

# YOUTHBUILD 2008 ANNUAL REPORT PRESENTED TO THE ILLINOIS 96<sup>th</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## IN THIS REPORT:

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT YOUTHBUILD

THE YOUTHBUILD NETWORK

YOUTHBUILD ILLINOIS

ILLINOIS NEED

STATE FUNDED YOUTHBUILD  
PROVIDERS

YOUTHBUILD TESTIMONIALS

## APPENDICIES

YOUTHBUILD MISSION STATEMENT

PROGRAM DESIGN  
AND

PERFORMANCE  
STANDARDS

## INTRODUCTION

On August 28, 2007 HB202 passed and was signed by the Governor. Public Act # 95-0524 expands the eligibility requirements for YouthBuild participants to include youth in foster care, youth offenders, youths with disabilities, children of incarcerated parents, and migrant youth. The Bill also requires an Annual Report to the General Assembly.

(20 ILCS 1315/45 new)

**“Sec. 45. Annual report”-** The Department of Human Services shall prepare an annual report summarizing costs and outcome data associated with the YouthBuild programs. The report must include, but not be limited to, the following information: (i) the number of participants in the program, (ii) the average cost per participant, (iii) the number of participants who achieve a high school diploma or its equivalent, and (iv) the number of projects completed by Youthbuild participants during that year. The Department must submit the report to the General Assembly by July 1, 2008 and by July 1 of each year thereafter.” This report is intended to fulfill this requirement.

The full text of these revisions to Public Act # 95-0524 can be found in Appendix A.

## WHAT IS YOUTHBUILD?

YouthBuild is a youth and community development program that simultaneously addresses core issues facing low-income communities: housing, education, employment, crime prevention, and youth leadership development. In YouthBuild programs, low-income young people ages 16 to 24 work toward their GED or high school diploma while learning the skills of the construction business through hands-on construction activities. Many of the youth have had experience with foster care, juvenile justice, welfare, and homelessness.

The YouthBuild Model has become a very comprehensive approach. In this full-time program, participants divide their time between the construction site and the YouthBuild alternative school. While attending classes to achieve their educational goals, the youth work with construction firms to learn job skills by building affordable housing for homeless and low-income individuals. Strong emphasis is placed on leadership development and community service.

Participants spend six to 24 months in both a classroom and construction setting in this full-time program. Community- and faith-based nonprofit organizations sponsor most programs, although some are sponsored by public agencies, and each YouthBuild program raises private and public funds to support itself. Primary support comes from the U.S. Department of Labor through a dedicated federal line-item. In most communities, YouthBuild serves as a variation of the following:

- *An alternative school*, in which young people attend a YouthBuild school full-time on alternate weeks, studying for their GEDs or high school diplomas. Classes generally allow one-on-one attention to students;
- *A community service program*, in which young people build housing for homeless and other low-income individuals, providing a valuable and visible commodity;
- *A job training and pre-apprenticeship program*, in which young people get close supervision and training in construction skills full-time on alternate weeks from qualified instructors;
- *A leadership development and civic engagement program*, in which youth share in the governance of their own program through an elected policy committee and participate actively in community affairs, learning the values and the life-long commitment needed to be effective and ethical community leaders;
- *A youth development program*, in which youth participate in personal counseling, peer support groups, and life planning processes that assist them in healing from past trials in their lives, overcoming negative habits and attitudes, and pursuing achievable goals that will establish a productive life;
- *A long-term mini-community*, in which young people make new friends committed to a positive lifestyle, pursue cultural and recreational activities together, and can continue to participate for years through the YouthBuild Alumni Association; and

- *A community development program*, in which community-based organizations obtain the resources to tackle several key community issues at once, strengthening their capacity to build and manage housing for their residents, educate and inspire their youth, prevent crime, create leadership for the future, and generally take responsibility for their neighborhoods.

In 2006, the YouthBuild Program was transferred from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). This was done to more effectively align the YouthBuild program with existing federal youth workforce and training programs.

## THE YOUTHBUILD NETWORK

The YouthBuild program has a number of organizations that assist in its goal of empowering youth. These organizations advocate for continued financial support of program, provide technical assistance, expand the reach of YouthBuild worldwide, and accredit exception programs that adhere to rigid standards of performance. The agencies described below provide a firm backbone of support for all YouthBuild providers.

### □ **YouthBuild USA**

YouthBuild USA represents and advocates for YouthBuild programs throughout the United States. Since its founding in 1990, YouthBuild USA has guided the development of the national YouthBuild network of more than 226 local programs in 44 states that act in collaboration to improve the outcomes for youth and the positive impact of the program.

YouthBuild USA provides local YouthBuild sites with national and regional trainings; on-site and telephone technical assistance; grants and loans amounting to several million dollars per year in public and private funds; quality assurance through the management of the YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network; and YouthBuild USA Extranet with resources specifically for YouthBuild programs.

### □ **YouthBuild International**

The mission of **YouthBuild International** (YBI), a Boston-based non-governmental organization (NGO), is to unleash the intelligence and positive energy of marginalized youth to rebuild their communities as well as their lives. YouthBuild is grounded in the philosophy that given the right context—an environment filled with respect, a caring community, a positive peer group, a valued role in local communities, an opportunity to develop skills, high standards of self-discipline and performance, and the means to future education and employment—young people with troubled pasts can transform themselves into productive citizens with viable futures. It is the role of YBI to spread this philosophy through the building a global network of organizations dedicated to reaching, inspiring, preparing and connecting disadvantaged youth to viable employment opportunities in both the formal and informal economic sectors.

Through its efforts to replicate the YouthBuild model around the world, YBI provides training, technical assistance and consultation to governments, bilateral and multilateral donors, public and private sector employment systems, schools, NGOs and youth groups in the areas of youth employment training, applied basic education, youth enterprise development, leadership and citizenship, construction and community revitalization. YBI's success draws on field-tested strategies, effective partnerships, access to a broad base of public and private resources, and a development approach that is informed by the experience and perspective of young people.

YouthBuild, Inc., through its two operating divisions, YouthBuild International and YouthBuild USA, brings 30 years of experience and expertise in policy development, advocacy, research, institutional capacity building, and on-the-ground practice. YouthBuild, Inc. is the originator of the YouthBuild name and program design. According to their website, in addition to supporting a network of more than 226 independent programs in the

United States, internationally, YouthBuild has been engaged with programs in South Africa, Palestinian Territories, Serbia, Mexico, Israel, Canada, Haiti, Timor Leste, Scotland, and Central America.

Working in partnership with others, their vision is to create viable, sustainable livelihoods for all young people, through training, education, employment and self-employment. This vision guides their mission to:

- **Create a global ‘hand up’ system**, that is visible, accessible and inspiring to marginalized youth, and provides an expanding network of connections for young people to education, training, financial services, leadership development, and employment opportunities in the formal sector;
- **Create a global forum for the exchange of effective practices** and for the creation of design and performance standards that are influenced by young people, program operators, public and private employers, and leadership from the financial sector;
- **Document and communicate stories of youth transformation** and community impact by showcasing the voice, progress and community contributions being made by young people in YouthBuild programs around the world; and
- **Inform the practice and policy conclusions of public and private global institutions** that share our commitment to address the global challenge of youth unemployment, by documenting the experience and outcomes of the global YouthBuild International network.

#### □ **YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network**

The YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network (AffNet) was created in 1992 to maintain the integrity of the YouthBuild program model, provide a support and learning network for YouthBuild program staff, and strengthen the YouthBuild movement's advocacy for low-income youth.

AffNet sets program design and performance standards, collects and analyzes data on YouthBuild program outcomes, and accredits outstanding programs.

All IDHS-funded YouthBuild providers are required to be members of AffNet.

In becoming an affiliate, a local YouthBuild program assumes responsibilities designed to strengthen the YouthBuild movement and protect the integrity and reputation of the YouthBuild program model. Currently, 167 YouthBuild programs have committed to uphold the YouthBuild philosophy, program design and performance standards, submit outcome data, and participate in the AffNet as the central leadership body of the YouthBuild movement. An affiliate can become an accredited affiliate by completing at least two program cycles and a comprehensive accreditation process, and demonstrating outcomes that meet or exceed YouthBuild performance standards. Accredited affiliates are considered first for grants from YouthBuild USA--in recent years accredited affiliates have received about

twice the amount of pass-through dollars through YouthBuild USA than non-accredited programs have received.

□ **National YouthBuild Coalition**

The National YouthBuild Coalition seeks to persuade the United States government to fund local communities to employ and train young people to serve their neighborhoods by building affordable housing for homeless and other low-income people. There are approximately four million unemployed youth who have dropped out of school in the United States and an estimated two million homeless youth. In addition, there are uncounted properties desperately needing rehabilitation and construction. The Coalition believes that part of the solution to all three of these tragedies lies in creatively putting them together, employing the youth to repair these buildings. This, in turn, helps to slow the tide of homelessness while the youth complete their high school education and prepare for college, career, and community leadership.

The basic philosophy of the Coalition dictates that the positive energy and intelligence of youth need to be enlisted in solving the problems facing our society. Young people in poor communities want to rebuild their communities and their lives, and will do so if given the opportunity. The Coalition believes that the desire to serve, to do meaningful work, is universal. Community-based organizations need to be given the resources to solve local problems and to mobilize local people, including neighborhood youth. Leadership development is a central element of effective community development and youth service.

The Coalition was founded in June of 1988, and in that same year proposed that the U.S. Congress put \$200 million into appropriations designated for the purpose of youth employment and training in building housing for the homeless and other low-income individuals. Since then, federal legislation has been passed to fund various YouthBuild programs, with appropriations for fiscal years 1993 through 2006 totaling \$755 million. The program was administered initially by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and now by the Department of Labor (DOL.). Legislation has also been passed which includes YouthBuild as an eligible program for funding through the Corporation for National and Community Service.

In addition to the above accomplishments, the National YouthBuild Coalition, which is organized by YouthBuild USA, has generated State YouthBuild Coalitions in Georgia, New York, Massachusetts, Ohio, Oregon, Missouri, Illinois, Texas, Minnesota, New Jersey, South Carolina, Wisconsin, and California. These coalitions, which focus on obtaining state funding, are led by directors of local YouthBuild programs in cooperation with YouthBuild USA.

□ **Illinois YouthBuild Coalition**

The Illinois YouthBuild Coalition (IYC) advocates for increased resources, programs, public and private involvement, and public recognition of the need for concerted efforts directed toward expanding employment opportunities for poor, disadvantaged, and minority youth in Illinois. It also seeks to assist and fund local communities to employ and train youth to serve

their neighborhoods by building affordable housing for homeless and other low-income people.

IYC represents all (current and former) state and federally funded YouthBuild-affiliated programs in Illinois. IYC is a voluntary organization and offers its members access to information about membership in the National YouthBuild Coalition; opportunities for training and technical assistance; YouthBuild publications; and material and advocacy for issues facing youth in Illinois.

The nine individual program affiliates currently involved with the IYC are located in Rockford, Bloomington, East St. Louis, Waukegan, Aurora, Lake County, Rock Island, Mt. Vernon and Chicago.



## **ILLINOIS NEED**

The 2008 Report on Illinois Poverty reports that the Midwest experienced a sizeable jump in poverty (10.2 to 12.4 percent) from 1999 to 2006, earning the distinction of having the largest increase of any region in the United States. Within Illinois specifically, 12.3 percent of the population lives in poverty according to the report's 2006 data. The sources of poverty are as varied as those that suffer from it, however, one factor that consistently influences earning potential is educational attainment and training. The Illinois Department of Employment Security reports that high school dropouts make up 50 percent of recipients of welfare assistance, and those without a high school education or equivalency are twice as likely to struggle to find employment and earn almost \$9,000 less annually than their peers with high school diplomas or a GED. These findings are hardly new, and in fact are a reflection of a continuing trend toward a workplace in need of more skilled employees. At a time when costs of living continue to increase, the situation has arguably never been more critical, as there is undeniable potential for sustained growth of people living in poverty.

The United States Department of Labor reported that since January of 2008, the national unemployment rate grew by 3.6 percent, from 4.9 to 8.5 in the month of March 2009. This rising unemployment rate will continue to make it increasingly more difficult for young people without a high school degree or equivalent to find work, not to mention those who have the added hardship of little or no workplace skills.

YouthBuild Illinois programs, funded in part by IDHS, are directly addressing the aforementioned need in the State through services delivered by four community-based organizations highlighted in the following section.

## **YOUTHBUILD ILLINOIS**

The YouthBuild Illinois programs enroll low-income youth and young adults 16 to 24 years of age who have dropped out of school and are unemployed and/or have limited job skills.

YouthBuild Illinois is a year-long, highly demanding program that prepares youth and young adults for the challenges they will face in today's world. The program offers young people a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to build their futures through education, leadership development, and job training in the construction trade. It also offers the opportunity to help build and develop their communities through the rehabilitation and production of affordable housing.

YouthBuild Illinois strives to empower struggling teens and young adults by focusing on achieving academic goals while also helping them to develop the job skills necessary to succeed in the work force. In addition to teaching the skills necessary to build and remodel homes for low-income families, youth are taught the basic skills of how to relate to employees and employers, the importance of reporting to work on time, the ability to follow workplace rules and regulations, and other preparatory skills upon which employment success is contingent.

The YouthBuild Illinois program is administered by local communities. There is no universal model that can be applied to every YouthBuild Illinois program. Although each program is unique in its approach to addressing the needs of the community, all embrace the same basic principles:

- Youth benefit from the opportunity to join and function in a community;
- Education comes not only from the classroom but from life skills learned from having to function as a team, maintain a job, manage money and speak effectively with one another;
- Adults in the program mentor students as they mature; and
- Each site's unique approach addresses the complexities within their community.

According to the DOL website, the following Illinois providers continue to receive funding from their 2007 grant:

1. Comprehensive Community Solutions Inc. (Rockford) - \$547,500;
2. Emerson Park Development Corporation (East St Louis) - \$550,000;
3. YouthBuild McLean (Bloomington) - \$550,000;
4. United Methodist Children's Home (Mount Vernon) - \$403,041;
5. Youth Conservation Corps (Waukegan) - \$350,000; and
6. Quad County Urban League Inc. (Aurora) - \$550,000.

In 2008 there was one additional Illinois provider receiving YouthBuild funding, the Springfield Urban League, which was awarded a grant for \$550,000, bringing the number of DOL-funded agencies in Illinois to eight.

In State Fiscal Year 2009, the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) provided grants totaling \$262,291 to four YouthBuild Illinois programs serving Bloomington, East St Louis, Rockford and Waukegan.

