

The Summer Employment Experiences and the Personal/ Social Behaviors of Youth Violence Prevention Employment Program Participants and Those of a Comparison Group

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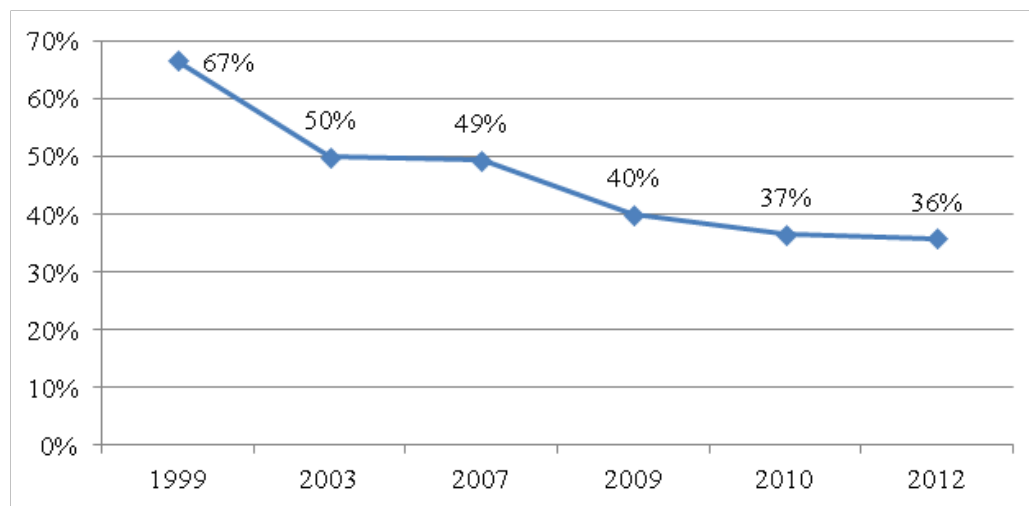
Thanks are due to the research assistance provided by Joseph Downey and Sheila Palma of the Center for Labor Market Studies, Midori Morikawa of Action for Boston Community Development, and Jonathan Rosenthal, Joseph McLaughlin, and Neil Sullivan of the Boston Private Industry Council. Portions of the research questions used in this study were originally developed by Dr. Gia Barboza of Northeastern University.

SECTION 1:

OVERVIEW

The summer job market for teens in both Massachusetts and the U.S. over the past five years has been quite depressed, with record low summer employment rates for the nation's teens being set in the past three years (2010-2012).¹ The teen summer employment rate in Massachusetts fell from 67% in 1999 to only 36% in 2012, a decline of 31 percentage points (Chart 1). Black and Hispanic teens, especially those residing in low income families and from high poverty neighborhoods, have experienced the greatest difficulties in finding employment in the summer. Lack of job opportunities reduces teens' exposure to the world of work and their ability to acquire both basic employability skills (attendance, team work, communicating with other workers and customers) and occupational skills. Being jobless all summer also increases their risk of social isolation (staying at home), hanging out on the street, and exposure to or participation in urban violence and delinquent behavior.

Chart 1: Trends in the Teen (16-19) Summer Employment Rate in Massachusetts, 1999-2012



To address these job deficit problems and provide positive summer activities for youth 14 to 24 years old in low income neighborhoods of Boston, the Youth Violence Prevention Funder Learning Collaborative ("the YVP Collaborative") has funded meaningful employment opportunities for each of the past three summers, 2010-2012. The YVP youth employment initiative has focused on youth residing or attending school within census tracts in Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan that have been identified by the Boston Police Department as having a high number of fatal and non-fatal shootings. Based on insights and research from the first two summers (2010-2011), the YVP Collaborative defines a meaningful employment opportunity as a paid work experience with quality supervision, a well-designed learning plan, and connections to supportive services, particularly positive youth development and mentoring activities.²

Over 420 YVP summer employment program participants, who worked in various non-profit and government agencies and a few private sector firms,³ were tracked in this research study. To facilitate an analysis of the impacts of the YVP summer employment programs, a comparison group was identified that included 192 eligible applicants from the Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD) waiting list who applied for but were not assigned a subsidized summer job through ABCD.

The purpose of this research was to study employment outcomes for YVP program participants and comparison group members, the quality of their workplace experiences,

and the impacts of the YVP summer employment program on personal and social behaviors that correlate with youth violence and exposure to violence. This study and previous evaluations of the YVP employment programs strived to answer the following question: Does meaningful summer employment reduce Boston economically disadvantaged youths' involvement in risky, violent, and delinquent behaviors while increasing their job skills, career aspirations, and positive social and community behaviors?⁴

In this study, we tracked and analyzed the employment experiences and personal / social behaviors of YVP program participants and those of the comparison group of youth over the course of the 2012 summer. Key findings include the following:

- The net job creation effects of the YVP summer employment program appear to be quite high. While all of the YVP program participants received subsidized employment, only 27 percent of the comparison group members obtained some employment during the summer. Most of the comparison group members who obtained employment worked limited hours (under 20) in private sector jobs.
- YVP program participants rated the overall quality of their subsidized work experiences quite high and the vast majority found their supervisors to be extremely or very supportive. Many YVP program participants engaged in work activities that helped them build occupational skills and various soft skills, which many employers find lacking in teen job applicants. Almost all of the participants rated their overall summer experience as being very good or somewhat good, and 92% of them said they would take the same summer job next year if it were offered to them.
- Our analysis of changes in the personal and social behaviors of both YVP summer employment program participants and comparison group members over the summer revealed that program participants almost always fared better than their comparison group counterparts, most of whom remained jobless during the summer.
- Program participants were significantly more likely than their comparison group peers to experience an improvement in risky, deviant, or violent behaviors or to avoid a deterioration in such behaviors over the summer. Program participants showed improvement in 19 of the 22 areas examined, 13 of which were statistically significant. Comparison group members experienced improvement in only 3 of the 22 areas, only one of which was statistically significant. Comparison group members also experienced a deterioration in behavior in 19 of the 22 areas, 9 of which were statistically significant.
- The biggest differences in statistically significant behavior change between the program participants and comparison group involved using alcohol, selling or using illegal drugs, not listening to one's parents, teachers or supervisors, spreading false rumors or lies about others, and picking on others by chasing them.
- Statistically significant behavior change among the program participants was also found in the following areas: involved in a physical fight during the past 30 days, attacked or threatened someone with a weapon other than a gun, and damaged or destroyed someone else's property.

