do the same. My goal is to pursue a life that helps many people in my community and to become an elected official. This program has helped me be more assertive in accomplishing my goals and escaping the fear of being a leader." **Cesar I. 16, Intern**

## SUPPORTS AND RESOURCES FOR THE YOUNG WORKER

Youth and young adults sometimes face challenges that they don't know how to address. Employers of young workers often learn about these challenges when the problem manifests itself in the workplace – such as a young parent who misses work because her child care arrangement has fallen through, or a motivated young adult who is unable to progress at work because of difficulties speaking or understanding English. Employers who are working in partnership with community-based organizations can contact their liaison for assistance when this type of situation arises. Employers who are not working with a community-based organization can refer their young workers to one of the resources listed below to seek assistance.

### **Child Care**

Child care is a critical work support for young parents, enabling them to work and/or pursue education while their children receive quality care. New York City provides subsidized child care to some parents participating in education programs or the workforce.

- To apply for a child care subsidy, parents should call 311 or enroll directly through their local child care center.

### **Educational Assistance**

#### **Beacon Programs**

Beacons are school-based community centers serving youth and young adults during out-of-school time (afternoons, evenings, weekends, school holidays, and summer). They provide literacy activities, tutoring, high school and college prep courses, as well as General Education Diplomas (GED) and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). There are 80 Beacon centers located throughout New York City. Beacon locations and other information can be found at [http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/afterschool/beacon\\_program.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/afterschool/beacon_program.shtml)

#### **CUNY Prep**

This is a joint initiative of the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development, the New York City Department of Education, and the City University of New York designed to help out-of-school youth ages 16-18 obtain a high school diploma or GED and enter post-secondary education. Students participate in a college-focused curriculum that provides a hands-on approach to learning. CUNY Prep information can be found at <http://www.cunyprep.org>.

#### **District 79 Alternative Schools and Programs**

The New York City Board of Education established District 79 for students who need additional supports to succeed in their current school or require alternative pathways to attain a high school or GED diploma. It offers a variety of innovative educational opportunities that combine rigorous academic instruction with meaningful youth development, which are described below. <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/District79/default.htm>

#### *The Referral Centers for High School Alternatives*

Located in every borough, Referral Centers for High School Alternatives are one-stop guidance centers where high school aged students can be connected to academic options and wrap-around supports. Additional information on the programs and services described in this list can be obtained at any Referral Center. Locations can be found at:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/District79/SchoolsProgramsServices/default.htm>

### *Alternative Academic Options*

- *GED Plus* is a citywide program that provides full-time and part-time GED services as well as support in transitioning to a college and/or career at no cost to students in New York City who are aged 18-21. Students who are 17 years of age may enroll if there are extenuating circumstances and with parent/guardian permission. For locations, go to <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/District79/SchoolsProgramsServices/GED+site+list.htm>
- *ACCESS GED* offers full time GED preparation with a work internship component called Learning to Work (LTW) which helps students stay engaged, or re-engage, in school through work readiness. Age requirements for this program are the same as GED Plus. For locations, go to <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/District79/SchoolsProgramsServices/GED+site+list.htm>
- *Co-Op Tech (School of Cooperative Technical Education)* offers half-day career and technical training courses for students who are enrolled in academic courses in another New York City Department of Education school or program including GED Plus and ACCESS. For more information, go to <http://www.co-optech.org/>
- *The Office of Adult and Continuing Education (OACE)*, the largest adult education provider in New York State, offers Basic Education, English as a Second Language (ESL), high school equivalency, and Career and Technical Education (CTE) classes to adults aged 21 and older. Day, evening and Saturday classes are tuition free and are taught by certified instructors. For more information, go to <http://adulthoodnyc.org/>

### *Wrap-Around Supports*

- *Life for Young Family through Education (LYFE)* program supports pregnant and parenting students enrolled in a New York City Department of Education school by providing childcare and referral services. Social Workers assigned to each of the 38 LYFE centers provide social and emotional support for young parents to enable their academic progress as well as their progress as parents. For more information and a list of LYFE program sites, go to <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/District79/SchoolsProgramsServices/LYFE.htm>
- *Services for Pregnant and Parenting Students* – District 79 operates Referral Centers for High School Alternatives and LYFE centers, both of which are equipped to support pregnant and parenting students through Academic Intervention Specialists. For more information and locations, go to <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/District79/SchoolsProgramsServices/Services+for+Pregnant+and+Parenting+Students.htm>