The four programs are:

- Comprehensive Community Solutions Inc. (Rockford) - \$71,277;
- Emerson Park Development Corporation (East St Louis) - \$71,277;
- YouthBuild McLean (Bloomington) - \$71,277; and
- Youth Conservation Corps, Inc. (Waukegan) - \$48,460.

The Secretary of Human Services was given grant-making authority with the enactment of the YouthBuild Act in 1997. Over the past 10 years, funds have been appropriated to the YouthBuild Illinois program from other IDHS Youth Services Appropriation lines.

## **STATE FUNDED YOUTHBUILD PROVIDERS**

**Program Name:** Tomorrows Builders YouthBuild

**Service Area:** East St. Louis, IL

### **Program Description**

Tomorrows Builders YouthBuild serves some of the most at-risk youth in the region, coming from the communities of Alorton, Centreville, East St. Louis, and Washington Park. Ninety eight (98) percent of the targeted area for this program comprises East St. Louis District #189.

Upon enrollment, youth immediately start a one-year carpenter pre-apprenticeship program consisting of 26 weeks classroom, 26 weeks on-site, and six months of job placement assistance and retention. Forty-five participants are accepted at one time, who are then divided into three groups of 15. The youth spend equal time in the classroom and on the job site, alternating a week in class with a week at work. Within the classroom setting, youth are divided into learning groups consistent with skill attainment level. Some youth begin by being placed in Adult Basic Education (ABE) and later move up to classes preparing for GED testing. More advanced youth start out in GED preparation classes. A counselor is assigned to each trainee to monitor progress in the program.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

Low-income youth aged 16 to 24 years from St. Clair or Madison Counties and in need of a high school diploma are eligible for this program. All participants must complete a four-week mental toughness program screening process. Students engaged in drug use upon entering the program are allowed to continue in the program provided they attend a six week substance abuse program and pass a drug test at the end of those six weeks. Failing a drug test later in the year when randomly tested will result in being dropped from the program. Youth must demonstrate construction aptitude and agree to become work-ready in personal appearance, grooming and clothing style according to the trainee Handbook and Contract before being accepted into the program.

### **Program Components**

#### **❑ Education – Classroom work**

Classroom Work consists of ABE skills readiness and GED preparation depending on the level of the youth. In addition, leadership development and conflict and anger management are part of the curriculum. Job-related skills include job development; construction skills course work based on the pre-apprenticeship program of union carpenters; 10 hours of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training and complete PACT Training.

#### **❑ Vocational – On-Site Work**

On-site Work consists of rehabilitation of at least one home and the construction of one new home. Trades learned during rehabilitation include carpentry, electrical, roofing, landscaping, plumbing, dry walling, replacing doors and windows, framing, and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) work. New construction skills are inclusive of the skills previously enumerated with the addition of getting blueprints approved,

requesting permits, bidding scheduling, ordering materials, digging for foundations, concrete framework and masonry, getting new homeowners approved, and sale of structures.

**2008 Program Funding Sources & Partnerships**

*(All non-state funding amounts were self reported)*

- ❑ **Federal:** DOL, HUD, ISBE, AmeriCorps, NSI, YouthBuild USA \$1,000,000
- ❑ **State:** IDHS \$73,542
- ❑ **Other (Private/Public):** None
- ❑ **In-Kind (Volunteers/Partnerships)** Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House, East St. Louis Township Office, St. Clair County Probation and Parole, Regional Housing and Community Development Alliance, Community Development Consultants.

**2008 Cost Per Youth**

- ❑ **Total Cost Per Youth (All Sources)** \$15,439
- ❑ **Total Cost Per Youth (IDHS Funds Only)** \$1,987

**2008 Program Statistics**

- ❑ **Enrolled – YouthBuild Program** 37
- ❑ **Demographic Information – Enrolled Participants**
  - Gender**
  - Males 16
  - Females 21
  - Race/Ethnicity**
  - African American 97%
  - Hispanic 0%
  - White 3%
  - Average Age** 19
  - Homeless Youth** 30 or 81%
  - Adjudicated Youth** 6 or 17%

**2008 Outcomes**

- ❑ **Youth Successfully Completing YouthBuild Program** 29
- ❑ **Employment At program completion**
  - # becoming gainfully employed 21
  - Average hourly wage \$9.09
  - # employed at 6 months yet to be determined
- ❑ **Education At Program Completion**
  - Completed youth receiving diploma/GED 17
  - # enrolled in full-time post-secondary education 11
  - # in post-secondary education at 6 months yet to be determined

- **Housing Units**
  - Housing units built 12
  - Housing units remodeled 3
  
- **Adjudicated Youth**
  - Recidivism Rate 3%

**Program Name:** Youth Conservation Corps, YouthBuild Waukegan

**Service Area:** Lake County

### **Program Description**

Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) provides job training and educational opportunities for low-income youth in need of a high school diploma. Youth split their time between the construction site and the classroom, where they earn their GED or high school diploma, depending on their entry level. Leadership skills are also part of the curriculum, enabling the youth to grow into community leaders, and prepare for college and other postsecondary training opportunities. On the job site, the youth learn construction skills while constructing or rehabilitating affordable housing for low-income or homeless families in their own neighborhoods. Youth are also afforded significant support systems, such as a mentoring, follow-up education, employment, personal counseling services, and participation in community service and civic engagement.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

Eligible participants are 16 to 24 year old disadvantaged youth with one or more barrier to success. These youth could be a high school dropout, economically disadvantaged, an ex-offender, aged out of foster care, a single parent, unemployed, and/or homeless.

### **Program Components**

#### **□ Education – Classroom work**

Classroom Work consists of ABE skills readiness and GED preparation depending on the level of the youth. In addition, leadership development and conflict and anger management are part of the curriculum. Job-related skills include job development; construction skills course work based on the pre-apprenticeship program of union carpenters; 10 hours of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training and Workin' it Out on the job conflict management skills training.

#### **□ Vocational – On-Site Work**

On-site Work consists of rehabilitation of at least five homes and the construction of two to three new homes. Trades learned during rehabilitation include carpentry, electrical, roofing, landscaping, plumbing, dry walling, replacing doors and windows, framing, and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) work. New construction skills would be inclusive of the skills listed above with the addition of getting blueprints approved, requesting permits, bidding scheduling, ordering materials, digging for foundations, concrete framework and masonry, getting new homeowners approved, and sale of structures.

YCC YouthBuild partners with Habitat for Humanity, Community Action Partnership to do rehabilitation and working on new homes.

#### **■ Green Affordable Housing – On-Site Work**

YCC acquired a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) home from the City of Waukegan in July of 2008. The youth participated in deconstructing the HUD home and recycled all usable construction material. Over a ton of metal and aluminum was recycled from the building and it is expected that the recycled lumber will provide approximately two-thirds of the lumber for a planned new “green,” or environmentally

friendly, home. This home will be the first environmentally sustainable, single family green home built as affordable housing in Waukegan. YCC will be working in conjunction with the pro bono services of Serena Sturm Architects, one of the premiere sustainable architectural firms in the Chicago area, to design the home and pursue green building certification. The YouthBuild national affiliate, YouthBuild USA, has also provided technical assistance for the project through their Green Fellows Program.

The home will be a 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom single family dwelling. YCC will be working with the Affordable Housing Corporation of Lake County to provide homebuyer education and counseling, and help potential buyers access mortgage assistance programs and other beneficial financing opportunities. The beneficiary of this project will be a low-to-moderate income family that earns less than 80% of the area's median income. It is expected that the University of Wisconsin and Virginia will study the planning and construction of the dwelling, as well as the placement of the low-income family.

The home will be built by the youth of the program using as much recycled material as possible. It will include Energy Star appliances, Solar Water Heating, and a Heat Recovery Ventilation System. In addition, the building will be encased in a rigid insulation to reduce energy use, decks will be made of recycled plastic, and interior components such as drywall, hardwood floors, kitchen and bathroom flooring will be installed using recycled materials. Outside the home, the Chicago Botanical Garden and Green Town Waukegan Community Garden Group will assist in providing training for the future homeowners in maintaining a sustainable garden, irrigated through down spouts that divert storm water.

This exciting project will aid in teaching the youth involved in the construction the principles of recycling and energy conservation and the importance of building green wherever and whenever possible.

## 2008 Program Funding Sources & Partnerships

*(All non-state funding amounts were self-reported)*

□ <b>Federal</b>	
DOL	\$332,000
CNCS	\$ 80,000
□ <b>State</b>	
IDHS	\$49,847.85
IDOC	\$30,000
IEPA	\$ 1,000
□ <b>Local</b>	
County and City CDBG	\$ 6,500
United Way	\$15,000
□ <b>Other (Private/Public):</b>	
Foundations, Lake County Corporations, Lake County and Waukegan CDBG, Youth Outdoor Legacy Fund, Baxter, Sunrise Rotary Libertyville, Bears Care, REI, Dr Scholl Foundation, YouthBuild USA, Wal-Mart, Home Depot	\$300,000



- ❑ **In-Kind (Volunteers/ Partnerships):** City of Waukegan, Abbott Laboratories, Waukegan Gang Outreach, Lake County Forest Preserve District, Thresholds of Lake County, Uhlich Children’s Advantage Network, YWCA, Waukegan Park District, College of Lake County, Illinois Dept. of Human Services, Habitat for Humanity Lake County, United Way of Lake County, Glencoe Union Church, Comcast Cable Company, Lake County Workforce Board, and Waukegan Public Schools.

**2008 Cost Per Youth**

- ❑ **Total Cost Per Youth (All Sources)** \$17,297
- ❑ **Total Cost Per Youth (IDHS Funds Only)** \$1061

**2008 Program Statistics**

- ❑ **Enrolled – YouthBuild Program** 47
- ❑ **35 in first enrollment, 12 in second enrollment**

❑ **Demographic Information – Enrolled Participants**

**Gender**

Males	39
Females	8

**Race/Ethnicity**

African American	20
Hispanic	22
Asian American	2
White	3

**Average Age** 22

**Homeless Youth** 2

**Adjudicated Youth** 30

**High School Drop outs** 34

**Youth with Diploma/GED** 2

**Employed Youth** 0

**2008 Outcomes**

- ❑ **Youth Successfully Completing YouthBuild Program**
- 35 In first group 100 %
- Second group still in program
- ❑ **Homeless Youth Domiciled** 100 %
- ❑ **Employment At Program Completion**
- # becoming gainfully employed 24 or 68 %
- Average hourly wage \$9.25
- # employed at 6 months 23 or 65 %
- ❑ **Education at Program Completion**
- Completed youth receiving diploma/GED 9 or 26 %
- Remaining Youth working on diploma/GED 16

- # enrolled in full-time post-secondary education 3 or 8 %
- # in post-secondary education at 6 months 1 or 3%
  
- **Housing Units**
  - Housing units built 2
  - Housing units remodeled 6
  
- **Adjudicated Students Recidivism Rate** 2 or 8 %
- **Youth Registered to Vote** 100 %

**Program:** Comprehensive Community Solutions, Inc., YouthBuild Rockford

**Service Area:** Winnebago County

**Program Description**

Youth split their time between the construction site and the classroom, where they earn their GED or high school diploma, depending on their entry level. Leadership skills are incorporated into the classroom curriculum, enabling the youth to grow into community leaders and prepare for college and other postsecondary training opportunities. On the job site, the youth learn construction skills while constructing or rehabilitating affordable housing for low-income or homeless families in their own neighborhoods.

The program includes significant support systems, such as a mentoring, follow-up education, employment, personal counseling services, and participation in community service and civic engagement. Participants are also members of YouthBuild Rockford’s AmeriCorps program.

YouthBuild Rockford has agreements with six trade unions that provide supplemental instruction at union apprenticeship facilities or on-site at YouthBuild sites and participants earn an industry-recognized credential. In addition to construction training, YouthBuild Rockford offers a second track in computer technology training that also leads to an industry-recognized credential.

**Eligibility Criteria**

Disadvantaged youth 16 to 24 years of age in need of a high school diploma, or who have significant educational deficits are eligible for the YouthBuild Rockford program.

**Program Components**

❑ **Education – Classroom work**

Classroom Work consists of ABE skills readiness and GED preparation depending on the level of the youth. In addition, leadership development and conflict and anger management are part of the curriculum. Job-related skills include job development; construction skills course work based on the NCCER nationally recognized curriculum, and 10 hours of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training.

❑ **Vocational – On-Site Work**

Each team completes at least one unit of low-income housing. During the construction of this new home (using green building techniques), students learn rough frame carpentry, insulation, drywall, siding, and trim carpentry. Other construction skills gained include blueprint reading, scheduling of project timeframes, and ordering materials. Through job shadowing and internships with local contractors, students also get experience in concrete framework and masonry, electrical work, roofing, landscaping, plumbing, and HVAC. Computer students help rebuild and refurbish computers for local schools, while earning an industry credential.