These research findings indicate that meaningful employment opportunities can help reduce violent, risky, and adverse social behaviors among economically disadvantaged youth from Boston's high crime neighborhoods during the summer months and prepare them for future employment and academic experiences.

SECTION 2:

ABOUT THE STUDY

In 2012, the YVP Collaborative partnered with the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University to evaluate the 2012 YVP summer employment program. A set of entry and follow-up surveys were administered to YVP summer employment program participants to improve our understanding of their summer job experiences and their personal / social behaviors over the summer.

Specifically, the survey questionnaires collected information on the demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds of program participants, the characteristics of the jobs they held, the type of work activities in which they engaged, their ratings of the quality of their job experience and supervision, their willingness to accept these jobs next summer, and their behaviors in a variety of areas, including risky, deviant, delinquent, and violent behaviors, and their exposure to various types of urban violence (getting punched, kicked, choked or being attacked with a weapon other than a gun). The information from the entry and exit surveys was combined to estimate changes in these behaviors and exposure to violent behaviors over the course of the summer.

To improve our understanding of the impacts of the YVP summer program on the employment and personal / social behaviors of program participants, a comparison group of youth summer job applicants was identified. These applicants were eligible for Action for Boston Community Development's (ABCD) summer jobs program, but did not receive a job through the program. They were free to seek other employment including jobs in other summer programs for teens. They were selected for interviewing shortly after the jobs program began and at the end of the summer jobs program.

Information was collected on the comparison group's employment experiences during the summer and at the time of the follow-up interview at the end of the summer. The survey questionnaire included the same questions on personal and social behavior that were asked of participants in the summer jobs program. A comparative side by side assessment of the numbers of net positive and negative outcomes for both groups was prepared, together with findings of a comprehensive set of multivariate statistical analyses of the estimated independent impacts of being a YVP summer employment program participant on selected deviant, delinquent, and violent behaviors.

SECTION 3:

KEY FINDINGS

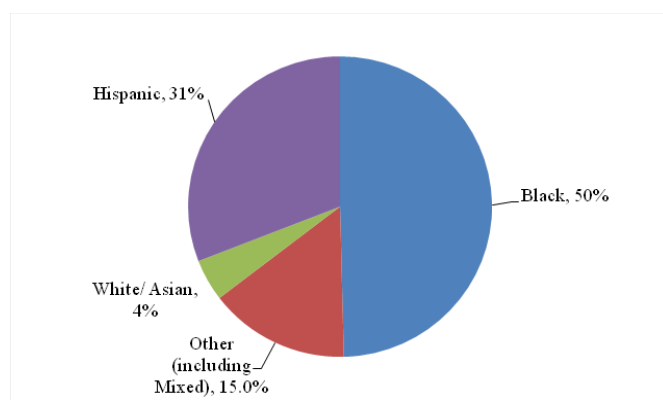
The Center for Labor Market Studies prepared a series of research papers on the summer job experiences and personal / social behaviors of both program participants and comparison group members with the assistance of both ABCD and Boston Private Industry Council staff. This research report is designed to provide an overview of the major findings from the three research papers with a focus on the employment and behavioral experiences of the program participants, the comparison group, and comparisons of key differences between the outcomes for the two groups, including tests of their statistical significance. The main findings by topic area include:

YVP Program Participants and Their Summer Employment Characteristics

- A total of 421 summer employment program participants were chosen for the study. The group was fairly evenly divided between men (52%) and women (48%), 30% were 14-15 years old, another 27% were between 16 and 17, and the remaining 43% were 18 or older.

- A substantial majority of the program participants were either Black or Hispanic, reflecting the race-ethnic composition of the eligible population in the neighborhoods served by the program (Chart 2). Only 1 in 4 of these participants had graduated from high school by the time of the initial interview with the balance still enrolled in high school. Only 18% were living with both parents. The vast majority (95%) were residents of Dorchester, Mattapan, or Roxbury.

Chart 2: The Race-Ethnic Distribution of YVP Summer Employment Program Participants at the Time of the Initial Interview (in %)

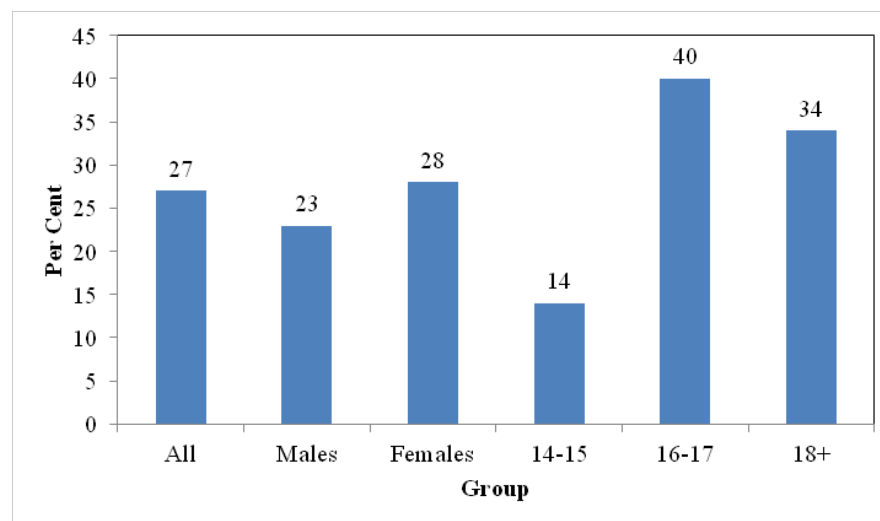


- The overwhelming majority (70%) of the jobs held by YVP summer employment participants were in non-profit agencies in the professional, technical and social services industries, primarily in child care, day care, family care, health care and social services for children and adults. Another 15% were in entertainment and recreation industries, including summer camps, hotels, and other services. Approximately 9 of 10 participants occupied jobs as service workers or administrative support / clerical workers. Fewer than 10% held blue collar jobs as construction helpers, landscapers, or handlers / laborers. A high fraction of the male respondents (25%) expressed an interest in working in mid-skills jobs in construction / manufacturing in the the future.