## **Employment and Training Resources**

### **New York City Department of Youth and Community Development**

- The *Out-of-School Youth (OSY) Program* is for 16-21 year olds who are not connected to school or work, or who need assistance upgrading their vocational skills. These programs offer occupational skills training, assistance with job and college placement, GED preparation, and a wide range of supportive services designed to increase young adults' success in the workplace and their personal lives. OSY programs are located in community-based organizations throughout New York City's five boroughs, and offer vocational training in industries such as construction, food service, health care, retail, and tourism. For more information, go to [http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/jobs/out\\_of\\_school\\_youth\\_program.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/jobs/out_of_school_youth_program.shtml)
- The *Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)* provides New York City youth between the ages of 14 and 24 with summer employment and educational opportunities. Young people work in a variety of entry-level jobs at government agencies, hospitals, summer camps, nonprofits, small businesses, law firms, museums, sports enterprises, and retail organizations. The program strives to:

- Emphasize real-world labor expectations.
- Increase awareness of services offered by local community-based organizations.
- Provide opportunities for career instruction, financial literacy training, academic improvement, and social growth.

For more information, go to

[http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/jobs/summer\\_youth\\_employment.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/jobs/summer_youth_employment.shtml)

### **Job Training Vouchers**

Some youth may be eligible for an Individual Training Grant (ITG). An ITG is a voucher that will help youth cover the cost of job training. To be eligible for an ITG voucher, a youth must:

- Be employed or seeking a job that will pay enough to live independently
- Have completed an orientation session and registered for services at a Workforce 1 Career Center
- Have developed an Individual Education Plan
- Meet the training course pre-requisites (e.g., a youth or young adult who wants to take a Commercial Driver's License training course must have a valid driver's license)

For more information, go to <http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/wf1/html/jobseekers/preparing.shtml>

### **Workforce1 Career Centers**

In New York City, workforce development and support is provided through *Workforce1 Career Centers*. At Workforce1 Career Centers, job seekers can find numerous resources, including workshops, resource rooms, job and career counseling and GED and ESL classes. For more information, go to <http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/wf1/html/home/home.shtml>

#### *Workshops*

Workforce1 Career Centers offer a variety of workshops designed to prepare jobseekers for new careers. These include:

- Computer skills assessments;
- Microsoft Office applications including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint;
- Job fairs and job searches;
- Resume and cover letter preparation;
- Networking classes;
- Identifying job skills and abilities;
- Interviewing skills;
- How to access health insurance; and
- Job placement assistance and services.



#### *Job Search Resource Rooms*

At the heart of the Workforce1 Career Center is the Resource Room, which is open to individuals once they have completed a Center orientation. In the Resource Room, individuals can learn about employment trends and companies that are hiring; use the computers to access hundreds of job listings; write, print, copy, and fax cover letters and resumes to prospective employers; and schedule interview appointments.

### *Job and Career Counseling*

Workforce1 Career Centers have Career Advisors to help individuals identify skills, abilities and interests. The Career Advisors can also help individuals develop an Individual Employment Plan, a plan that establishes a clearly defined road map to a job, including employment goals and career interests.

### *GED and ESL Classes*

Workforce1 Career Centers enroll individuals in GED or English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. The GED classes are designed to help individuals gain the credentials they need to move into, and succeed in, the workforce.

## **Health and Safety Resources**

### **Federal Network for Young Worker Safety and Health**

This group increases awareness of young worker occupational safety and health among key community players and young workers as they enter the workforce. FedNet also fosters education, training and outreach to promote young worker safety and health, enhances federal initiatives that create relationships with small businesses, trade associations, and other organizations that employ young workers, and promotes resources that enhance employer compliance and knowledge of federal and state regulations related to young workers. For more information, go to

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/fednet>

### **Health Insurance**

New York City provides two health care programs for youth. Youth under the age of 19 are eligible for both Medicaid and the State's Child Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). These two programs provide free and low-cost health care for low-income children.

- To apply for Medicaid or SCHIP, a young adult should visit their local HRA Job Center. Find a job center location at [http://www.nyc.gov/html/hra/html/directory/job\\_centers.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/hra/html/directory/job_centers.shtml).