**2008 Program Funding Sources & Partnerships**

*(All non-state funding amounts were self reported)*

❑ <b>Federal:</b> DOL	\$66,561
WIA	\$63,304

Americorps	\$174,942
HUD	\$724,643
❑ <b>State: IDHS</b>	\$73,542
❑ <b>Local</b>	\$121,773
❑ <b>In-Kind (Volunteers/ Partnerships):</b> City of Rockford, Rockford Housing Authority, Winnebago County Housing Authority, Winnebago County Criminal Justice Programs, Rock Valley College, Rockford Public Schools, CCS Construction, State of Illinois, Rockford Area Affordable Housing Coalition.	\$ 7,254

**2008 Cost Per Youth**

❑ <b>Total Cost Per Youth (All Sources)</b>	\$18,858
❑ <b>Total Cost Per Youth (IDHS Funds Only)</b>	\$1,149

**2008 Program Statistics**

❑ <b>Enrolled – YouthBuild Program</b>	64
❑ <b>Demographic Information – Enrolled Participants</b>	
<b>Gender</b>	
Males	36
Females	28
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	
AA	42
Hispanic	3
Asian American	0
White	19
<b>Average Age</b>	20
<b>Homeless Youth</b>	2
<b>Adjudicated Youth</b>	46
<b>Number of Youth with Youth with GED/Diploma</b>	0

**2008 Outcomes**

❑ <b>Youth Successfully Completing YouthBuild Program</b>	47 or 73 %
❑ <b>Youth terminating program</b>	17 or 27 %
❑ <b>Youth Registered to Vote</b>	100 %
❑ <b>Homeless Youth Domiciled</b>	100 %
❑ <b>Employment At Program Completion</b>	
▪ # becoming gainfully employed	29 or 62 %
▪ Average hourly wage	\$9.50
▪ # employed at 6 months	29 or 100 %
❑ <b>Education At Program Completion</b>	
▪ Completed youth receiving diploma/GED	18 or 38.3 %
▪ # enrolled in full-time post-secondary education	3 or 16 %
▪ # in post-secondary education in 6 months	2 or 4 %

- **Housing Units**
  - Housing units built 3
  - Housing units remodeled 0
  
- **Adjudicated Youth Recidivism Rate** 4 or 8 %

**Program Name:** YouthBuild McLean County

**Service Area:** McLean County

**Program Description**

YouthBuild McLean County (YBMC) is a 501 (c)(3) organization (incorporated in 1996) specifically designed to comprehensively and simultaneously address issues that impact the lower income areas of the McLean County community including high school drop-outs and undereducated youth, lack of affordable housing, unemployment, and disempowerment of disadvantaged young people. Since its inception, YBMC has built over 50 units of affordable housing in McLean County. The program enrolls 50 to 70 students full-time for ten to eleven months each year. Students may earn a high school diploma or GED, AmeriCorps education awards, and industry certifications. Between 2002 and 2008, over 70 percent of the students completed the program, with over 50 percent receiving their GED or diploma, and greater than 85 percent employed or enrolled in college upon exit. YBMC receives funds and/or services from the Department of Labor, Housing and Urban Development, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), AmeriCorps, the Illinois Department of Human Services, as well as a variety of local corporations and foundations. YBMC has won awards or been recognized by The National Youth Employment Coalition, All-Means-All School to Work Award, and The Institute for Educational Leadership. Additionally, YBMC has been accredited by YouthBuild USA.

**Eligibility Criteria:**

Low-income youth 17 to 24 years of age in need of a high school diploma are eligible for the program.

**Program Components**

- ❑ **Education** – YBMC places strong emphasis on education. A curriculum approved by the Illinois State Board of Education is utilized. This curriculum is designed to be project-based, rigorous, and help students advance to the level required for college courses.
  
- ❑ **Vocational – On-Site Work** – The vocational education provided by the program focuses on construction and rehabilitation of green, single and multi-family affordable housing. Industry-recognized certifications are offered in construction and property maintenance.
  
- ❑ **Leadership Development** - Students are encouraged to develop their leadership skills by participating in service projects, civic engagement, and program and national leadership positions. In 2007-08 students completed over 27,000 hours of community service, with seven students elected to the YBMC policy committee and 4 students elected to the National Young Leader’s Council.

**2008 Program Funding Sources & Partnerships**

*(All non-state funding amounts were self reported)*

❑ <b>Federal: HUD and DOL</b>	\$ 1,556,493.75
❑ <b>State: IDHS</b>	\$ 73,542 .00
<b>Other (Private/Public):</b>	\$264285.66

**2008 Cost Per Youth**

- **Total Cost Per Youth (All Sources)** \$16,522
- **Total Cost Per Youth (IDHS Funds Only)** \$ 1599

**2008 Program Statistics**

- **Enrolled – YouthBuild Program** 46
- **Demographic Information – Enrolled Participants**
  - Gender**
    - Males 37
    - Females 9
  - Race/Ethnicity**
    - AA 24
    - Hispanic 1
    - Asian American 0
    - White 21
  - Average Age** 19
  - Homeless Youth** 8
  - Adjudicated Youth** 24
  - Youth needing GED** 39

**2008 Outcomes**

- **Youth Successfully Completing YouthBuild Program** 37 or 81%
- **Employment At Program Completion**
  - # becoming gainfully employed 19 or 51%
  - Average hourly wage \$9.77
  - # employed at 6 months to be determined
- **Education At Program Completion**
  - Completed youth receiving diploma/GED (Five already had diplomas) 27 or 84%
  - # enrolled in full-time post-secondary education 17 or 46 %
  - # in post-secondary education in 6 months to be determined
- **Housing Units**
  - Housing units built 7
  - Housing units remodeled 0
- **Adjudicated Youth Recidivism Rate** unknown

## **YOUTH TESTIMONIALS**

### **Jacob (in his own words)**

My name is Jacob and I am a 2008 graduate of YouthBuild McLean County. Prior to being accepted into YouthBuild I had dropped out of school and convinced myself that having a good future wasn't for me. I spent all of my time hanging out in the streets and partying. I was given a second chance to prove to myself, my parents and my girlfriend (who was pregnant at the time) that I could be a successful person, a good son and a good father. While in YouthBuild, I earned my GED, my construction certification, and became OSHA, first aid and CPR certified. During the time I spent on the jobsite, I realized that I had a passion for construction. I am currently working on my Associate of Applied Science Degree in Construction Technologies and working in an apprenticeship. Although it was my motivation that moved me to the next level, the YouthBuild McLean County staff encouraged me and supported me throughout my transformation. I am thankful and proud to have been part of this program.

### **Omar**

Omar started in the YCC YouthBuild program in April 2008. Omar was kicked out of high school in September 2007 because of his fighting with students and his lack of ability to get along with teachers. He was also an ex-offender, having local Latin King Gang affiliation and continuing to have gang related activities after entering the program. Omar had anger issues and caused quite a lot of dramatic circumstances in the program almost from his first day. Through counseling the case manager worked very closely with him to change his attitudes and behavior. Over time, Omar removed himself from gang-related activities, and his attendance and ability to get along with other members began to improve. He became an informal leader among his peers, encouraging them to work towards success. Having recently received his GED, Omar has applied to enter the College of Lake County in the Fall.

### **Michael**

Michael was an older foster care child and as a result spent much of his time switching from one family to another before going to YouthBuild Rockford. Since his enrollment in the 2007/2008 program cycle, Michael has received his GED and is currently attending the Universal Technical Institute with a goal of becoming a certified automobile mechanic technician. Michael's classes are from 6:00 am to noon. He gets up extremely early to commute to class in the Chicago area and then returns to the YouthBuild Program in the afternoon to continue with program-related assignments. While the rest of the YouthBuild students have usually gone home at 3:30 when the program ends for the day, Michael is often here until 5:00 pm.

Michael just completed his mid-term examinations, received all A's, and has a GPA of 4.00. Needless to say, he is as proud of himself as the YouthBuild workers are. It has been Michael's strong desire and goal to make something of himself and to become self-sufficient. He is doing just that, in spite of obstacles and life situations that have threatened to derail his efforts. With the guidance provided by the YouthBuild program, Michael realized his potential and stayed in



the program. Michael is a great example of a young man aspiring to stay motivated and dedicated even when his situation dictated otherwise.

Currently, even with all of his program and school responsibilities Michael speaks monthly at Foster Care Support Meetings sharing his story and experiences in the foster care system. He offers support to others in similar situations, while providing motivation and direction.

## SUMMARY

Overall, the IDHS YouthBuild program in Illinois is but a piece of a much larger network of programs and providers. IDHS YouthBuild funding supplements a small number of existing, federally funded YouthBuild programs in Illinois. These programs combine federal, state and local resources to serve disadvantaged youth in Illinois. This, in turn, also means that youth are often dually enrolled in programs from multiple funding streams and it is often difficult to distinguish IDHS funded youth from others. This is due, in large part, to the fact that IDHS grant allocations to providers are not sufficient to sustain the services, activities and building materials necessary to fully implement the program. The IDHS grant funds are intended only to supplement, and not to fully fund, these programs.

As can be seen in the State Funded YouthBuild Providers section above, each of the programs have been very successful in developing partnerships, securing volunteers, bringing in local community resources to the program as well as securing state and federal funding. However, where they are most successful is in keeping the youth engaged and committed to bettering their lives. For example, in 2008:

- Illinois YouthBuild programs served 194 youth at an average cost to IDHS of \$1,394 per youth. (This figure represents IDHS funds only and does not accurately reflect the total program cost per youth served.)
- Fewer than 18% of youth dropped out of the program prematurely.
- 41% of all youth completing the program obtained either their High School diploma or their GED certificate. Another 9% were still working towards their diploma or certificate.
- 55% off all enrollees had gained employment or entered apprenticeships upon program completion.
- A total of 20 new homes were built for low-income families and 9 homes were remodeled.
- Of the participants, approximately 59% were previously adjudicated and these youth had approximately a 5% recidivism rate.
- 19% of the program's participants went on to post-secondary education. At six months, with two groups reporting, 50% were still in school. There are no figures available for the other groups as six months had not lapsed as of this report.
- The YouthBuild programs have also been very successful at improving both math and reading levels for enrolled youth. A goal of the programming is to increase both the reading and math levels for identified youth by at least two grade levels while enrolled.

Again, the above achievements cannot be attributed to IDHS funding alone, however, it is necessary to recognize that IDHS funds are an integral and vital piece of the funding stream that sustains these invaluable programs. Without it, fewer youth will have this wonderful opportunity to get their life on track, become valuable, productive citizens, and achieve the self-sufficiency necessary to support their families.

**APPENDIX # A**  
**YOUTHBUILD MISSION STATEMENT**

## **YOUTHBUILD MISSION STATEMENT**

### **1.) To provide a safe, secure, and supportive environment for all socially and economically disadvantaged young adults in which:**

- There is a profound respect for the intelligence and decision-making ability of young adults;
- Resources are provided to reverse the impact of past experiences that have limited the achievement of their full potential;
- Young adults are empowered spiritually and intellectually to make decisions and take responsibility for their lives, their families, and their communities;
- Young adults learn about and take pride in their individual cultural backgrounds while simultaneously learning to respect and appreciate the many diverse cultures that make up our society;
- Leadership development, education, and skills training are combined to prepare young adults to take advantage of existing economic opportunities, create new ones, and further their education;
- The importance of community service—compassion for and a genuine desire to help others—is a philosophy fostered in all young adults; and
- Civic engagement is encouraged in students, staff, and graduates.

### **2.) YouthBuild programs not only develop the capacity of young adults, but also act as a positive force for change in the larger community by:**

- Creating affordable housing, housing for the homeless, and facilities serving various community needs;
- Creating access to well-paying, long-term, meaningful jobs for young adults;
- Pressing for expanded resources for low-income communities and young people;
- Providing and developing visible role models;
- Stabilizing and strengthening the economic fabric of local communities through fostering entrepreneurship and individual home ownership; and
- Encouraging participation in electoral democracy through voter registration and getting out the vote.

**APPENDIX # B**  
**YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM DESIGN and**  
**PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**



## **The YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network**

The YouthBuild USA Affiliated network is made up of YouthBuild program, students, and alumni who are committed to adhering to the philosophy of the YouthBuild program model, implementing and enhancing its design and program standards, and building a strong YouthBuild movement in partnership with YouthBuild USA and other local YouthBuild programs.

The network's goals are to set in place a nationwide system of mutual support and learning for YouthBuild participants, graduates, staff, program directors, executive directors, and board members; to achieve the highest possible outcomes and impact; to access public and private funding to bring the YouthBuild opportunity to every youth and community that seeks it; and to serve as the center of gravity for the YouthBuild movement, which seeks to address the related issues of disconnected youth and poverty in the United States.

*The YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network was established with support from, or receives current funding from:*

The Rockefeller Foundation  
Lilly Endowment  
The Annie E. Casey Foundation  
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation  
DeWitt Wallace-Readers Digest Fund  
The Ford Foundation  
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation  
The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

*On the cover:* Roy O. Priest, Chairman of the Board of Directors of YouthBuild USA; Dorothy Stoneman, President and Founder; Mikey Caban, President, Young Leaders Council; Antonio Ramirez, President, National Alumni Council; Suzanne Fitzgerald, President, National Directors Association.





# YouthBuild Program Design and Performance Standards

YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network  
November 2007

# Contents

<b>I. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>IV. 2008 YouthBuild Program Performance Standards</b>	<b>44</b>
Purposes	3	Levels of Performance	44
Acknowledgements and the History of this Document	4	<i>YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network Performance Standards Summary</i>	46
<b>II. Underlying YouthBuild Values and Philosophy</b>	<b>6</b>	Attendance	47
YouthBuild Statement of Philosophy	6	Retention	48
YouthBuild Mission Statement	6	Job or School Placement	49
<b>III. YouthBuild Program Design Standards</b>	<b>8</b>	Wages at Job Placement	50
Essential Program Qualities	8	Educational (GED or Diploma) Achievement	51
Required and Recommended Elements of Program Design	9	Educational (Literacy and Numeracy) Gains	52
1. Service to the Community	10	Leadership Development	53
2. Skills Training	11	Construction Skills Mastery	54
3. Education	13	Individual Leadership: Personal Responsibility and Group Membership	55
4. Postsecondary Education	17	Community Leadership Development	56
5. Career Development	20	In Summary	57
6. Personal Counseling and Development	22	<b>V. Honors Graduates</b>	<b>58</b>
7. Leadership Development	25	<b>VI. The Process for Changing the YouthBuild Model or Requirements</b>	<b>60</b>
8. Cultural and Recreational Activities	28	<b>VII. Working Definitions of Important Terms Related to These Standards</b>	<b>61</b>
9. Wages, Stipends, and Incentives	29	<b>VIII. Appendix</b>	<b>62</b>
10. Length of Program	30	<i>YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network Organizational Chart</i>	62
11. Program Implementation and Culture	32	<i>State Minimum Wages and New Proposed Wage Performance Standards, 2007</i>	63
12. Management and Governance	34	<i>State Minimum Wages and New Proposed Wage Performance Standards, 2008–10</i>	64
13. Record Keeping	37		
14. Community Leadership	39		
15. Collaboration with YouthBuild USA	41		
Additional Information about Best Practices	43		

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## PART I

# Introduction

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## Purposes

This document has six purposes:

1. It presents the basic philosophy, programmatic requirements, and performance objectives for members of the YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network.
2. It presents briefly and coherently the best practices that experience indicates will produce a successful YouthBuild school or program and the performance outcomes that can be expected.
3. It provides the basis for members of the YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network to hold each other accountable for upholding the vision, identity, and success of YouthBuild, and to provide accreditation to members who achieve the program design and performance standards.
4. It defines the standards to be achieved by individual YouthBuild graduates who can obtain a National Honors Graduate Certificate or a Rudy Award for Perfect Attendance from YouthBuild USA.
5. It describes the decision-making structure of the YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network that both defines these standards and initiates programmatic developments and collaborations among local programs.