The Comparison Group and Their Summer Employment Outcomes

- The program staff members at ABCD were able to obtain completed initial surveys with 192 of the youth that were originally assigned to the comparison group in the early part of the summer and follow-up surveys with 166 of them. The ages of these individuals ranged from 14 to 22 years old; however, a relatively high fraction (47%) was in the 14-15 age range while 30% were 18 or older. The respondents were members of diverse race-ethnic groups.
- Although the comparison group members were free to find jobs on their own or through other subsidized employment programs, only 27 percent reported some summer employment at the time of the follow-up interviews. Thus, more than 70 percent remained jobless during the entire summer. Employment ratios were higher for females than for males, and for older teens (16-17) than for younger teens (14-15).

Chart 3: Percent of Comparison Group Members Who Were Employed at Some Point During the Summer, All and by Gender and Age Group



- Many of the summer jobs obtained by the comparison group offered limited hours and weeks of employment. Nearly 30% worked for 10 or fewer hours per week, and 50% worked under 20 hours per week. The average employed member of the comparison group worked less than 6 weeks.

Net Job Creation Effects and Fall Employment Rates

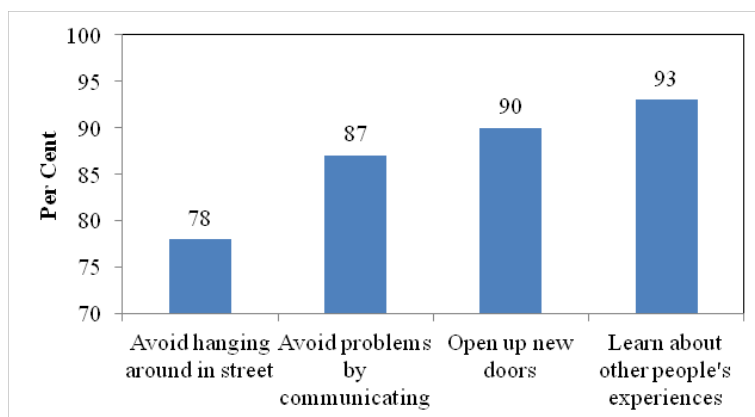
- While 27% of the comparison group found some employment, nearly 1 in 4 of the employed reported working in an agency that received public or private funding to create summer jobs. Thus, only 1 of 5 members of the comparison group was successful in obtaining an unsubsidized job during the summer. The net job creation effects of the summer program appeared to be quite high.
- At the time of the exit interviews, 35% of the participants in the summer jobs program reported that they had a job lined up after the program ended. In contrast, only 17% of the comparison group reported any employment at the time of the follow-up interview in the late summer / early fall. The best predictors of their employment status were their work status during the summer months. Path dependency in teen employment is quite high for all groups of youth. Work today leads to a higher probability of work tomorrow.
- One-half of the comparison group reported that they were jobless but actively looking for work at the time of the follow-up survey, yielding an unemployment rate of 75%. Many members of the participant group (69%) also reported being unemployed at the time of the exit interviews. Both groups could benefit from active job placement assistance in securing employment upon the end of the summer.

YVP Summer Employment Program Participants' Activities and Their Assessments of Work and Program Experiences

- A majority or near majority of program participants indicated that on their job they met new people that would help them move forward in life (62%), learned how to help solve problems (52%), got trained in a new skill area (49%), and helped to come up with ideas to assist their agency in performing better (49%).

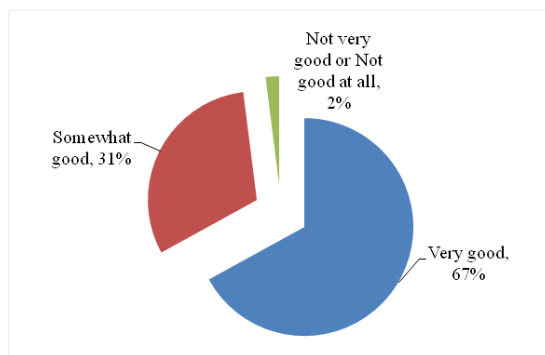
- Most program participants reported that the summer program helped open up new doors for the future (90%), helped them learn about other people's experiences (93%), and helped them avoid simply hanging out in the street all summer (78%).

Chart 4: Percent of YVP Summer Employment Program Participants Reporting Various Types of Help Received From the Program



- Nearly all participants (97%) responded that they had a regular worksite supervisor, and a very high percentage (75%) rated their supervisors as either extremely supportive or very supportive in helping them do their jobs. Only 4% of the participants rated their supervisor as not being very supportive or not supportive at all in performing their job. The higher the rating of the job site supervisor, the more likely a participant was to rate his/her summer work experience as favorable. Almost all (98%) of the participants rated their overall summer experience as very good or somewhat good (Chart 5). Each gender and race-ethnic group gave very high ratings to their summer work experience (94% to 100%)

Chart 5: YVP Summer Employment Program Participants' Views on the Quality of Their Work Experiences, 2012



