Reengaging Disconnected Youth:
An Important (Yet Sometimes Forgotten) Piece of the Puzzle

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@AYPF_Tweets
American Youth Policy Form (AYPF)

- Nonprofit, nonpartisan
- Provides learning opportunities
- Exists at intersection of education, workforce development, & youth development
- Focused on older youth who face barriers to success

www.aypf.org
Disclaimer: “College” can be….

Full range of postsecondary learning experiences:

• AA/BA and other academic degrees
• Industry or apprenticeship certifications
• Other high-quality experiences that help people to accumulate postsecondary credit

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Disconnected or Opportunity Youth in the U.S.

Who is being left behind?

- More than one in every seven young people in America.
Disconnected or Opportunity Youth in the U.S.

- An astounding 5.8 million teens and young adults between the ages of 16 and 24 are neither working nor in school.

- African Americans are roughly three times as likely as Asian Americans and twice as likely as whites to be disconnected in their teens and early twenties.

The Backgrounds of Opportunity Youth and the Challenges Facing them Vary Widely

- 32% are single mothers
- 75% grew up in households without a parent who graduated from college
- 55% live apart from their parents
- 21% lack health insurance
- 44% were raised by a single parent

Though motivated to work, these youth continue to face barriers, including the high cost of education, the need to take care of their families, lack of transportation, difficulties balancing school and work priorities, and not knowing how to apply to college or obtain financial aid.

Source: Aspen Forum: Collective Impact for Opportunity Youth
Economic Imperative to Act

Taxpayer Burden of Each 16 Year Old Opportunity Youth

- Ages 16-24
  - $13,900 annual burden
  - Each year

- Ages 25-65
  - $148,790 lump sum burden
  - Valued at age 16

- Lifetime total
  - $258,240 lump sum burden
  - Valued at age 16

Social Burden of Each 16 Year Old Opportunity Youth

- Ages 16-24
  - $37,450 annual burden
  - Each year

- Ages 25-65
  - $461,020 lump sum burden
  - Valued at age 16

- Lifetime total
  - $755,900 lump sum burden
  - Valued at age 16

Source: Aspen Forum: The Economic Value of Opportunity Youth
Whatever It Takes

How Twelve Communities Are Reconnecting Out-of-School Youth

Nancy Martin and Samuel Halsperin

American Youth Policy Forum

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Who is doing this well?

- Austin, Texas
- Baltimore, Maryland
- Camden, New Jersey
- Jefferson County (Louisville), Kentucky
- Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- Montgomery County (Dayton), Ohio
- Oakland, California
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Pima County (Tucson), Arizona
- Portland, Oregon
- Salt Lake City, Utah
- Trenton, New Jersey
National Program Models

- Job Corps
- Jobs for America’s Graduates
- National Guard Youth ChalleNGe
- Opportunities Industrialization Centers
- YouthBuild
- Youth Service and Conservation Corps
- Youth Opportunity Grant Program
Dropout Recovery Efforts: One size does NOT fit all...

- Type of credential earned
- Entry point: education or employment
- Provider
Program Characteristics

- Open-Entry/Open-Exit
- Flexible Scheduling and Year-round Learning
- Teachers As Coaches, Facilitators & Crew Leaders
- Real-World, Career-Oriented Curricula
Program Characteristics

- Opportunities for Employment
- Clear Codes of Conduct with Consistent Enforcement
- Extensive Support Services
- A Portfolio of Options for a Varied Group
Success Stories

Portland, OR: Gateway to College
Success Stories

Montgomery County, OH: Out-of-School Youth Initiative
Success Stories

Philadelphia, PA: Reintegration Initiative
Success Stories

Youthbuild USA
Lessons Learned

- The need for a clearly articulated theory of change
- Data collection which mirrors program needs
- A strong organizational commitment to professional development for all staff related to data collection and data use
AYPF’s Current Work

- Currently profiling pathways in two states: Connecticut and Michigan

- Role of policy to support, sustain, & grow these pathways
Characteristics of successful pathways

- Asset-focused approach
- Flexible and responsive to young person needs
- Opportunity for young person to take leadership/ownership
- Case manager/caring adult advisor
Characteristics of successful pathways

- Safe and supportive environment
- Development of skills and abilities to lead to long-term success
- Bridge education and the workforce
- Opportunities for service to community
Opportunities for Policy

• Public Will
• Role of Business
• Data Collection and Reporting
Opportunities for Policy

- Flexibility of funding
- Ability to blend and braid funding sources
- Credit for competencies
- Role of remediation and adult basic education
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