Membership in the YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network implies a commitment to achieve both the program design and performance standards included in this document. Requirements for accreditation include the achievement of these standards as demonstrated through both YouthBuild USA's Web-based Student Tracking Application (WebSTA) and a program assessment implemented by YouthBuild USA under the supervision of the membership committee of the Affiliated Network. This document does not attempt to describe the accreditation process, WebSTA, or the precise level of achievement that marks a successful review. All of that information is available in separate documents.

## Acknowledgements and the History of this Document

The first version of this document was conceived in 1992 and published in 1994. When creation of the YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network was proposed by the first 15 directors in 1992, those directors called for a clear summation of the program elements necessary for a program to be called a YouthBuild program. Up until that time a 250-page program manual had been the primary written guide. Dozens of directors, students, YouthBuild USA staff, and YouthBuild USA board members contributed and agreed to the first concise written definition of program design and performance standards.

That document was revised in 1996. By then, a formal decision-making structure was in place for regular review of standards. The Policy Council of the YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network deliberated on changes recommended by the Young Leaders Council, the National Directors Council, the National Alumni Council, and the staff of YouthBuild USA, and made final recommendations that were accepted by the YouthBuild USA Board of Directors.

These standards were revised again between 1998 and 2000, and between 2003 and June 2005, by the same process, each time orchestrated by the director of the Affiliated Network and the president of YouthBuild USA.

In response to the increase in numbers of diploma-granting schools within the YouthBuild network, and the growing attention to postsecondary education and career development, *Program Design and Performance Standards* was updated once again in 2006 to 2007 to make sure that it kept pace with innovations and best practices related to education and career development.

School coaches for YouthBuild USA's National Schools Initiative and some principals of YouthBuild schools were added to the usual review process. Many thanks go to NSI school coaches Mike Sack and Antonia Rudenstine for their leadership role in proposing additions to the existing standards. The standards were then reviewed by the National Directors Council, various alumni, key YouthBuild USA staff, and the Affiliated Network's Policy Council. YouthBuild USA's vice president for education and career development, Sangeeta Tyagi, and Anne Wright, director of the Affiliated Network, orchestrated development and review of *Program Design and Performance Standards* for this 2007 version.

The following people participated in this process:

**Directors**

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## PART II

# Underlying YouthBuild Values and Philosophy

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## YouthBuild Statement of Philosophy

There are close to 1,000 member organizations in the YouthBuild Coalition, which is guided by the following simple statement of philosophy:

The positive energy and intelligence of young people need to be liberated and enlisted in solving the problems facing our society. Young people in poor communities want to rebuild their neighborhoods and their lives, and will do so if given the opportunity. The desire to serve, to do meaningful work which is of value to other people, is universal. Community-based organizations need to be given the resources to solve local problems and to mobilize local people, including neighborhood youth. Leadership development is a central element of effective community development and youth service.

## YouthBuild Mission Statement

In 1992, the YouthBuild Directors Council, composed of the directors of seven original YouthBuild programs, met with the president of YouthBuild USA and developed the following mission statement for YouthBuild programs. This has been reaffirmed and updated at each revision by the YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network Policy Council.

The mission of YouthBuild programs is:

- I. To provide a safe, secure, and supportive environment for all socially and economically disadvantaged young adults in which:
  - A. There is a profound respect for the intelligence and decision-making ability of young adults;
  - B. Resources are provided to reverse the impact of past experiences that have limited the achievement of their full potential;

- C. Young adults are empowered spiritually and intellectually to make decisions and take responsibility for their lives, their families, and their communities;
  - D. Young adults learn about and take pride in their individual cultural backgrounds while simultaneously learning to respect and appreciate the many diverse cultures that make up our society;
  - E. Leadership development, education, and skills training are combined to prepare young adults to take advantage of existing economic opportunities, create new ones, and further their education;
  - F. The importance of community service—compassion for and a genuine desire to help others—is a philosophy fostered in all young adults; and
  - G. Civic engagement is encouraged in students, staff, and graduates.
- II. YouthBuild programs not only develop the capacity of young adults, but also act as a positive force for change in the larger community by:
- A. Creating affordable housing, housing for the homeless, and facilities serving various community needs;
  - B. Creating access to well-paying, long-term, meaningful jobs for young adults;
  - C. Pressing for expanded resources for low-income communities and young people;
  - D. Providing and developing visible role models;
  - E. Stabilizing and strengthening the economic fabric of local communities through fostering entrepreneurship and individual residential home ownership; and
  - F. Encouraging participation in electoral democracy through voter registration and getting out the vote.

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## PART III

# YouthBuild Program Design Standards

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## Essential Program Qualities

The following program qualities are not easy to measure, but they are the philosophical core and spirit of YouthBuild. To succeed, the program components must be suffused with these qualities, and staff must be trained in the meaning of them. They are designed to provide experience directly opposite to the previous negative experiences of YouthBuild students. The essential YouthBuild program qualities are:

- Profound respect for the young people's intelligence
- Power for young people over their immediate environment
- Protection for the participants, as much as possible, from disaster—or at least the support necessary to cope with it
- Meaningful and important work for both students and staff
- Real, patient caring for young people's development
- Teaching of academic, employment, and social skills
- Consistently positive values
- A firm and loving challenge for young people to stop self-destructive behavior and change negative attitudes
- Family-like support and appreciation from peers and adults
- High standards and expectations
- Staff members who have overcome similar obstacles who can serve as inspiring and caring role models
- An understanding of the proud and unique history of their own people, and respect for people of different cultural backgrounds
- Heightened awareness of the present-day world and young people's important place in it
- A path to future opportunity
- Real concern and action to change the conditions that have affected the young people and the people they love
- Fun!



## Required and Recommended Elements of Program Design

The distillation of 30 years of experience in an expanding network of YouthBuild programs has resulted in the following description of essential program elements. These are the best practices that have been selected through extensive review by practitioners and students.

Each accredited YouthBuild program must not only achieve a satisfactory level of the performance standards described in part IV of this document, but also demonstrate a total of 80 percent of the required program design elements described in this document. Each program must demonstrate no less than 50 percent in each component category.

There are many very important elements listed as “recommended.” The Young Leaders Council has expressed the opinion that most of the recommended items should be required, but has yielded to the awareness that the complexity of YouthBuild and the lack of resources experienced by many affiliates often require that desirable steps are delayed.

The one element that is mandatory for all YouthBuild affiliates reflects the importance of youth leadership development and youth input into program policy:

**Every YouthBuild program must have a working policy committee or comparable process by which students receive experience in program governance and participate in significant decisions affecting the program.**

Required and recommended program design elements are described in the following categories, as shown in the table of contents:

1. Service to the Community
2. Skills Training
3. Education
4. Postsecondary Education
5. Career Development
6. Personal Counseling and Development
7. Leadership Development
8. Cultural and Recreational Activities
9. Wages, Stipends and Incentives
10. Length of Program
11. Program Implementation and Culture
12. Management and Governance
13. Record Keeping
14. Community Leadership
15. Collaboration with YouthBuild USA

## 1. Service to the Community

### Required actions

- 1 A** Young people in low-income communities serve their neighborhoods by building or rehabilitating affordable housing for homeless or low-income people, or community facilities or commercial facilities that will enhance the social and/or economic viability of the local community.
- 1 B** Opportunities are provided to reflect on the historical and current social and political implications of the particular community needs being addressed and the methods of addressing them. These issues are woven into the academic curriculum to provide relevance to students' learning and critical thinking skill development.
- 1 C** Energy-efficient and green-building principles are followed in construction programs.

### Recommended actions

- 1 D** Students are encouraged to consciously develop themselves as role models to influence other teenagers and younger children to take their lives seriously. Programs arrange opportunities for students to speak in schools, churches, prisons, and on the streets about the value of a positive and productive life.
- 1 E** Programs arrange for extra community service through which students can volunteer in local nonprofit human service or advocacy organizations or can carry out projects independently or with other young people.
- 1 F** Programs that have already established construction as a career path may add other career paths that are presented as a community service function, such as environmental protection, medical services, child care, computer services, and ventures that are entrepreneurial and clearly contributing to community economic development or community service. These career paths may be included as part of the YouthBuild program.

## 2. Skills Training

### Required actions

- 2 A** The process of construction is coupled with skills training and close on-site supervision by experienced trainers in a staff-to-youth ratio of no less than one trainer to no more than seven students.
- 2 B** Safety skills and safe practices are taught at the outset and enforced throughout the program. Care is taken to provide the same training to students who join at a later date.
- 2 C** The curriculum includes transferable career readiness skills that are broadly applicable as well as specific skills for known career opportunities. A set of locally agreed-upon or nationally certified skills and competencies are systematically taught and students' mastery is assessed individually on a regular, ongoing basis.
- 2 D** Site training is complemented by vocational education classes to reinforce skills training and teach construction terminology or terminology used in additional career tracks in an environment free of production constraints. The training exposes young people to cutting-edge concepts and technology to best prepare them for careers in an evolving field.
- 2 E** Planning is done in advance for substitute activities that can be provided in sometimes unavoidable downtime during the construction process.
- 2 F** Opportunities to obtain driver's education are provided; students are encouraged to obtain driver's licenses to enhance employability.
- 2 G** A plan is developed for nonconstruction work for individual students who become unable to perform construction work for health reasons.
- 2 H** Industry-recognized credentials are made available to students and staff. For example: NCCER for construction, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Home Builders Institute (HBI), First Aid, CPR, lead abatement, asbestos removal, CNA for Nursing, A+ for technology. As proficiency is achieved, or at graduation, certificates of skills mastery are awarded to students.

## Recommended actions

- 2 I** Programs develop construction projects that entail gut rehabilitation or new construction, since such projects offer the best opportunities for comprehensive training. Projects involving minor renovations or work on occupied buildings are distinctly less effective for training purposes.
- 2 J** Students' mastery of the locally agreed-upon competencies is tested by the site supervisors in regular cycles related to raises and coordinated with regular cycles in the academic program.
- 2 K** Internships are set up with private electrical, plumbing, engineering, and architectural firms; and with other developers and contractors allowing well-performing YouthBuild students to obtain additional experience and training during the program cycle. Orientation is provided for both interns and contractors to ensure actual training is being done and interns are not being used for cheap labor.
- 2 L** When programs have added additional career paths, appropriate skills and competencies will be taught and certifications offered.

## 3. Education

### Required actions: Program design

- 3 A** The program offers an education program that strengthens basic skills (reading, writing, math, and computer) and leads to a GED, a high school diploma, college, or advanced technical training. In combination with vocational education, leadership development, life-skills training, and counseling, this education program takes between 50 and 60 percent of the program's time, usually, but not necessarily, in the pattern of alternating one week on the construction site and one week in the classroom.
- 3 B** The minimum teacher-to-student ratio is 1 to 28 students (note that this assumes 14 students on the construction site, and 14 students in the classroom at any given time). Different ratios will be appropriate for different students at various levels. Tutoring and teachers' assistants are available to supplement classroom instruction.
- 3 C** Programs that enroll students under 18 create developmentally appropriate structures and supports to enable them to succeed in the program. Useful skill-building strategies for this age group include refresher reading, writing, and math courses, and learning-to-learn skills. Older youth who need these supports are able to access them as well.

### Required actions: Curriculum

- 3 D** Emphasis is placed on direct instruction that enhances postsecondary and career-preparation skills. Students are exposed to and learn to analyze and synthesize information from a wide range of authors, thinkers, and bodies of knowledge in different disciplines.
- 3 E** Instruction is learner-centered and project-based and uses methods such as collaborative learning and peer-to-peer teaching to address specific student needs, learning styles, strengths, and interests.

- 3 F** The curriculum includes life-skills training that addresses the issues that would prevent students from succeeding if the issues are not handled. These issues are determined locally, but usually include substance abuse, legal problems, AIDS, racism, sexual harassment, intimate relationships, violence, loss of family members, homelessness, gangs, and caring for children and parents. Learning blocks such as lack of concentration and fear of failure might also be included.
- 3 G** The curriculum includes leadership skills, concepts, and attitudes; and links to community service.

### **Required actions: Assessment of student progress**

- 3 H** The program's intake process incorporates various assessments, including the TABE test, to provide literacy and numeracy levels, and baseline data on academic credit history, learning styles, future goals, and learning challenges (such as English Language Learners and students with special needs).
- 3 I** The program's initial assessment is used to shape individualized learning plans for all students. The plans address each student's college and career readiness and broader postsecondary and career goals. Good plans are updated every quarter; include active input from the student, advisors, and teachers; and form the basis for instructional decisions made throughout the year.
- 3 J** Teachers use appropriate tools, for example, evaluation rubrics, teacher-student conferences, standardized tests, self-assessment, observation, and peer-review, to assess student learning. Teachers collect, discuss, share, and use student assessment data consistently to inform and adjust instruction.
- 3 K** Students are trained on an array of appropriate assessment requirements and standardized tests to prepare them for state exit exams and college and career placement tests such as Accuplacer, SAT, and ACT.

### Required actions: Technology

- 3 L** YouthBuild programs establish specific targeted instruction in computer literacy. For example, students learn the current computer applications and how to type, use the Web appropriately, conduct research, access college and career resources, build their résumés, submit school work online, and use e-mail accounts responsibly and effectively.
- 3 M** The program ensures that every student has adequate access to a computer and works toward fully integrating technology into every aspect of a student's education. All faculty and staff are encouraged to become computer literate and use technology in their daily work—for curriculum development, for teaching and learning, and for assessing student progress.

### Required actions: Teacher quality, supervision, and assessment

- 3 N** Teachers ensure that students master the material being studied.
- 3 O** The entire program focuses on achievement and continuous improvement.
- 3 P** All teachers are qualified to teach their subject. Supplemental teaching staff, including tutors, are also well qualified.
- 3 Q** Teachers have regular time built into their schedule for designing cross-discipline curriculum development, lesson planning, assessment of individual student progress and challenges, and aligning classroom and work-site-based expectations. Planning time includes individual and group meetings as part of the regular salaried work week.
- 3 R** The program seeks to constantly improve its instructional program through vigilant oversight and leveraging external and internal resources and expertise. Where possible, an instructional leader keeps up with and uses best teaching and curriculum practices to coach, supervise, and evaluate staff members involved in instruction.
- 3 S** Teacher incentives and tenure are linked appropriately to student performance and outcomes as well as students' evaluation of teacher performance.