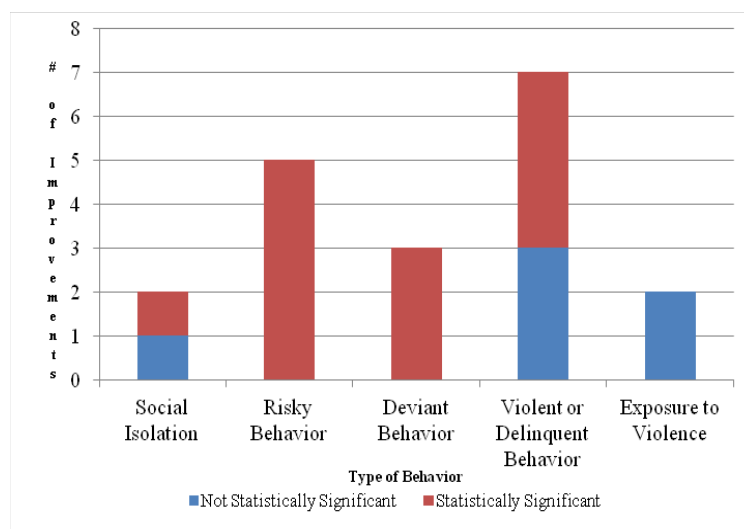
- A very high share of summer program participants (92%) said they would take the same summer job next year if it were offered to them. Over 90% of the members of each gender and race-ethnic group said that they would do so. The willingness of participants to accept the same summer job was significantly and positively linked to their overall rating of the quality of their summer work experience.

- When asked how they spent their summer pay checks, the most frequent response by participants was buying clothes, shoes, or other personal items (68%). However, more than 60 of every 100 participants reported giving money to their mother or father, and 17% gave money to other relatives. Almost half of the participants responded that they put part of their money in savings accounts, and 40% used their income to buy school supplies. Only 3% admitted that they used part of their incomes to buy illegal substances.

Changes in the Personal and Social Behaviors of YVP Program Participants and the Comparison Group Over the Course of the 2012 Summer

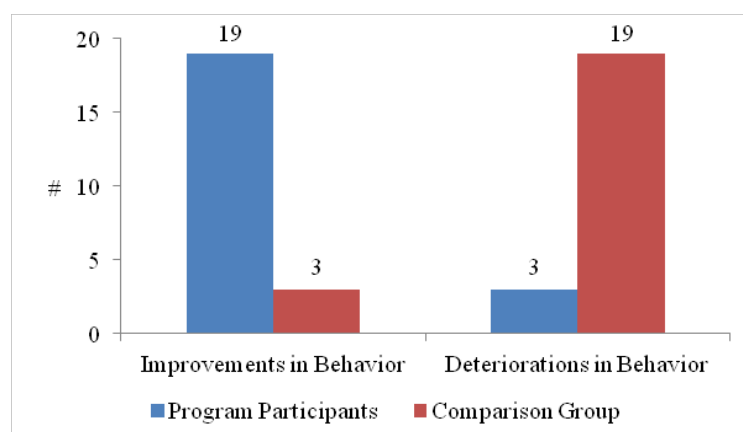
- Among YVP program participants, net improvements in behavior over the course of the summer took place in 19 of the 22 areas examined (social isolation, risky, deviant, delinquent, and violent behaviors). Thirteen of these 19 changes (primarily in violent or delinquent behavior) were large enough to be classified as statistically significant. The biggest changes in these two areas were typically largest for men. Among the comparison group, net improvements in behavior took place in only 3 areas over the course of the summers, and only 1 of these changes was large enough to be categorized as statistically significant (Chart 6).

Chart 6: Number of Measures in Which YVP Summer Employment Program Participants' Experienced Improvements in Behavior by Type of Behavior and Statistical Significance of the Changes Between the Initial and Follow-up Interviews



- Of the 22 behaviors measured, summer program participants experienced a net deterioration in behavior in only 3 areas, none of which was large enough to be classified as statistically significant. Comparison group members experienced a deterioration in behavior in 19 areas, 9 of which were statistically significant (Chart 7).
- On not one measure of net positive behavior change did the comparison group significantly outperform the program participants. On 12 of the 22 measures of net behavior change, the program participants exceeded the comparison group by five percentage points or more and on four measures by ten or more percentage points.

Chart 7: Comparisons of the Number of Measures in Which YVP Program Participants and Comparison Group Members Obtained a Net Improvement or Deterioration in Behavior Over the Summer (22 Total Measures)



- The participants did not experience any significant change in their exposure to four forms of urban violence during the summer. The comparison group only experienced a statistically negative change in one area (being shown a gun by others in their neighborhood).
- The biggest differences in statistically significant behavior change between the program participants and comparison group involved:
 - using alcohol;
 - selling or using illegal drugs;
 - not listening to one's parents, teachers or supervisors;
 - spreading false rumors or lies about others; and
 - picking on others by chasing them.
- Statistically significant behavior change among the program participants was also found in the following areas:
 - been involved in a physical fight during the past 30 days;
 - attacked or threatened someone with a weapon other than a gun; and
 - damaged or destroyed someone else's property.

1) For recent evidence on this issue, See: Andrew Sum, Ishwar Khatriwada, and Walter McHugh, The Dismal State of the Nation's Teen Summer Job Market, 2008-2011 and the Outlook for the Summer of 2012, Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University, Boston, May 2012.

2) See: <http://www.bostonyvpfunders.org/>.

3) The YVP program participants were placed in meaningful employment opportunities by six local programs and intermediaries, including Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD), the Boston Private Industry Council (PIC), Boston Youth Fund (BYF), GOTCHA Youth Jobs, StreetSafe Boston, and Youth Options Unlimited (YOU).

4) During 2010 and 2011, the YVP Collaborative conducted community based research studies to understand the effects of youth employment on violent behaviors and other personal/ social behaviors that are predictors of violent behavior. This earlier research informed the YVP Collaborative's definition and concept of meaningful employment. Portions of the original research questionnaire developed by Dr. Gia Barboza at Northeastern University were used in this new evaluation.