## SUPPORTS AND RESOURCES FOR THE EMPLOYER

There are a variety of tax credits and other financial incentives available for businesses that are interested in working with youth and young adults:

### **Immigrant Opportunities Initiative**

At least 130 community organizations located in New York City's five boroughs rely on this funding to help immigrant adults and youth achieve education, employment and other goals. Participants from these programs may be potential candidates for employment or may be an internship candidate with your company. Employers interested in providing these internships in partnership with a community-based organization can find more information at <http://unhny.org/advocacy/pdf>.

### **Summer Youth Employment Program**

This program provides meaningful employment for over 42,000 youth in New York City each year, providing young people with the opportunity to gain valuable work skills. Employers interested in providing young people with the employment opportunities through this program can find out how to apply at [www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/jobs/summer\\_youth\\_employment.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/jobs/summer_youth_employment.shtml).

### **Work Opportunity Tax Credit**

Special incentives for employers to hire minors are provided under the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) Program. An employer can claim a credit for each youth aged 18-24 that they hire who has been certified by the New York State Department of Labor as being a member of a WOTC target group. The employer can claim a federal tax credit equal to 40% of the first \$6000 of wages (\$2400 maximum) paid to each eligible individual during the first year of employment. Further information on the WOTC program can be found at <http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workerprotection/laborstandards/workprot/ythsrvcs.shtm>.

### **Young Adult Internship Program**

This New York City program provides paid internships for 1,349 youth between the ages of 16-24 who are not employed or enrolled in an educational program (also known as “disconnected youth”). Youth receive intensive short-term training in preparation for their internship. Wages earned by participants are paid by New York City. Employers interested in providing internships through this program can find application information at [http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/hobs/young\\_adult\\_internship\\_program.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd/html/hobs/young_adult_internship_program.shtml).

There are many community-based organizations with youth employment programs in New York City. Check the websites of the following agencies and coalitions to identify potential partners for your youth employment efforts:

- Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies – [www.fpwa.org](http://www.fpwa.org)
- JobsFirst NYC – [www.jobsfirstnyc.org](http://www.jobsfirstnyc.org)
- New York City Department of Youth and Community Development – [www.nyc.gov/html/dycd](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dycd)
- New York City Employment and Training Coalition – [www.nycetc.org](http://www.nycetc.org)
- United Neighborhood Houses – [www.unhny.org](http://www.unhny.org)

## SAMPLE AGREEMENTS AND FORMS

This section includes sample agreements and forms for effective partnerships between employers and community-based organizations. The agreements and forms may be used for various work experiences, including apprenticeships, community service, internships, and volunteer projects. The sample agreements and forms may be tailored to your specific needs.

- **Employer Work Assignment Form**
- **Employment Action Plan**
- **Youth/Young Adult Employment Agreement**
- **Intern Evaluation Form (Work Performance)**
- **Orientation Checklist**



## Employer Work Assignment Form

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Industry/Sector: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

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Work Assignment Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

### Job Description:

List job functions/duties, skills needed, equipment used or operated, any special physical demands, working conditions, qualifications, and educational level.

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### Skills Needed/Required:

#### *Technical Skills*

- Computer (list programs/skills: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Office (copying/collating, faxing, filing, organizing materials)
- Telephone (answering calls, recording messages, responding to inquiries, other phone work)
- Writing (editing/proofreading)

#### *Non-Technical Skills*

- Communication (verbal/oral)
- Handling multiple tasks/projects
- Interpersonal (teamwork, working independently or in a group)
- Management
- Time management

#### *Other Specifications*

- Other skills (list specific skills: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Special interests (list interest areas: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Specific knowledge (other: \_\_\_\_\_)

Skills youth/young adult will gain from this experience: \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment Details: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of positions available: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Days: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours per week: \_\_\_\_\_ Weekends: \_\_\_\_\_

Salary: \_\_\_\_\_ per hour/week Interview Candidate: \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_ No

## Employment Action Plan

Program Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Intern name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Business name: \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Worksite Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Expected Date of Completion: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Work Schedule: \_\_\_\_\_

Position Description:

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Learning Objectives:

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Worksite Will Provide:

**Example:** *A hospital provides 7 internships in various departments (e.g. nursing, information technology, lab technician). The hospital agrees to provide supervision and will complete performance evaluations regarding the intern's progress.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Worksite Supervisor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Intern Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Youth/Young Adult Employment Agreement