## Recommended actions

- 3 T** Program staff follow up with all completers and all enrollees who do not complete and who did not attain their GED or high school diploma during the full-time program until they do achieve it.
- 3 U** The assessment system has a portfolio and demonstration component. The portfolio is a compilation of student work that demonstrates progress over time, accomplishment of state and local standards, reflections on learning, and college and career skill preparation. It also provides students with a forum to demonstrate mastery.
- 3 V** Schools apply for technology-related funding such as e-rate funding, Beaumont Foundation, and Tech Soup grants to enhance their educational-technology resources and capacity so that all teachers and students have consistent access to effective and well-maintained print, visual, and audio tools including computers, calculators, LCD projectors, video, communication systems, and the Internet.
- 3W** Programs use YouthBuild USA's *Blueprint for Democracy*, or a comparable curriculum, to focus on civic engagement.



## 4. Postsecondary Education

YouthBuild programs are committed to the success of all students and work towards providing supports to ensure post secondary completion, career success and ongoing learning. Students' postsecondary plans are connected to their life and career goals. Postsecondary readiness skills are provided to all students whether or not they have decided to attend college.

### Required actions

- 4 A** Building partnerships with postsecondary institutions is an executive function.
- 4 B** Program staff make a concerted effort to ensure college and job placement and success. The program creates a culture that promotes postsecondary enrollment and supports students in preparing for a range of options such as certification programs and two-year and four-year colleges.
- 4 C** A significant percentage of one or several staff members is dedicated to assisting students in preparing for college and careers, or staff may involve and supervise graduates, community members, and other volunteers to support postsecondary and career preparation and success for all students as long as the overall responsibility sits with program staff.
- 4 D** Students are inspired to take college seriously as an option for themselves. A program-wide college-preparatory component begins during intake and Mental Toughness. This component forms an integral part of the daily and weekly life of the program and includes such activities as current college enrollees advising students, and in-depth and individualized assistance with the application and financial aid, scholarships, and loan processes and options. Sessions are provided, college visits are held, and students are prepared for college placement tests.
- 4 E** Programs create rituals and celebrations related to college-oriented activities. For example, they celebrate a student's acceptance into college or provide a healthy breakfast for students who are taking an entrance or placement test.

- 4 F** Programs research, identify, and partner with organizations that provide resources for the entire postsecondary preparation, application, acceptance, and completion process. Programs help students assess the risks and benefits, pros and cons of different kinds of postsecondary institutions and programs.
- 4 G** Programs include—in addition to meeting the academic requirements—the completion of postsecondary and career-related portfolios and completion of service hours to earn AmeriCorps Education awards (where available) as part of students' graduation requirements.
- 4 H** Programs also provide additional resources such as Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) and help students access appropriate grants, loans, and scholarships to maximize financial resources for graduates in postsecondary institutions. The terms and use of all financial aid options are explained clearly to students and graduates.
- 4 I** Leading up to college entrance, students learn credit-building skills, and create multi-year budgets that help them balance their income and expenses. Instruction includes an assessment of how many hours a week they need to work in order to meet their tuition and living needs. Staff emphasize the benefits of grants over loans where available.
- 4 J** The program builds institutional partnerships with postsecondary institutions. For example, staff build relationships with postsecondary education personnel including admissions and financial aid officers and student services personnel and faculty; they develop co-teaching and faculty-sharing agreements and strong articulation agreements, or agree on joint representation on boards and advisory committees.

## Recommended actions

- 4 K** The program creates college-readiness measures that all staff buy into. Examples of these measures are:
- All graduates read and write at at least a ninth-grade level.
  - All graduates are able to do math at a high enough level to enter college.
  - All graduates use technology; including e-mail, Web-based research, and Microsoft Word, Excel, and Power Point.
  - Every student applies to a postsecondary institution and completes a financial aid application before graduation.
- 4 L** Programs follow up with graduates who are not enrolled to remind them of their postsecondary options and to encourage them to enroll.
- 4M** The program provides each graduate access to community mentors who provide supports and guidance towards successful completion of a postsecondary credential.
- 4 N** Graduates are encouraged to enroll in college as a group to provide ongoing academic and social support to each other.
- 4 O** Programs support graduates who are in postsecondary education by providing space for graduates to complete their school work, offering regular tutorial support for postsecondary enrollees, and developing proactive systems for tracking and supporting student progress towards completion of postsecondary credentials.

## 5. Career Development

Programs create a program-wide career-development component that begins during admissions and Mental Toughness, and is an integral part of the daily and weekly life of the program. This component is connected to students' college, vocational, and life planning.

### Required actions

- 5 A** Career development is treated as an executive function. Directors and board members seek and define partnerships with relevant agencies such as unions, major contractors, and community institutions like universities and hospitals to maximize training opportunities and line up good job openings.
- 5 B** Program staff make a concentrated effort to find construction-related job placements and careers for all graduates who desire them and have performed well. Adequate staff time is dedicated to fulfilling this function.
- 5 C** Non-construction jobs are identified for graduates not interested in construction.
- 5 D** All students gain a thorough understanding of how to build a career track, including the ways postsecondary education—4-year, 2-year, certification programs, apprenticeships, etc.—fits into their personal track. Students get support on initiating a career path during the program year and through the graduate resources program.
- 5 E** A series of workshops or retreats prior to graduation is focused on anticipating and preparing students for the obstacles, pitfalls, and complex problems they will face on the job and in general in life beyond YouthBuild.
- 5 F** Follow-up counseling and help in job seeking is available for at least 12 months after graduation.
- 5 G** Students' progress is tracked after placement, and support is provided for their continued success. Contact with employers is similarly maintained.
- 5 H** The program builds a reputation for producing graduates who make good employees and for providing helpful information and support after placement.

## Recommended actions

- 5 I** Students are exposed to the range of job and career options and internships available in their region: in the broad construction-related arena, green-construction careers, in the human service arena, and in other high demand careers.
- 5 J** Entrepreneurial initiatives are encouraged.
- 5 K** Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) are set up to the extent possible for students and graduates.
- 5 L** Internships within the program itself are funded to enable selected graduates to work as staff assistants in various roles.
- 5M** The program arranges for every student to have a mentor—a staff member, graduate, or volunteer—to guide, support, and assist the student in developing and implementing life plans that address personal leadership development, postsecondary education and career planning and networking, and to encourage each student to become a mentor to others.

## 6. Personal Counseling and Development

### Required actions

- 6 A** High standards for personal responsibility and group participation are set, with input from staff and students.
- 6 B** The program makes clear from the beginning; in selection, orientation and thereafter; that it is not possible to straddle two worlds, that is, to live a “street life” and a “YouthBuild life” at the same time.
- 6 C** An intensive student orientation, at least one week in length but often lasting two weeks or even more, builds what has been called “mental toughness,” with emphasis on goal setting, overcoming obstacles, resisting pitfalls and traps, bonding within the group, understanding oppression and racism, building trust with staff, and preparing for the rigors of the YouthBuild program.
- 6 D** Personal counseling in a steady and ongoing fashion for everyday life issues, as well as for crises, is provided within the program. Each program has no less than one full-time counselor for every 28 youth. This counselor meets regularly with individual students.
- 6 E** Staff ensure from the start that all students develop life plans that address postsecondary education, careers, leadership skills, and personal and family responsibility.
- 6 F** The individual’s struggle to choose a positive lifestyle over self-destructive and irresponsible social behavior is actively supported in a variety of ways. Peer group counseling sessions, rap groups, or other modes of developing interpersonal support among the students are an ongoing part of the program, as is training in how to resist negative peer pressure.
- 6 G** Referrals to outside resources are available for students with severe emotional problems, drug or alcohol addiction, or other issues, if good referrals are available in the community.
- 6 H** Counselors pay particular attention to helping students solve pending court problems and complete probation requirements.

- 6 I** Confidentiality guidelines are made clear, and all commitments of confidentiality made by staff are scrupulously kept.
- 6 J** Random or routine drug testing is done as part of a proactive substance-abuse strategy. Students who test positive are provided counseling or treatment, which must be completed along with passing a follow-up drug test, as part of a clear plan for becoming drug-free prior to graduation.
- 6 K** Training in personal finance management is provided. This training covers budgeting, managing bank accounts, understanding taxes, using credit, building assets, owning a home, filing income taxes, obtaining the earned income tax credit, and investing.

### **Recommended actions**

- 6 L** Issues revolving around personal identity; racial and ethnic identity; interpersonal relationships; discrimination based on race, gender, national origin, class background, or sexual orientation; and ways to sort out one's perceptions about discrimination are addressed through various rap groups, retreats, curriculum elements, and personal counseling.
- 6M** Close liaisons are set up with residential substance abuse rehabilitation programs, and students are referred to them when appropriate. If students voluntarily join a residential treatment program, space will be made available for them in YouthBuild when they complete the treatment program.
- 6 N** Issues related to sexuality, pregnancy and family planning, sexually transmitted diseases, and intimacy are given special attention. Support groups are available for both men and women.
- 6 O** Issues related to parenting are given special attention, and support in finding good child care is provided.
- 6 P** Special attention is paid to the housing needs of students, especially those who are homeless or living in unworkable situations. If possible, suitable housing is found.

- 6 Q** Staff are willing to meet with students one-on-one or by telephone outside of program hours. A policy on home visits and one-on-one contacts outside of program hours is developed at each site by staff and students, taking into account the privacy and confidentiality of students, the usefulness of home visits in strengthening relationships with students and their families, and the occasional need to reach out in a crisis.
  
- 6 R** Small cash-assistance and savings programs such as individual development accounts (IDAs) are established to the extent feasible to help students achieve their goals.
  
- 6 S** Regular clinical supervision by a licensed professional, if available in the community, is provided to counseling staff.



## 7. Leadership Development

### Mandatory action

- 7 A** A YouthBuild program must have a working policy committee or comparable process by which students receive experience in program governance and participate in significant decision making that affects the program.

### Required actions

- 7 B** The education program includes a curriculum focused on leadership attitudes and skills.
- 7 C** The program communicates the principle “Good leadership is taking responsibility to make sure things go right for your life, for your family, for the program, for the community,” which unifies personal development with community leadership.
- 7 D** Emphasis is placed on the fact that leadership starts with being a responsible group member who can keep one’s own commitments and support the achievements of the group’s goals and objectives through cooperative work and reliability.
- 7 E** Group attention is focused on defining good leadership.
- 7 F** YouthBuild graduates who are enrolled in postsecondary education or are successfully pursuing careers are recognized as leaders and are called upon to provide support and guidance to enrolled YouthBuild students.
- 7 G** The process of becoming a positive role model in the community is taken seriously and its implications are discussed.

- 7 H** The elected policy committee, or a comparable ongoing body, should meet regularly, preferably weekly, with the director or program manager, whichever is designated to play that role on an ongoing basis, and at least one staff representative. The committee should participate in governance and decision making affecting the program, such as the selection and evaluation of staff, program, and program policies. The committee should receive training. The *Policy Committee Handbook* can be used as a guide in developing the committee. Standards for serving on the policy committee are set collectively, including attendance standards. The policy committee is fully informed about sources of funds, requirements and limitations of those funds, and the budget and expenditures of the YouthBuild program.
- 7 I** Young people taking leadership responsibility for the program are taught skills in facilitating group discussions and decision making, and resolving conflicts.
- 7 J** Opportunities are maximized for young people to participate in fundraising, public relations, and advocacy.
- 7 K** YouthBuild graduates serve on the board of directors of the sponsoring organization or on a committee of the board dedicated to the YouthBuild program. Training and preparation are provided.
- 7 L** Programs involve local YouthBuild graduates in service-learning opportunities and mentoring relationships to enhance positive program culture.
- 7 M** Young people are assigned administrative responsibilities in the implementation of the program as opportunities arise to build leadership skills not only in governance but also in program implementation. There are leadership objectives, and students are able to take leadership, in every component of the program.
- 7 N** Leadership competencies are defined and taught, and a process of evaluation of mastery of these competencies, including self-evaluation, is carried out. These competencies may include training in peaceful conflict resolution, solving community problems, peer tutoring, good parenting, public speaking, and other leadership skills.
- 7 O** Students are given systematic attention to their own development, especially through an individualized leadership development plan connected to their personal life plans.

- 7 P** Students register to vote and are encouraged to become informed citizens and to vote in local, state, and federal elections. Staff help those who have lost their voting rights work to restore them if possible under state law.

### **Recommended actions**

- 7 Q** Paths to becoming staff in YouthBuild programs are described and provided to the extent possible and appropriate. Such paths might include internships, training, and higher education.
- 7 R** Programs involve YouthBuild graduates in service-learning opportunities and mentoring relationships to enhance positive program culture.

## 8. Cultural and Recreational Activities

### Required actions

- 8 A** Cultural, recreational, and community activities that build group cohesion and morale are a regular component of the program cycle. These activities are organized, supervised, and well-coordinated. A planned program activity takes place on average at least once every month.

### Recommended actions

- 8 B** Two-day retreats are taken at least twice in a program cycle.
- 8 C** A recreation and cultural events committee of students and staff work out a rich array of fun things to do outside of program time to build a positive peer group that stretches beyond the confines of the workweek.
- 8 D** Exchange programs of various kinds are arranged with groups of young people who live and work in different communities or nations, or who come from different cultural and economic backgrounds. Collaborations are set up with other service programs; conferences are created that bring young people together to exchange views. Exchanges with other Youth-Build programs are organized.

## 9. Wages, Stipends, and Incentives

### Required actions

- 9 A** Young people receive wages, stipends, or living allowances for their on-site training and service, and stipends to cover food and travel during their program time.
- 9 B** A system of bonuses, raises, awards, and other recognition for good performance is systematically and consistently implemented. Effective incentives include making bonuses available every pay period for perfect attendance, and raises being given every two to four months for good performance in program and on site.
- 9 C** Students are fully informed of all financial circumstances dictated by various funding sources and program policies affecting their pay and they are warned in advance if there will be a delay for any reason. All policies regarding the docking of pay or the payment of fines are vetted with the policy committee and followed with fairness and consistency for all students.

### Recommended actions

- 9 D** Income for students starts at no less than the federal minimum wage for work on the site, and \$60 a week for program, or, in those cases where it has been equalized into one stipend, it starts at no less than \$309\* every two weeks.
- 9 E** A reasonable number of paid sick days are provided.
- 9 F** Efforts are made to get payroll-tax waivers from the IRS and state agencies, and Earned Income Tax Credits and child support payments for those who are eligible.

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\* This was calculated by taking the federal minimum wage (\$5.85 at the time of publication) and multiplying it by a 40-hour workweek (= \$234); then adding five days of money adequate for paying food and transportation money ( $\$15 \times 5 = \$75$ ). If your state minimum wage is above the federal minimum wage, this total would increase. Note that, according to law, the state minimum wage prevails unless the federal rate is higher. Also note that the federal minimum wage will increase to \$6.55 in July 2008, and to \$7.25 in July 2009.