5) The group of eligible applicants was supposed to have been randomly assigned to a control group by ABCD. Since several of the demographic characteristics of the control group differed from those of the participants in a number of significant ways, we refer to this group as a comparison group rather than a true control group.

6) The Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University prepared the following three reports for The Boston Private Industry Council and the Youth Violence Prevention Funder Learning Collaborative, See:

(i) The Summer 2012 Jobs Program for At-Risk Youth in High Poverty Neighborhoods of Boston: An Overview and Assessment of Program Operations, the Work Experiences of Participants, their Perceptions of Program Benefits, and Changes in the Social Behaviors of Youth, February 2013;

(ii) The Employment Experiences and the Personal and Social Behaviors of the Comparison Group of Boston Teens and Young Adults During and After the Summer of 2012, February 2013; and

(iii) A Comparison and Assessment of the Summer Employment Experiences and the Deviant/Delinquent/Risky/Violent Behaviors of Summer Jobs Program Participants and Members of the Comparison Group, March 2013.

7) A net improvement implies that the per cent of respondents reporting an improvement in behavior exceeded the percent with a deterioration in behavior.

The full research paper is available on The Boston Private Industry Council's website (<http://www.bostonpic.org/research>) and the Center for Labor Market Studies' website (<http://www.northeastern.edu/clms/publications/>).

The Center for Labor Market Studies also prepared three background research reports on 2012 YVP program participants and program operations, the employment experiences and behaviors of comparison group members, and a comparative assessment of the employment experiences and behaviors of both groups. These three research papers are available on the Center for Labor Market Studies' website. The titles of the three papers are the following:

- (i) The Summer 2012 Jobs Program for At-Risk Youth in High Poverty Neighborhoods of Boston: An Overview and Assessment of Program Operations, the Work Experiences of Participants, their Perceptions of Program Benefits, and Changes in the Social Behaviors of Youth, February 2013;
- (ii) The Employment Experiences and the Personal and Social Behaviors of the Comparison Group of Boston Teens and Young Adults During and After the Summer of 2012, February 2013; and
- (iii) A Comparison and Assessment of the Summer Employment Experiences and the Deviant/Delinquent/Risky/Violent Behaviors of Summer Jobs Program Participants and Members of the Comparison Group, March 2013.

Research Paper

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Introduction

The summer job market for teens in both Massachusetts and the U.S. over the past five years has been quite depressed, with record low summer employment rates for the nation's teens being set in the past three years (2010-2012).¹ Black and Hispanic teens, especially those residing in low income families and from high poverty neighborhoods have experienced the greatest difficulties in finding employment in the summer. Lack of job opportunities reduces their exposure to the world of work and their ability to acquire both basic employability skills (attendance, team work, communicating with other workers and customers) and occupational skills. Being jobless all summer increases the risks of social isolation (staying at home), hanging out on the street, and being exposed to or participating in urban violence and delinquent behavior.

To address these job deficit problems and provide positive summer activities for youth 14 to 24 years old in low income neighborhoods of Boston, the Youth Violence Prevention Funder Learning Collaborative ("the YVP Collaborative") developed an employment initiative in 2010.² The employment initiative provided funding to six youth serving organizations to provide meaningful employment opportunities for youth residing in Boston neighborhoods that have been identified by the Boston Police Department as having a high number of fatal and non-fatal shootings. During the 2010 and 2011 program years, the YVP Collaborative conducted community based research studies to understand the effects of the YVP employment program on youth behaviors that have been found in previous research to be predictors of violent and delinquent behavior.³ These earlier evaluations of the Boston YVP summer employment programs found that youth participants experienced positive changes in risky, deviant, delinquent, and violent behaviors over the course of the summer programs while developing important work readiness and occupational skills.

In 2012, the YVP Collaborative partnered with the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University to evaluate the 2012 YVP summer employment program. The 2012 evaluation was expanded to include an analysis of employment outcomes and behavioral changes among a subset of the summer job applicants to ABCD, who were randomly assigned to a comparison group

¹ For recent evidence on this issue, See: Andrew Sum, Ishwar Khatiwada, and Walter McHugh, The Dismal State of the Nation's Teen Summer Job Market, 2008-2011 and the Outlook for the Summer of 2012, Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University, Boston, May 2012.

² The Youth Violence Prevention (YVP) Funder Learning Collaborative is a network of businesses, foundations, government agency funders, and key experts formed to share knowledge, identify funding gaps and promote dialogue to help funders and businesses coordinate and strategically align their efforts to increase their impact on youth violence in Boston.

³ Dr. Gia Barboza of Northeastern University developed a behavioral research methodology and conducted the earlier evaluations of the YVP school-year and summer employment programs.

that did not receive subsidized employment through the YVP summer employment program. This research report compares the summer employment experiences of YVP program participants to those of this comparison group. Through an analysis of pre and post surveys on self-reported behaviors, we present findings on changes in the risky, deviant, delinquent, and violent behaviors of YVP summer employment program participants and the comparison group members over the course of the summer.

Based on insight and research findings from the first two summers of the YVP employment program, the YVP Collaborative defines a meaningful employment opportunity as paid work experience with quality supervision, a well-designed learning plan, and connections to supportive services, particularly positive youth development and mentoring activities.⁴ Over 420 participants in the YVP summer employment program, who worked in various non-profit and government agencies and a few private sector firms, were tracked in this study.⁵ One of the primary goal of this research study and previous evaluations of the YVP employment programs was to determine: Does meaningful summer employment reduce Boston economically disadvantaged youths' involvement in negative behaviors while increasing their job skills, career aspirations, and positive social and community behaviors?