Employment Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Youth name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Business name: \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Worksite Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Expected Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Schedule: \_\_\_\_\_

Employment Description:

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Employment Objectives:

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Worksite Will Provide:

**Example:** *A hospital provides 7 internships in various departments (e.g. nursing, information technology, lab technician). The hospital agrees to provide supervision and will complete performance evaluations regarding the intern's progress.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Worksite Supervisor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Youth Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Intern Evaluation Form

Intern Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Internship Site: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Period of Performance Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Person Completing Evaluation: ( ) Supervisor ( ) Self

### Performance Rating is as follows:

- |                                   |                                    |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 = Unacceptable Performance      | 4 = Acceptable/Average Performance |
| 2 = Needs Significant Improvement | 5 = Above Average Performance      |
| 3 = Needs Improvement             | 6 = Excels in this Category        |

	Performance Category	Score
<b>Work Habits</b>	Displays a positive, cooperative attitude toward daily tasks and work assignments.	
<b>Communication Skills</b>	Demonstrates effective verbal and written skills; listens effectively and asks for clarification when necessary.	
<b>Dependability</b>	Adheres to time frames; is punctual for meetings and appointments.	
<b>Cooperation</b>	Works well with others; demonstrates consideration; treats others respectfully; seeks to understand others' viewpoints; cooperative and flexible.	
<b>Initiative</b>	Assumes extra responsibility; seeks guidance or resources when necessary; good attitude when corrected.	
<b>Adaptability</b>	Values and seeks out the insights of others; accepts new ideas, and willing to assist others when needed, and is considered a team player.	
<b>Judgment</b>	Effectively recognizes and analyzes problems, determines appropriate action for solutions, and exhibits timely and decisive action; thinks logically.	
<b>Attendance &amp; Punctuality</b>	Arrives on time and ready to work, provides appropriate reasons for absences, adheres to prescribed work assignments.	
<b>Planning &amp; Organization</b>	Plans and organizes work, coordinates with others, establishes priorities, manages time, carries out assignments effectively.	
<b>Leadership Skills</b>	Demonstrates effective leadership abilities; gains respect and cooperation from others; inspires and motivates peers.	

The intern has been effective in: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The intern has shown growth in the following areas: \_\_\_\_\_

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The intern needs to improve in the following areas: \_\_\_\_\_

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How the intern has met stated learning objectives: \_\_\_\_\_

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Additional Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Intern Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ORIENTATION CHECKLIST

This checklist will help employers acclimate a youth/young adult to the work environment.

### Orientation Session

- Provide a welcome to the organization
- Provide an overview and/or organizational chart
- Provide company literature: annual report, brochures, newsletters
- Provide and discuss position description

### Policies and Procedures

- Review policies and procedures
  - Appointments and meetings
  - Attendance and punctuality
  - Dress code
  - Leave times
  - Safety and emergency procedures/Security
- Discuss workplace codes of conduct
- Discuss “non-negotiable” policies
  - Drugs/Alcohol
  - Theft
  - Vandalism
- ID badges/Keys
- Timesheets

### Tour and Staff Introductions

- Conduct tour of facility
  - Common areas
  - Department locations
  - Offices/Work stations
  - Restrooms
  - Where to eat: Cafeteria, staff lounge, other
  - Where to store food: Refrigerator, pantry, other
- Introduce youth/young adult to staff

### Supplies and Workplace Equipment

- Provide youth/young adult with work supplies
- Explain use of workplace equipment
  - Computer
  - Fax
  - Photocopier
  - Telephone
  - Passwords/Codes

### Supervision

- Discuss evaluation of job performance
- Establish a supervision meeting schedule

## GLOSSARY

Every young person serves as an important resource in the workforce. Given an opportunity to flourish, youth will contribute greatly and make a positive impact on their peers, customers, clients, and their work environment. The following terms may arise in your dealings with youth and the community-based organizations with whom you are interacting.

**Apprenticeship:** An opportunity for on-the-job training where an experienced or skilled worker teaches the youth a new trade or craft.

**Community-Based Organization:** A nonprofit organization that provides or addresses social service needs to culturally diverse groups in specific neighborhoods, including youth employment and job training programs.