## 10. Length of Program

It is useful to look at YouthBuild as a multiphase, multiyear program.

### Required actions

- 10 A** Full-time program participation must be available for at least nine months, but 11 or 12 months is generally considered more desirable, and some programs engage students full time for 18 to 24 months in order to achieve their goals. The intention behind this is to have students graduate with the credentials and skills required to transition to postsecondary education, trade certifications, and meaningful career paths. Within these parameters, students' individual development plans should drive the length of engagement.
- 10 B** Programs begin the full-time program with a week- to monthlong Mental Toughness or equivalent orientation program. It is at this point that staff begin to prepare students for graduation, careers, college, and community leadership. This preparation continues throughout the entire program.
- 10 C** Students must remain in the program a minimum of six months to be considered a completer or a graduate. Exceptions to this minimum participation requirement may be made if earlier placement is determined to be in the best interest of an individual student.
- 10 D** A graduate program at least 12 months long provides job counseling, continued access to academic opportunities, personal counseling, leadership opportunities, and support groups for former YouthBuild program participants. This program is designed locally and may include outsourcing with partner organizations.

## Recommended actions

- 10 E** A local alumni club is set up and young people are connected to Youthbuild USA's national alumni association. This club invites graduates to participate in programs for as long as they choose.
- 10 F** A pre-YouthBuild program can help students entering with low literacy rates make the best use of the program and be more likely to finish with a GED or diploma.
- 10 G** To avoid turning people back out onto the streets, a program extension is provided for graduates who have not yet found an appropriate job or educational placement.
- 10 H** For students who earn their high school diploma or GED early, the program links them to an accredited college course, a job, an internship, or an apprenticeship while remaining engaged in the YouthBuild program.

## 11. Program Implementation and Culture

### Required actions

- 11 A** The program's curriculum and classroom experience intentionally integrate service and experiential learning. Deliberate links between the field and classroom are established to maximize student learning. Student time away from the classroom is carefully considered and integrated into academic goals.
- 11 B** The entire program is self-assessed by students, staff, or board at least annually to ensure it meets all the standards.
- 11 C** Programs with rolling admissions admit students in groups of no less than seven to facilitate the integration process.
- 11 D** The tone of a YouthBuild program is one of cooperation, mutual assistance, respect, patience, high expectations, and students helping each other. Relationships are personalized: teachers know students' strengths, interests and needs; students are part of a mini-community and have a close and continuous relationship with one or more adults.
- 11 E** Student-centered celebrations, rituals, and routines intentionally contribute to the creation of a strong positive program climate.
- 11 F** Regular feedback systems are set up so all staff and students are aware at all times of their progress. Each stage is recognized, encouraged, and acknowledged in a systematic way throughout the program.
- 11 G** The program facility offers an environment that is physically healthy and promotes a positive program culture. Walls celebrate student work and communicate the program spirit and culture. Rooms are well lit; value-laden messages such as the YouthBuild pledge are clearly visible.
- 11 H** Students and staff together develop program policies that are consistently applied.



- 11 I** The program embraces a systematic professional development plan for all staff that is results-oriented, is embedded in the day-to-day work of the program, and provides coaching and effective learning strategies.
- 11 J** All staff are well oriented prior to start-up and trained on positive youth development strategies and basic YouthBuild philosophy. The importance of continuity is reinforced as staff members are asked to make a commitment for at least a complete cycle.
- 11 K** A student handbook is provided. This handbook includes all the information about the program's expectations, practices, rules, and objectives, as well as information on graduation requirements, attendance policies, and program disciplinary policies. In addition, the handbook addresses the impact of wages, stipends, or living allowances on other government-funded benefits such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), food stamps, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC or EIC), and housing subsidies.
- 11 L** An agreement between the program and each student governs behavior, expectations, and consequences for violating these agreements, as well as a commitment by the program to the students regarding how they will be respected and engaged, and what opportunities will be available to them.
- 11 M** A process is defined for students and interns who are terminated or have a grievance, in case they want a hearing before an appropriate decision-making body.
- 11 N** Programs work toward making a computer available for every full-time staff person.
- 11 O** Programs create strategies to thoughtfully invite the involvement of parents, guardians, and partners in students' education and life plans.
- 11 P** The program helps students obtain state-issued identification cards and other paperwork required to access financial aid, including birth certificates and personal and family tax documents. Programs encourage students to complete tax documents the year prior to applying for college.
- 11 Q** As part of final enrollment, students have a fit-to-work physical.

## 12. Management and Governance

### Required actions

- 12 A** A full-time YouthBuild director or program manager dedicates his or her time to the leadership of the program. In addition, trained staff are dedicated to the functions of education and construction management.
- 12 B** The program's board of directors is fully informed about and committed to the YouthBuild philosophy and mission. If the sponsoring agency is not a free-standing YouthBuild organization, and it has other programs, the board forms a subcommittee focused on the well-being of the YouthBuild program. If the board does not include a significant number of members reflecting the ethnic background of the students, an advisory committee is formed that does.
- 12 C** At least two YouthBuild graduates serve on the board of directors of the sponsoring organization, or on an advisory committee of the board dedicated to the YouthBuild program. Training and preparation are provided.
- 12 D** The executive director of a multi-service sponsoring agency provides full support to the YouthBuild program and delegates sufficient authority to the YouthBuild director so that he or she can manage the program. The executive director provides full financial reporting to the YouthBuild director.
- 12 E** When YouthBuild is implemented by collaborating organizations, there is a clear locus of control, clear lines of accountability, and centralized records creating a cohesive program with a common philosophy and community of staff and students.
- 12 F** The faculty and staff roughly reflect the ethnic, socioeconomic, or community background of the students.
- 12 G** Staff meetings of the entire YouthBuild staff and appropriate subgroups, including staff of collaborating agencies, are held as needed and on a regular basis.

- 12 H** Financial management meets high standards of planning, accountability, and information for managers.
- Monthly reports showing expenditures against budget, revenue projections, and cash flow projections are provided to management.
  - Fiscal controls are thorough, according to standard practices, preventing theft, mismanagement, or inappropriate use of funds.
  - All required corporate reports are filed, and taxes paid, to maintain charitable status and good standing with the IRS.
  - Financial obligations are paid on a timely basis.
  - An annual independent financial audit is performed according to legal requirements.
- 12 I** The organization sets a code of conduct for the staff and personnel policies are developed and implemented systematically. The policies include conflict-of-interest policies, sexual harassment policies, and drug-free workplace policies.
- 12 J** The code of conduct includes the guideline that no staff or board member may obtain any personal profit or benefit through the labor of the students being carried out on personal property.
- 12 K** To enable staff development and growth, staff training and development is systematically offered, provided, budgeted, and valued.
- 12 L** Annual written evaluations of staff and director are done and discussed. Comments from students are gathered during the completion of staff and director annual evaluations.
- 12 M** Appropriate insurance is maintained.
- 12 N** The program develops a written plan for sustainability that assesses a range of possible public and private funding sources that may be available to sustain the program for at least two years. The plan is supported by the sponsoring agency.
- 12 O** Programs assess issues of sustainability and economies of scale to determine optimal program size.

## Recommended actions

- 12 P** The board of directors evaluates the program annually, using these program standards as a general guide, inviting input from staff and the policy committee, and sharing the results with the YouthBuild USA program advisor. In the case of YouthBuild programs without boards of directors and operating within public agencies, the executive director of that agency or a YouthBuild community advisory board carries out the evaluation.
- 12 Q** The YouthBuild director designates an instructional leader to emphasize a cohesive education program. In YouthBuild diploma-granting schools, leadership teams designate administrators to adequately fulfill two core functions: instructional leadership and executive duties. The team ensures that the infrastructure is sufficient to carry out and sustain all school functions.

## 13. Record Keeping

### Required actions

**13 A** YouthBuild USA affiliates participate in the Web-based Student Tracking Application (WebSTA) of the Affiliated Network, keeping and reporting data in a uniform way covering the following areas:

- Recruitment
- Basic demographic information, including income levels and educational levels of students
- Contact information, including several relatives to facilitate future contact
- Attendance
- Retention (average length of stay and percent completing)
- Reasons for termination
- GED and HSD acquisition and educational gains data, including literacy and numeracy data according to Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) or comparable tests
- Job placement, including wage levels and employer
- Apprenticeships, certifications received
- Postsecondary education placement: numbers of students taking placement tests; numbers of students accepted into college, numbers of students enrolled in college, numbers of students completing college
- Voter registration

**13 B** A data collection, monitoring, and assessment infrastructure is built and data review is an executive function. Real-time information on performance, attendance etc. is available for staff to review and the information continuously shapes program decisions.

**13 C** Graduates' college and career placements are tracked for at least 12 months, optimally for 24 months and support provided as needed.

- 13 D** Individual student academic progress folders and graduation portfolios are kept.
- 13 E** Records are kept of all individual students' progress in mastering leadership skills and fulfilling leadership roles.
- 13 F** Student evaluations of program components are done annually and are used as guides for program improvement.
- 13 G** Simple records of counseling progress are kept. These reflect commitments made by the counselor and follow-up done, and reflect the life-planning process of the student.

## 14. Community Leadership

Our vision includes every local YouthBuild becoming a center of advocacy, unity, coalition building, leadership, and struggle for better local conditions in every neighborhood. This only happens if program leadership stays focused on having maximum impact, not just on preserving and enhancing its program internally. For the first year or two, new YouthBuild programs may not have much attention to give to the community beyond the development of a sound YouthBuild program. But if the goal to have maximum impact on improving the conditions affecting the young people is there from the beginning, it will soon lead to the following types of action, which in turn will result in the creation of a reputation as a good collaborator.

### Required action

- 14 A** YouthBuild representatives participate actively in local coalitions designed to improve policies and access to resources.

### Recommended actions

- 14 B** YouthBuild sponsors community youth conferences to explore issues and reach recommendations regarding issues affecting youth and the neighborhood.
- 14 C** YouthBuild convenes other local groups to devise common activities either as collaborations to improve direct services or as advocacy for increased resources or changed policies affecting the neighborhood.
- 14 D** YouthBuild leads and staffs a coalition to achieve changes in policy or flow of resources to benefit the community.
- 14 E** YouthBuild starts an entrepreneurial venture with graduates of the program.
- 14 F** YouthBuild actively supports local economic development and self-sufficiency policies and practices.

- 14 G** YouthBuild reaches out for faith-based and corporate support for YouthBuild and other neighborhood initiatives.
  
- 14 H** YouthBuild program leadership participates in state YouthBuild coalitions.



## 15. Collaboration with YouthBuild USA

### Required actions

- 15 A** Each local program agrees to adhere to the basic philosophy and mission of YouthBuild, as reflected in the essential program qualities, the directors' mission statement, the *Leadership Development Handbook*, and the *YouthBuild Program Manual*.
- 15 B** Each local program participates in further definition, refinement, and evaluation of aspects of the program, supporting the effort to get clarity about best practices and best resources for implementation of each program component and quality.
- 15 C** Each local program participates in the leadership opportunities for youth provided by YouthBuild USA.
- 15 D** Each local program participates in the activities of the national YouthBuild Coalition, which works to obtain adequate federal funding, enhance YouthBuild programs' visibility, support youth development, and build unity toward the elimination of poverty and discrimination.
- 15 E** Each local program includes in its organizational documents the fact that it is affiliated with YouthBuild USA and uses the service marks and public relations materials according to the affiliation agreements.
- 15 F** Experienced YouthBuild programs participate in providing various forms of training for new YouthBuild programs through on-site visits and workshops at seminars.
- 15 G** Cooperative organizational planning to make full use of YouthBuild USA's resources is carefully done. The director and program advisor assess needs for technical assistance and training, develop an annual work plan, and measure progress on a regular basis. When staff training is provided by YouthBuild USA, local YouthBuild programs ensure that staff attend for the entire training, that schedules are not changed at the last minute, that time is devoted to joint planning for staff and youth training to ensure success, and that feedback designed to improve future training is provided.

- 15 H** Programs take responsibility for self-assessment and constant improvement, sharing openly with their program advisor the issues with which they are grappling, and working with the program advisor to meet program and performance standards.
- 15 I** Programs invite YouthBuild USA to implement the accreditation process as soon as they think they can qualify.

### **Recommended actions**

- 15 J** Each local YouthBuild may include a representative of YouthBuild USA in the selection of the YouthBuild director, if desired.

## Additional Information about Best Practices

The handbooks and curricula listed below are available from YouthBuild USA e-store, which is accessible through the YouthBuild USA Web site, [www.YouthBuild.org](http://www.YouthBuild.org).

All of these are important ongoing resources and references for implementing all program components. We recommend reading the handbooks before starting a YouthBuild program. The first YouthBuild Program Manual was forged out of experiences from the first YouthBuild programs, which existed from 1984–1988, during which time five out of nine programs failed and were defunded within two years. We saw the need for clear and thorough advice up front. The YouthBuild Program Manual was updated in 1993 based on the experience of 12 new sites around the country and again in 1996 after 100 new programs were implemented.

### Handbooks and Resource Guides

- *YouthBuild Program Manual*
- *Handbook of Leadership Development*

Handbooks endorsed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development:

- *Construction Training at a Youthbuild Program*
- *Leadership Development at a Youthbuild Program*
- *Education at a Youthbuild Program*
- *Opportunities for Graduates of a Youthbuild Program*
- *YouthBuild Policy Committee Handbook*
- *YouthBuild Appendices* (job descriptions, sample staffing plans, contracts, etc.)
- *Mental Toughness Handbook*
- *Leadership Competencies Handbook*
- *Counseling at a YouthBuild Program (Updated HUD counseling handbook, not reviewed by HUD)*
- *Guide to Expanding Opportunities in Trade Unions*

- *Shades of Green: A Green Building Guide for YouthBuild Affiliates*
- Articles on the Educational Component of the YouthBuild Program

### Curricula

*Working Hands, Working Minds* curriculum guides (integrating construction and academics):

- *Teamwork and Leadership*
- *Health and Safety*
- *Math and Measurement*
- *Tools and Technology*
- *Housing and Community*
- *Building Your Money Skills: Taking Charge of Your Future*
- *Blueprint for Democracy: A Curriculum on Civic Engagement*
- *Career Development Curricula Review*

Videos, articles, posters, and banners are also available from the YouthBuild USA e-store.