Data Sources and Evaluation Methods

The findings appearing in this study of the design, operations and outcomes of the YVP summer employment programs are based on a set of entry and exit/ follow-up interviews with program participants and the comparison group. The YVP summer employment program participant questionnaires collected information on the demographic and socioeconomic backgrounds of program participants, the characteristics of the jobs they held, the type of work activities in which they engaged, their ratings of the quality of their job experience and supervision, their willingness to accept these jobs next summer, and their behaviors in a variety of areas, including risky, deviant, delinquent, and violent behavior and their exposure to various types of urban violence (getting punched, kicked, choked or being attacked with a weapon other than a gun). The information from the entry and exit surveys was combined to estimate changes in these behaviors over the course of the summer.

⁴ See: www.bostonyvpfunders.org.

⁵ The YVP program participants were placed in meaningful employment opportunities by six local programs and intermediaries, including Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD), the Boston Private Industry Council (PIC), Boston Youth Fund (BYF), GOTCHA Youth Jobs, StreetSafe Boston, and Youth Options Unlimited (YOU).

Differences between these pre and post-program outcomes were subject to a number of statistical tests to determine when they were large enough to be classified as statistically significant.

To increase our knowledge of the impacts of the summer jobs program on the employment experiences and personal / social behaviors of participants, a comparison group of youth was selected as part of this study's research design. This group of eligible applicants applied to the summer jobs program through Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD) but was not assigned a subsidized summer job under the program.⁶ They were free to seek other employment including jobs in other summer programs for teens. They were selected for interviews shortly after the jobs program began and at the end of the summer jobs program. Information was collected on their employment experiences during the summer and at the time of the follow-up interview at the end of the summer. The survey questionnaire included the same questions on personal and social behavior that were asked of participants in the summer jobs program.

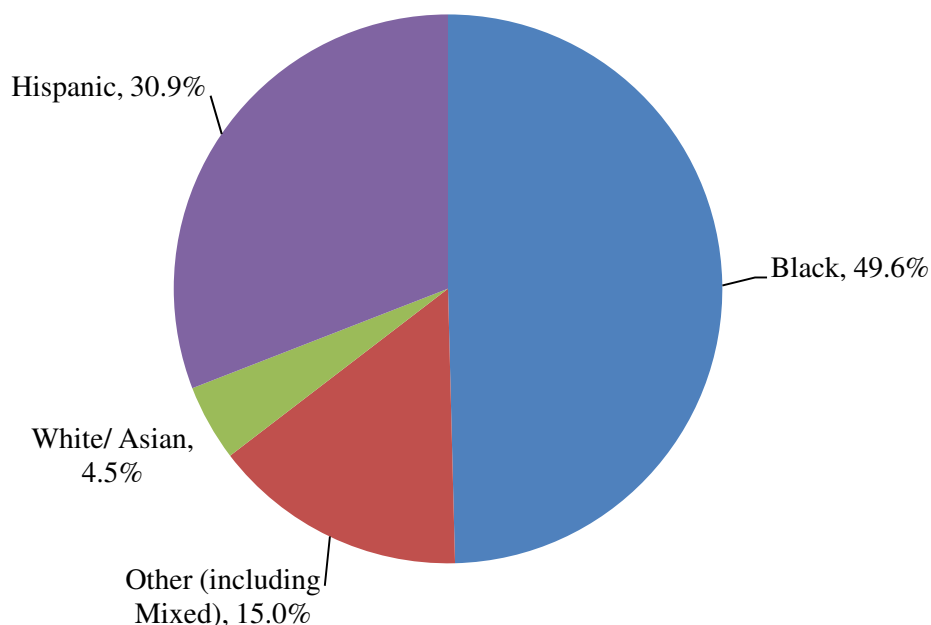
Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics of YVP Summer Employment Program Participants

The 2012 YVP summer employment program served youth ages 14-24, most of whom either lived or attended school in one of three Boston neighborhoods characterized by high overall rates of poverty, unemployment, and urban violence and a high incidence of school dropouts and youth joblessness. These three neighborhoods were Grove Hall, Bowden-Geneva, and Franklin Field/Franklin Hill. The poverty rate for all persons in these three neighborhoods in the ending years of the past decade was close to 30 per cent, and over 50% of the resident population were low income; i.e., annual incomes under 200% of the poverty line.

A demographic analysis of the participants in the summer 2012 program revealed that a slight majority were males (52%), 30% were 14-15 years old, another 27% were between 16 and 17, and the remaining 43% were 18 or older. One-half of the participants were Black, 31% were Hispanic, 15% identified themselves as members of other races or mixed races, and less than 4% were White or Asian (Chart 1). One in four of the program participants had graduated from high school at the time of the initial interview. Only 18% were living with both of their parents.

⁶ ABCD intended to randomly assign applicants to a control group. Since some of the demographic characteristics of the control group differed from those of the participants in a number of significant ways, we refer to this group as a comparison group rather than a true control group. To account for this shortcoming in the research design, the independent impacts of the YVP summer employment programs on the behaviors of youth participants were estimated through a set of multivariate statistical models. The models and their findings are presented in this study and provide further support of the influence of the program on changing youth participants' behaviors.

Chart 1: The Race-Ethnic Distribution of YVP Summer Employment Program Participants at the Time of the Initial Interview (in %) (N=421)



Types of Jobs Held By YVP Program Participants

The summer jobs program participants were enrolled in programs sponsored by six community action and workforce development agencies in the city. A slight majority (55%) of the participants who completed the entry survey were enrolled in programs sponsored by ABCD. The Boston Private Industry Council (PIC) sponsored two sets of summer programs, including the Academic Persistence Through Employment Program at the Jeremiah H. Burke High School which served 44 participants in our sample and another 50 participants in other high schools in the city. The Youth Opportunity Unlimited (YOU) Program sponsored jobs for 47 of the participants in the study and the remaining 49 enrollees were served by four programs, including Boston Rising, GOTCHA, Street Safe, and Teen Empowerment.

The jobs held by the YVP summer employment program participants were in many different government and nonprofit agencies and in a few private sector firms. The overwhelming majority (70%) of the jobs held by YVP summer employment program participants were in non-profit agencies in the professional, technical and related services industries, primarily in child care, day care services, family care, health care and social services for children and adults. Another 15% were in entertainment and recreation industries, including summer camps, hotels, and other recreational services.