**Informational Interview:** A networking tool used to acquire knowledge and direct contact with businesses and organizations about how to enter into a career, the positives and negatives about an industry, what to expect about daily duties and responsibilities, and the future prospects of a particular company or specific industry.

**Internship:** An opportunity for on-the-job learning and training to obtain skills and learn about duties, culture and work responsibilities. The primary intent of an **internship** is to provide the youth with an opportunity to have a career-focused, meaningful learning experience where they can acquire skills and information about the specific company, the industry, and the roles and responsibilities of positions ranging from entry-level to senior management.

**Job Shadowing:** A short-term (usually one-day) learning experience, in which a youth/young adult has an opportunity for an up-close, first-hand look at the world of work. **Job shadowing** allows a youth/young adult to explore careers or opportunities that interest her. By **shadowing** someone in their job for a day, the youth/young adult receives an insider's look into what a person's job entails and what the benefits and challenges of the position are. In seeing how the person interacts with co-workers, participating in the activities faced daily, and observing what it takes to "be that person", the youth/young adult gains valuable insight into whether this job or career is something she might want to pursue. ([www.groovejob.com/resources/jobshadowing/](http://www.groovejob.com/resources/jobshadowing/))

**Job Sharing:** A part-time work experience that allows a youth/young adult to share a work shift with another youth/young adult in order to participate in educational, work readiness, and other training activities.

**Learning Experience:** A successful **learning experience** will provide valuable work experience, training, and professional development through apprenticeships, internships, job shadowing, mentoring, and vocational training.

**Mentoring:** A relationship between an adult and a youth/young adult in which the adult teaches knowledge, skills, and information in order to foster the youth's personal and professional growth. (<http://cmcismmentorprogram.wordpress.com/mentoring-program-manual/definition-of-mentoring/>)

**Problem-Solving:** Addressing issues and concerns that may interfere with performing work assignments, tasks, and overall functioning of company business. **Problem-solving** can be most appropriately used as a preventive method to avoid conflict or mitigate a potential problem from escalating or occurring.

**Professionalism:** Appropriate work attire, timeliness, and commitment to accomplishing the tasks required of the position. **Professionalism** is demonstrated in interactions with customers/clients, co-workers, and supervisors while accomplishing assigned work functions.

**Quality Work Assignments:** **Work assignments** that provide meaningful learning opportunities and experiences. Each work assignment ideally should have:

- A position description
- Selection criteria
- A learning plan
- Assigned supervision
- Ongoing evaluation and assessment
- Interesting and challenging projects that start at the youth/young adult's skill level and increase in challenge level as the youth/young adult gains skills

(Source: Heather Abramson, Baruch College Internship Program Handouts)

**Quality Work Experience:** A **work experience** that offers tangible skills, an opportunity to consider various career options, an ability to perform self-assessments of professional skills, and an understanding of career "likes and dislikes".

**Site Visits:** Opportunities to observe, experience, and interact at a work location to learn about career options, daily work responsibilities, and the benefits and challenges of a profession. The youth/young adult has an opportunity to learn about work culture and employee expectations.

**Support:** Meeting a youth/young adult's needs throughout the job search, placement, and retention processes. Usually provided by a community-based organization, **support** includes troubleshooting issues, addressing any follow-up services, and acting as an intermediary between the employer and the youth/young adult.

**Team Player:** Coordinating efforts with co-workers to accomplish a common goal or task. The youth/young adult achieves the spirit of being a **team player** by sharing information, collaborating on projects or work assignments with others, and being open-minded to diverse perspectives and solutions.

**Volunteer Activity/Community Service (both short- and long-term):** To do charitable or helpful work without pay.

**Work/Job Readiness:** Being prepared on workplace protocols, effective work habits and behavior, interpersonal relations, punctuality, problem-solving, and the importance of being a team player.

**Workplace Protocols/Culture:** The norms, policies and overall culture of a workplace that a youth/young adult needs to learn to adjust to a work environment.

**Young Adult:** Any person aged 18 to 24 years.

**Youth:** Any person aged 14 to 17 years who requires working papers for employment.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### Youth Employment Project Committee

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**Henry Street Settlement** – Justin Brown, Job Developer

**NPower New York** – Stephanie Hyacinth

**Reconstruct Art** – Lawrence Joyner, Co-Founder

**Sarah Shirley, Inc.** – Sarah Shirley

**Year Up** – Dennis Acevedo, Director of Apprenticeships