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## PART IV

# 2008 YouthBuild Program Performance Standards

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## Levels of performance

YouthBuild programs are complex. High standards are reached step by step, and usually not in every area at once. But experience has shown that whatever the director and the staff decide to achieve is usually what they do achieve. Where they put their attention, things happen. To a certain extent it is true that the higher the standards, the higher the performance.

On each performance measure, the standards shown here have been arrived at through experience. They will change with additional experience. In some areas we do not yet have objective measures that are being consistently reported, so standards have not yet been set. Accurate reporting will come first.

<b>Excellent</b>	“Excellent” represents the range that the strongest programs have been able to produce on an ongoing, steady basis.
<b>Very Good</b>	“Very Good” represents the average range that strong programs have been able to produce.
<b>Satisfactory</b>	“Satisfactory” represents the level that has been widely achieved by sound programs and has been set as a standard for accreditation. This level has risen over time, as more programs have demonstrated good outcomes.
<b>Needing Attention</b>	“Needing Attention” represents the achievement levels that programs have suffered when they were having difficulties but were still in good faith attempting to fulfill the mission of YouthBuild and had reasonable hope of doing so. Corrective action plans are required at this level.
<b>Unacceptable</b>	“Unacceptable” levels are those levels that are clearly indicative of failure in this component, and that have been associated with eventual failure of past programs.

It is understood that performance levels are affected by the demographics of the students in the program. Research on YouthBuild programs by Professor Ron Ferguson of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government has shown direct correspondence between outcomes and two unrelated sets of factors: program quality and characteristics of the students accepted. Programs serving a distinctly different population can expect to achieve somewhat different ranges of outcomes. However, we have often enough seen outstanding staff effort achieve high outcomes with seemingly less-likely-to-succeed students that we think program quality is more impactful than demographics in determining outcomes.

While it is important to have clear performance standards, it is even more important to not allow the existence of these standards to distort the program by pressuring people to exclude youth who are not excelling academically, to avoid experimentation, or to avoid honest reporting. The YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network encourages programs to select students who are most likely to make good use of the expensive opportunities presented and who have the potential to become community leaders; but it does not discourage programs from trying to reach youth who have failed or been turned off in other systems.

## YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network Performance Standards Summary

Note that the new standards have been designed so that retention times placement must equal at least 50 percent for a program to be at the accreditation level.

When assessing the GED or high school diploma attainment rate for membership reasons, if a program cycle has students with different incoming reading levels, the TABE reading tests levels are averaged and the standard level for that average test level is used.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD	Excellent	Very Good	Satisfactory	Needing Attention	Unacceptable
<b>Average monthly attendance for all enrolled participants</b>	93–100%	85–92%	80–84%	70–79%	Below 70%
<b>Retention of enrollees (completion rates)</b>	82–100%	71–81%	63–70%	50–62%	Below 50%
<b>Placement of completers</b>	90–100%	86–89%	79–85%	61–78%	Less than 61%
<b>Placement of enrollees</b>			50%		
<b>Wage of completers</b>	At least 51% above state minimum wage	25–50% above state minimum wage	15–24% above state minimum wage	0–14% above state minimum wage	NA (below minimum wage is impossible)
<b>Educational achievement (GED or diploma) of groups entering at 8th grade level or above</b>	76–100%	61–75%	46–60%	30–45%	Less than 30%
<b>GED/HSD attainment of students entering between 4th- and 8th-grade levels</b>	65–100%	51–64%	36–50%	26–35%	Less than 26%
<b>Leadership development and voter registration of all students eligible to vote</b>			95% will be registered to vote	Less than 95% of those eligible will be registered to vote	
<b>Educational testing (literacy and numeracy) gains. This will apply to all completers, including those who get their GED or HSD</b>	TBD	TBD	80% will gain 2 years' levels	TBD	TBD

## Attendance

### Average monthly attendance for all enrolled students

<b>Excellent</b>	93–100 percent are present or at planned off-site appointments
<b>Very good</b>	85–92 percent
<b>Satisfactory</b>	80–84 percent
<b>Needing attention</b>	70–79 percent
<b>Unacceptable</b>	Below 70 percent

These are averages achieved for the full program cycle, including all enrolled students in all program components.

Two types of attendance records are kept:

1. Actual attendance in terms of who is present at the program, or at planned off-site appointments
2. Adjusted attendance, including excused absences.

The above performance standards are for actual attendance. The YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network has decided that in counting actual attendance, absences for sickness and family emergencies count as “absent” even when they are excused as a result of doctors’ notices or documented need. Absences for events that are part of a student’s leadership development plan may be counted as “present” (i.e., court dates, driver’s ed classes, setting up child care for the semester, attendance at leadership conferences). When a site applies for full affiliation or accreditation, actual, not adjusted, attendance is examined.

*Note:* The National Rudy Awards for Perfect Attendance and the National Honors Awards are also based on actual attendance.

## Retention

Some employment training programs focus on calculating the average length of stay as the indicator of retention. YouthBuild has put primary emphasis on the percentage of students who complete the entire program after having completed orientation, including Mental Toughness. However, completion can also include those who are deliberately placed during the program in an appropriate job, college, or residential treatment program. If a student completes a prison term for a crime committed prior to YouthBuild and returns to complete YouthBuild afterward, he or she is included.

A student is counted as enrolled after one month, including the orientation and Mental Toughness, regardless of the length of orientation. This practice was adopted from other employment training systems in order to make YouthBuild comparable to them. Using this approach, the current standards are as follows:

<b>Excellent</b>	82–100 percent of enrollees remain for the entire program cycle or are appropriately placed during the program cycle
<b>Very good</b>	71–81 percent
<b>Satisfactory</b>	63–70 percent
<b>Needing attention</b>	50–62 percent
<b>Unacceptable</b>	Below 50 percent

Retention levels are influenced by the particular population recruited. This will be taken into account in interpreting the outcomes.

If the average attendance level falls below 80 percent, then high retention levels have relatively less significance. Retention and attendance levels are assessed together. The program review will report both retention of all students and retention of students with at least an 80 percent attendance record.

At one time YouthBuild USA only counted individual students as having been “retained” if his or her own attendance averaged at least 80 percent; but this turned out to be too rigid a standard. In some cases retaining a student in the program is an enormous achievement even with lower attendance. However, the average attendance, retention, and placement rates are expected to interact positively so that there is not a pattern of retaining numerous students on the roll books who are actually not present or not placed. Therefore, for the purposes of passing to full or accredited status, a program may not have below a “satisfactory” level of retention for the cycle being considered.

**Considering these factors together, satisfactory outcomes show that more than half of the students enrolled complete the program and are appropriately placed.**



## Job or School Placement

Placement within 90 days of completion:

<b>Excellent</b>	90–100 percent of completers get jobs or go on to full-time education
<b>Very good</b>	86–89 percent
<b>Satisfactory</b>	79–85 percent
<b>Needing attention</b>	61–78 percent
<b>Unacceptable</b>	Less than 61 percent

### Job retention after placement

Affiliates are required to keep track of job retention and report this data through the YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network WebSTA. The Affiliated Network has not yet established standards. However, a 2004 study of 900 graduates indicates that the following averages have been achieved:

- Programs have contact with more than 50 percent of graduates
- More than 75 percent are still in jobs or school
- About 25 percent are continuing education
- Average wage is higher than it was at graduation

## Wages at Job Placement

Wage standards are calculated by averaging the wages of all completers who are placed in a job or paying program placement. Wage standards are set against the state minimum wage, for the purposes of ensuring that wages achieved are at least 15 percent above the state minimum wage or the federal minimum wage, whichever is higher. This is a reasonable standard for placement at exit. However, because working full-time at an above-minimum wage job can still produce a poverty-level income, graduate follow-up, career placements, and college education are strongly recommended.

Average wage of completers placed is:

<b>Excellent</b>	At least 51 percent above the state minimum wage
<b>Very good</b>	25–50 percent above the state minimum wage
<b>Satisfactory</b>	15–24 percent above the state minimum wage
<b>Needing Attention</b>	Minimum wage to 14 percent above the state minimum wage
<b>Unacceptable</b>	Not applicable: below minimum wage is impossible

See pages 64 and 65 for charts of state minimum wages and the new proposed wage performance standards for each state.

## Educational (GED or Diploma) Achievement

Students enter the program with widely different academic levels. Up to 25 percent may already have their diploma. Some programs offer GEDs; others offer diplomas or both GEDs and diplomas. Directors of the initial YouthBuild demonstration sites set the attainment of the GED as the primary objective. The only performance standard was whether or not students passed the five subtests of the GED. But since up to 25 percent may enter the program with a diploma, and some programs now offer a diploma rather than a GED, literacy and numeracy gains have been added as a standard.

GED or diploma standards are as follows:

<b>INCOMING READING LEVEL</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Needing Attention</b>	<b>Unacceptable</b>
<b>8th grade or above: achieving diploma or GED</b>	76–100 percent of completers	61–75 percent	46–60 percent	30–45 percent	Less than 30 percent
<b>Below 8th grade</b>	65–100 percent of completers	51–64 percent	36–50 percent	26–35 percent	Less than 26 percent

We arrived at these standards by looking at the current average GED rates of YouthBuild programs. There is a wide range of GED rates. However, contrary to general expectations, students entering at a low (below seventh-grade) reading level achieve GEDs at roughly the same average rate (35.5 percent) as those entering at an above-seventh grade level (about 37 percent). It appears that outcomes relate as much to the quality of teaching as to the incoming grade levels.

## **Educational (Literacy and Numeracy) Gains**

To meet the satisfactory level, 80 percent of all completers who entered at a test level of tenth grade or below, including those who get their GEDs or high school diplomas, will raise their levels of the adult literacy/numeracy test by two years. This will be the achievement level against which programs applying for affiliate membership or accreditation will be measured. YouthBuild USA staff will collect the data and, after a reasonable amount of data is collected, will work with the YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network Policy Council to establish a full scale for literacy and numeracy achievement, ranging from “excellent” to “unacceptable” based on what successful YouthBuild programs are able to achieve.

Each program will determine the best test for its students, although most programs have found that the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) matches their needs better than other available tests. Local program staff will report scores on each student through AffNet’s WebSTA.

## Leadership Development

**Satisfactory** 95 percent of students eligible to vote are registered to vote

**Needing Attention** Less than 95 percent of those eligible to vote are registered to vote

This is a relatively new outcome measure. For now there will only be two possible levels of achievement for this standard: satisfactory or needing attention. Program staff should mark in WebSTA whether a student has registered to vote, or, alternatively, is not eligible (because of citizenship status or prior felony status). They should also make a copy of the voter registration form or card and put it in the student's file.

## Construction Skills Mastery

In the early nineties YouthBuild USA created a standard list of construction skills to be mastered and published it in 1998 in the appendix to the HUD handbook *Youthbuild Construction Training at a Youthbuild Program*. More recently, many programs have adopted either the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) or the Home Building Institute (HBI) curricula and industry-recognized certifications. In addition, recognized certifications for occupational safety, first aid, hazardous materials, and other topics have been achieved.

With the federal government's recent emphasis on industry-recognized certifications, the Affiliated Network has adopted a new required action, 2H, which calls for offering such certifications. No specific target has yet been set for the number of certifications desirable per student or the percent of students who must achieve any particular certification. This will be done based on experience over the next few years.

## **Individual Leadership: Personal Responsibility and Group Membership**

Personal responsibility and leadership are hard to measure. The performance standards now include one easily measurable leadership development measure: voter registration. Other than this measure, goals would be the following.

Students would:

- Have 90 percent attendance, without lateness
- Fulfill their school and program objectives
- Take care of their children
- Stay out of legal trouble
- Resolve past legal troubles
- Give up their addictions
- Improve their family relationships
- Learn how to resolve conflicts peaceably
- Express their opinions fully and respectfully
- Learn how to negotiate on their own behalf
- Keep their promises

Additional goals could include ensuring that, if students join a committee or any task force, they would attend reliably and follow through on all commitments.

Thus far these have not been measured because tracking them for each student would place an enormous burden on each program. However, the outcome measures related to attendance, retention, job placement, and educational achievement indirectly measure personal responsibility and group membership; high standards generally cannot be reached in those areas unless personal growth is occurring.

## Community Leadership Development

The goals for community leadership development are that a significant number of students are moved to participate in committees that are taking collective responsibility for the program, benefiting people other than themselves, although of course including themselves. It can also mean that they take on individual leadership roles designed to improve the functioning of the program or improve the community or benefit people who will come behind them.

While the first step of leadership is taking responsibility to make things go right for oneself, eventually leadership must include making things go right for other people as well. Learning to subordinate one's own interests to the interests of others and becoming the chief servant of one's constituency requires a struggle against the dominant societal values of selfishness and cynicism. Exercising leadership also includes influencing people with power to use their power to benefit other people. Learning to do this requires a struggle against deeply ingrained and widespread feelings of powerlessness.

Objective measures are needed for showing the extent to which YouthBuild students take on the values, the attitudes, the behaviors, and the commitments of community leadership, as well as the skills needed to be effective. Without some objective measures, it will be difficult to keep the attention of future YouthBuild managers on this measure. We might have to devise a measurement such as a percentage of students who participate systematically in an ongoing leadership role for at least six months, either on the policy committee or another committee, or in assigned roles assisting staff to fulfill management functions; and another percentage who emerge as apparently enthusiastic, respected, potential community leaders with identifiable skills.

A list of leadership skills and competencies, which the National Directors Council has agreed constitutes skills that all students should learn, has been developed. The young leaders who reviewed these program standards recommend a system of self-evaluation against these skills as the first measure. Programs are encouraged to do this at their own initiative.



## **In Summary**

Standards affect behavior. Knowing what has been achieved by others affects aspirations. Accountability for results affects consistency of effort. YouthBuild USA will help provide direction and inspiration about what is possible, insight regarding how to achieve it, and accountability for seeing to it that we do all in our power to use the resources we have gathered to make a real difference. We will bring people together to share their methods of achieving the highest levels of success.