Approximately 9 of 10 participants occupied jobs as service workers or administrative support clerical workers. Under 10% held blue collar jobs as construction helpers, landscapers, or handlers / laborers. A high fraction of the male respondents (25%) expressed an interest in working in mid-skills jobs in construction / manufacturing in the future.

Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Comparison Group of Youth

The program staff at ABCD was able to obtain completed initial surveys with 192 of the youth that were originally assigned to the comparison group in the early part of the summer and obtained follow-up surveys for 166 of them. This initial survey typically took place in mid-summer. The questionnaire for the initial survey collected demographic and socioeconomic background data (gender, age, race, nativity status, educational attainment), family living arrangements data, and neighborhood of residence information from each of the respondents.

Females accounted for a clear majority (63%) of the comparison group respondents. The ages of these individuals ranged from 14 to 22 years; however, a relatively high fraction (47%) were in the 14-15 age group while 30% were 18 or older. The respondents were members of diverse race-ethnic groups. The largest share were Black/African American (35%), another 29% were Hispanic, 21% were either White or Asian, and the remaining 15% were of other or mixed races (Table 1).⁷

⁷ There were only a small number of Asians and Whites in our treatment group sample; thus, we combined them for our analysis of the findings by race-ethnic group.

Table 1: Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Comparison Group at the Time of the Initial Interview (N = 192)

	(A)	(B)
Characteristic	Number	Per Cent of Total
Gender		
• Men	72	37
• Women	120	63
Age Group		
• 14 - 15	90	47
• 16 - 17	44	23
• 18 - 22	58	30
Race-Ethnic Group		
• Black	67	35
• Hispanic	55	29
• Other/Mixed Races	29	15
• Whites/Asians	41	21
Nativity		
• Foreign born	51	27
• Native born	141	73
Educational Status		
• In middle/high school	146	76
• High school graduate	46	24
Family Living Arrangements		
• Lives with both parents	76	40
• Lives with mother only	92	48
• Lives with father only	7	4
• Other arrangements	17	9

A substantial majority (76%) of the comparison group members were still enrolled in middle school/high school at the time of the initial survey while nearly one-fourth claimed to be high school graduates.⁸ The family living arrangements of the comparison group members were quite varied. The largest share of the group (47%) lived in a single parent family with their mother only present in the home while another 7% lived in a family with only the father present. Another 40% lived in a two parent family, and the remaining 9% lived with either other relatives (grandparents, aunts, other relatives) or with foster parents.

⁸ Only 1 to 2 of the comparison group members appeared to be high school dropouts at the time of the initial interview.

Summer Employment Experiences of the Comparison Group and the Job Creation Effects of the Summer Jobs Program

A key goal of the 2012 YVP summer employment program evaluation was to compare the employment experiences of program participants to those of the comparison group. The net job creation impacts of the YVP summer employment program for disadvantaged youth are dependent on the ability of the comparison group to obtain jobs and their weeks and hours of employment relative to those of the program participants.⁹ The greater the gaps between the employment rates and weeks and hours of work of the summer program participants and their comparison group counterparts, the higher are the job creation impacts of the summer jobs program. Previous studies of the federal government's summer jobs program for economically disadvantaged youth frequently showed high net job creation impacts for such programs and a high cost effectiveness ratio in terms of jobs created per dollar spent by such programs.

While all participants in the YVP summer employment program received a subsidized job, those selected for the comparison group by ABCD did not. At the time of the follow-up interview at the end of the summer, only 27% of the 164 respondents reported that they had been employed at some time during the summer. Approximately seven of every ten members of the comparison group failed to obtain any paid employment during the summer.¹⁰ Findings of the follow-up interviews revealed that women were slightly more likely than men (28% vs. 23%) to obtain some employment during the summer. The youngest members of the comparison group (those 14-15) had the most difficult time finding employment on their own. Only 14% of them reported some paid employment versus one-third or more of those 16 and older. Follow-up results also showed that White and Asian comparison group members (33%) were more likely to be employed during the summer than their Black (24%) or Hispanic (19%) peers.

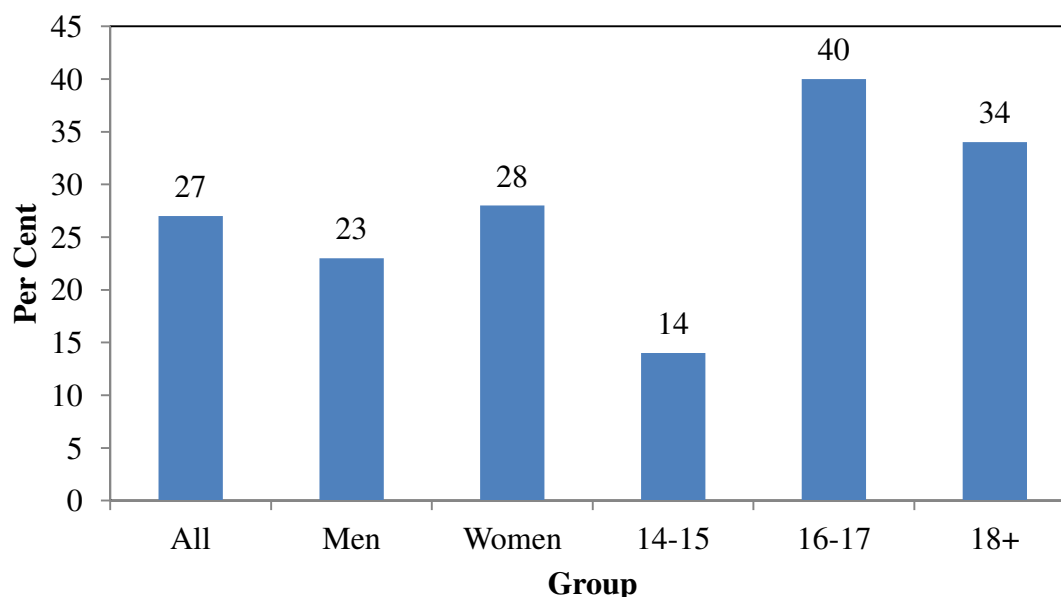
Many of the summer jobs obtained by the comparison group offered limited hours and weeks of employment. Nearly 30% worked for 10 or fewer hours per week, and 50% worked under 20 hours per week. The average employed member of the comparison group worked less than 6 weeks.

