

FactSheet

Youth Development

Youth who develop in a positive direction, cognitively, emotionally and socially, are more likely to achieve their full potential. They require: opportunities to explore a variety of interests, expanded enrichment activities, positive relationships with adults, meaningful ways to participate in their communities, and preparation for entry into the workforce or higher education. Our highest risk youth also need appropriate and effective services and supports, to both address problems and to help them identify and develop their potential.

New York provides important funding for youth development, delinquency prevention services, afterschool programs, and employment opportunities for youth. New York also offers a number of programs that focus on discrete problems of troubled youth. Youth development principles should be incorporated into all youth programming so that youth can be fully prepared to become successful, productive citizens.



Key Facts

- ▶ For the 2007-08 school year, 69.9% of 8th graders performed at grade level or above for math and 56.2% for English.
- ▶ Demand for afterschool programs outstrips supply. Nearly one million children would participate in afterschool programs if they were available to them. In the 2010-2011 school year, there are 7,000 fewer afterschool slots due to cuts in funding.
- ▶ In New York, 7% of 16- to 19-year-olds are not in school or employed and are considered “disconnected youth.”
- ▶ Unemployment rates for youth in the summer of 2010 were expected to be close to 23%. Rates are even higher for African-American youth. In New York City alone, 143,000 kids applied for 38,000 available jobs through the Summer Youth Employment program.
- ▶ In 2007, 53% of youth admitted to a juvenile justice facility were guilty of non-violent offenses.

- ▶ Community-based supports such as mentoring programs, mental health and substance abuse treatment, and transition services have been effective at reducing drug and alcohol usage, truancy and other negative behaviors.

We Can Do Better

- ▶ Community-based services should be integrated and coordinated across systems with funding that is flexible and predictable. These services include mentoring programs, out-of-school time activities and afterschool programming, and summer youth employment and internships.
- ▶ New York needs additional alternatives to costly out-of-home placements for troubled youth to meet the demand for services. Youth exiting placement need a continuum of services to support their successful transition and to achieve reductions in recidivism and better outcomes. Initiatives that help to prevent these negative outcomes in the first place must be supported and enhanced.