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## PART V

# Honors Graduates

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## National Honors Awards

In April 1998, the YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network Policy Council accepted the recommendation of the Directors Association and other councils and implemented voluntary honors graduation standards. Students who fulfill the following requirements are considered Honors YouthBuild Graduates and are entitled to receive Honors Graduate certificates from YouthBuild USA. Graduates must:

- Remain in the program for a minimum of six months (this may include students who have been deliberately placed in an appropriate job or school after six months, but before the program cycle is over)
- Have an average overall attendance record of 90 percent or an overall attendance of 80–85 percent with 95 percent attendance for the last three months
- Attain a GED or diploma
- Pass a drug test and remain drug-free for at least one month before graduation
- Meet the skill competencies developed by their individual program
- Complete AmeriCorps service hours (if their program is an AmeriCorps site)

## The Rudy Award for Perfect Attendance

The Rudy Award was created in 1991 by YouthBuild USA to honor Rudy Griffith, a YouthBuild Boston graduate who had perfect attendance. From 1991 on, the award was given annually to outstanding YouthBuild trainees who met the qualification of perfect attendance at their own programs.

To qualify for the award, a trainee must have a perfect attendance record and must have graduated from an affiliated YouthBuild program. Perfect attendance means that the student had only absences from the classrooms that were pre-planned with the staff, and that were part of his or her educational or leadership development plan. No absences for being sick, dependent's illnesses, or other unplanned absences are allowed. The perfect attendance must be reflected in the student's WebSTA records.

Rudy Award winners are given a plaque honoring their accomplishments, and a check for \$100. In addition, their names will be added to the Rudy Award roster on the YouthBuild USA Web site so that they can share their success with their friends and family.

Local programs should submit names of National Honors or Rudy Award candidates to the YouthBuild USA Director of the Affiliated Network, who will check the length of stay, attendance, and GED data through WebSTA.

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## PART VI

# The Process for Changing the YouthBuild Model or Requirements

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The YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network Policy Council will review the program standards every four years or as needed. It will consider proposals from local programs or from the National Directors Council, Young Leaders Council, YouthBuild National Alumni Council, state YouthBuild coalitions, or YouthBuild USA staff or board of directors regarding any type of change in basic definition, the required and recommended components and actions, qualities, program or performance standards, or explicit philosophy guiding YouthBuild programs. In some cases it will be clear that the proposal should be simply accepted or rejected; in some cases thorough discussion in the councils will be needed; in others the resolution of the question will require further testing, observation of results, and a later report back to the Policy Council. In some cases funding will be needed to do the exploration. If the Policy Council recommends that funds be provided, YouthBuild USA will endeavor to raise the funds.

The YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network Policy Council will include the following members:

- The YouthBuild USA president, who will chair the council
- The chief operating officer of YouthBuild USA plus three other staff with different roles, to be appointed by the president
- Five directors from affiliated YouthBuild sites elected by the National Directors Council. One director shall be the president of the National Directors Association.
- Three young people elected by the Young Leaders Council. One shall be the president of the Young Leaders Council. They must be current students or completers of YouthBuild programs, and either in good standing at their sites, currently employed, or in school.
- Two YouthBuild program alumni. One shall be the president of the YouthBuild National Alumni Council.

Recommendations for changes will be made by the Policy Council to the YouthBuild USA Board of Directors.

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PART VII

# Working Definitions of Important Terms Related to These Standards

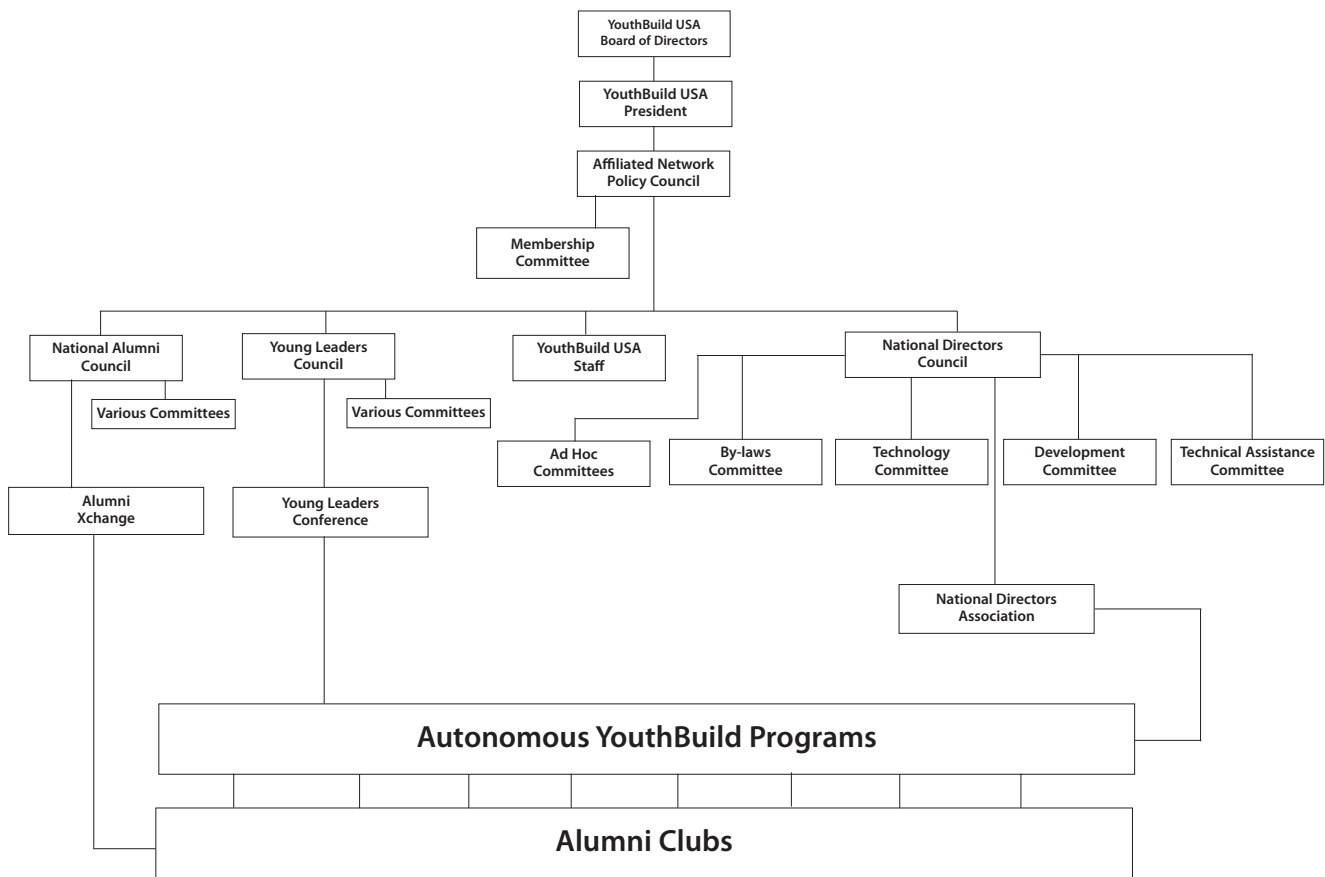
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<b>Enrollee</b>	A student who has completed the first month of the full-time program, including the orientation and Mental Toughness program
<b>Completer</b>	A student who stays until the end of the full YouthBuild program
<b>Early completer</b>	A student who stays less than the full YouthBuild program cycle, but stays at least six months, and is placed in an appropriate job, a postsecondary educational placement, the military, or a residential treatment program
<b>Exceptional early completer</b>	A student who stays less than six months in a YouthBuild program because there is a compelling reason to place him or her in an appropriate job, a postsecondary educational placement, the military, or a residential treatment program
<b>Appropriate placement</b>	A placement that is better than what the student would have gotten without the YouthBuild program. This should include at least “satisfactory” level wage; and it should be a job in a field that is chosen by the student and that represents a career trajectory with possibility of advancement.
<b>Graduate</b>	<i>Graduate</i> is defined by the local program, not by the Affiliated Network Program Standards, except in the case of an Honors YouthBuild Graduate (see page 58).
<b>Termination</b>	Someone who is counted as <i>terminated</i> is terminated by the program after she or he has completed the first month of the full-time program, including orientation and Mental Toughness. If the student is terminated during that first month, he or she is taken from the rolls and not counted as an enrollee for that cycle.

PART VIII

# Appendix

## YouthBuild USA Affiliated Network



## State minimum wages and new proposed wage performance standards, 2007

STATE	State minimum wage	Unacceptable Below minimum wage is impossible.	Needing Attention Minimum wage to 14% over	Satisfactory 15–24% above minimum wage	Very good 25–50% above minimum wage	Excellent 51% and more above minimum wage	(FYI) 80% above minimum wage
AK	\$ 7.15		\$ 8.15	\$ 8.87	\$ 10.73	\$ 10.80	\$ 12.87
AL*	5.85		6.67	7.25	8.78	8.83	10.53
AS	6.25		7.13	7.75	9.38	9.44	11.25
AZ**	6.75		7.70	8.37	10.13	10.19	12.15
CA	7.50		8.55	9.30	11.25	11.33	13.50
CO	6.85		7.81	8.49	10.28	10.34	12.33
CT	7.65		8.72	9.49	11.48	11.55	13.77
DC	7.00		7.98	8.68	10.50	10.57	12.60
DE	6.65		7.58	8.25	9.98	10.04	11.97
FL	6.67		7.60	8.27	10.01	10.07	12.01
GA	5.15		5.87	6.39	7.73	7.78	9.27
HI	7.25		8.27	8.99	10.88	10.95	13.05
IA	6.20		7.07	7.69	9.30	9.36	11.16
ID	5.85		6.67	7.25	8.78	8.83	10.53
IL	7.50		8.55	9.30	11.25	11.33	13.50
IN	5.85		6.67	7.25	8.78	8.83	10.53
KS	2.65		3.02	3.29	3.98	4.00	4.77
KY	5.85		6.67	7.25	8.78	8.83	10.53
LA*	5.85		6.67	7.25	8.78	8.83	10.53
ME	6.75		7.70	8.37	10.13	10.19	12.15
MA	7.50		8.55	9.30	11.25	11.33	13.50
MI	7.15		8.15	8.87	10.73	10.80	12.87
MN	6.15		7.01	7.63	9.23	9.29	11.07
MO**	6.50		7.41	8.06	9.75	9.82	11.70
MS*	5.85		6.67	7.25	8.78	8.83	10.53
MT**	6.15		7.01	7.63	9.23	9.29	11.07
NE	5.85		6.67	7.25	8.78	8.83	10.53
NJ	7.15		8.15	8.87	10.73	10.80	12.87
NV	6.33		7.22	7.85	9.50	9.56	11.39
NY	7.15		8.15	8.87	10.73	10.80	12.87
OH	6.85		7.81	8.49	10.28	10.34	12.33
OK	5.85		6.67	7.25	8.78	8.83	10.53
OR**	7.80		8.89	9.67	11.70	11.78	14.04
PA	6.25		7.13	7.75	9.38	9.44	11.25
RI	7.40		8.44	9.18	11.10	11.17	13.32
SC*	5.85		6.67	7.25	8.78	8.83	10.53
SD	5.85		6.67	7.25	8.78	8.83	10.53
TN*	5.85		6.67	7.25	8.78	8.83	10.53
TX	5.85		6.67	7.25	8.78	8.83	10.53
UT*	5.85		6.67	7.25	8.78	8.83	10.53
VT	7.53		8.58	9.34	11.30	11.37	13.55
VA*	5.85		6.67	7.25	8.78	8.83	10.53
WA	7.93		9.04	9.83	11.90	11.97	14.27
WV	6.55		7.47	8.12	9.83	9.89	11.79
WI	6.50		7.41	8.06	9.75	9.82	11.70
WY	5.15		5.87	6.39	7.73	7.78	9.27
<b>Federal</b>	5.85		6.67	7.25	8.78	8.83	10.53

\*The state has no state minimum wage stipulated; federal minimum wage applies. \*\* In AZ, MT, OR, and MO, wage rate will be indexed to inflation--adjustment every Jan. 1.

According to the DOL Web site, "In cases where an employee is subject to both the state and federal minimum wage laws, the employee is entitled to the higher of the two minimum wages. Some states' wage rates vary by number of employees or gross sales.

## State minimum wages and new proposed wage performance standards, 2008–2010

STATE	State minimum wage, 2008–2010	Date of Change	Needing Attention Minimum wage to 14% over	Satisfactory 15–24% above minimum wage	Very good 25–50% above minimum wage	Excellent 51% and more above minimum wage	(FYI) 80% above minimum wage
CA	\$ 8.00	1/1/08	\$ 9.12	\$ 9.92	\$ 12.00	\$ 12.08	\$ 14.40
DE	7.15	1/1/08	8.15	8.87	10.73	10.80	12.87
DE	7.25	7/24/09	8.27	8.99	10.88	10.95	13.05
DC	7.55	7/24/08	8.61	9.36	11.33	11.40	13.59
IA	7.25	1/1/08	8.27	8.99	10.88	10.95	13.05
IN	6.55	7/24/08	7.47	8.12	9.83	9.89	11.79
IN	7.25	7/24/09	8.27	8.99	10.88	10.95	13.05
IL	7.75	7/1/08	8.84	9.61	11.63	11.70	13.95
IL	8.00	7/1/09	9.12	9.92	12.00	12.08	14.40
IL	8.25	7/1/10	9.41	10.23	12.38	12.46	14.85
KY	6.55	7/1/08	7.47	8.12	9.83	9.89	11.79
KY	7.25	7/1/09	8.27	8.99	10.88	10.95	13.05
ME	7.00	10/1/07	7.98	8.68	10.50	10.57	12.60
ME	7.25	7/24/09	8.27	8.99	10.88	10.95	13.05
MA	8.00	1/1/08	9.12	9.92	12.00	12.08	14.40
MI	7.40	7/1/08	8.44	9.18	11.10	11.17	13.32
NJ	7.25	7/24/09	8.27	8.99	10.88	10.95	13.05
NY	7.25	7/24/09	8.27	8.99	10.88	10.95	13.05
OK	6.55	7/24/08	7.47	8.12	9.83	9.89	11.79
OK	7.25	7/24/09	8.27	8.99	10.88	10.95	13.05
PA	7.15	7/1/08	8.15	8.87	10.73	10.80	12.87
PA	7.25	7/1/09	8.27	8.99	10.88	10.95	13.05
SD	6.55	7/24/08	7.47	8.12	9.83	9.89	11.79
SD	7.25	7/24/09	8.27	8.99	10.88	10.95	13.05
TX	6.55	7/24/08	7.47	8.12	9.83	9.89	11.79
TX	7.25	7/24/09	8.27	8.99	10.88	10.95	13.05
VA	6.55	7/24/08	7.47	8.12	9.83	9.89	11.79
VA	7.25	7/24/09	8.27	8.99	10.88	10.95	13.05
WV	7.25	7/1/08	8.27	8.99	10.88	10.95	13.05





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