⁹ For past evidence on the job creation impacts and post-program effectiveness of the federally funded summer jobs programs for disadvantaged youth,

See: (i) Timothy Bartik, Jobs for the Poor: Can Labor Demand Policies Work, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 2001; (ii) Andrew Hahn and Robert Lerman, What Works in Youth Employment Policy, National Planning Association, Washington, D.C., 1985.

¹⁰ A small subset (5-6 per cent) of those who were jobless at the time of the initial interview were able to obtain some subsidized employment through ABCD between the initial and follow-up interviews. They were removed from the sample of comparison group members.

Chart 2: Per Cent of Comparison Group Members Who Were Employed at Some Point During the Summer, All and by Gender and Age Group



These findings imply that the net job creation effects of the summer jobs program are largest for the youngest teens (14-15) and for Black and Hispanic youth. For the youngest teens, every 100 jobs created will increase their net employment by about 86 jobs. The true net job creation effect is even larger when the types of jobs held by the comparison group are taken into account. Most of these employers were non-profits some of whom received monies from public (state, local) and private agencies to create jobs for youth. We estimate that at least one-fourth of the jobs held by the comparison group were themselves subsidized jobs. At best, only one of every 5 comparison group members was able to obtain a non-subsidized job during the summer. The additional hours worked by YVP program participants and the local jobs created through their spending (income multipliers) add to the net job creation effect of the program.

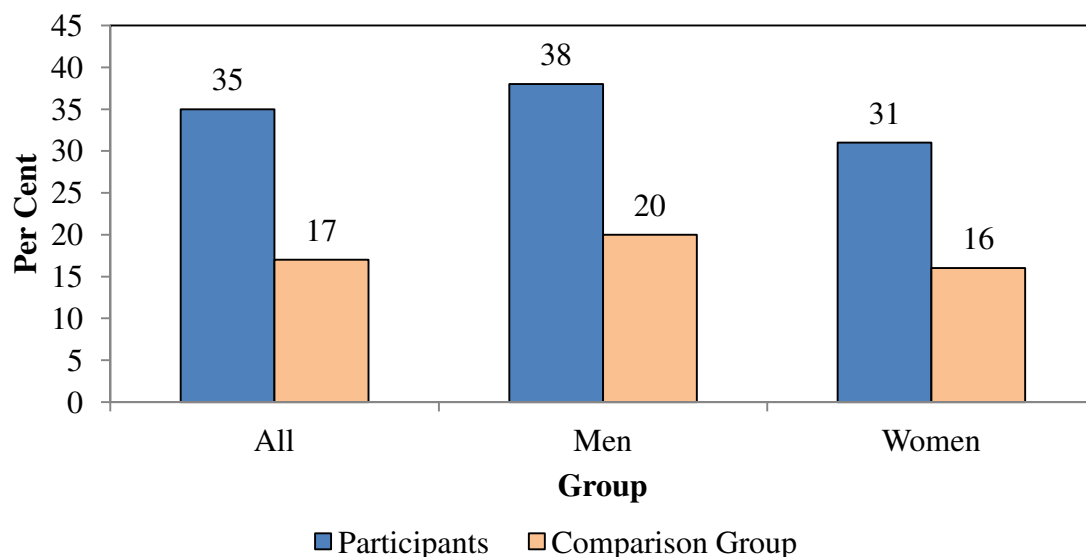
The Late Summer and Early Fall Employment Experiences of Summer Program Participants and Comparison Group Members

The exit interviews with the YVP summer employment program participants collected information on their job plans at the end of the program. Respondents indicated whether they expected to continue with their summer jobs, whether they had a new job lined up, whether they expected to look for work, or whether they did not wish to work. The number of the summer program participants who reported that either they would continue working on their summer job or had landed a new job were combined to form a count of the "planned employed". The number of planned

employed was then divided by the total number of summer job participants completing the exit survey to obtain a value for the employment/population ratio. Thirty-five per cent of the participants expected to be employed at the time of the exit survey (Chart 3). Males had a higher expected employment rate than women (38% vs. 31%).

The planned employment rate of YVP employment program participants was compared to the comparison group's employment rate at the time of follow-up survey. Only 17% of the comparison group, less than half that of the participant group, were employed (Chart 3). The employment rate advantage of YVP program participants was quite large, even after adjusting for differences in the age characteristics of the two groups.¹¹

Chart 3: Comparisons of the Planned Fall Employment Rate of Summer Job Participants with the Actual Employment Rate of Comparison Group Youth, All and by Gender (in %)



YVP Program Participants' Personal Assessments of the Quality of Worksite Supervision and the Most Beneficial Aspects of the Program and Their Overall Ratings of Their Work Experiences

How did YVP program participants view their program experiences? One of the objectives of the 2012 YVP summer employment programs evaluation was to assess the quality of the employment opportunities provided to program participants through reviewing the nature of the job duties and activities of the participants in the summer program. To better understand the nature of the job duties

¹¹ To review this age-adjusted employment rate analysis, see: Andrew Sum, Mykhaylo Trubskyy, et.al., A Comparison and Assessment of the Summer Employment Experiences and the Deviant/Delinquent/Risky/Violent Behaviors of Summer Jobs Program Participants and Members of a Comparison Group, Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University, March 2013, Paper #3.

and activities of participants in the summer program, the exit survey asked them to identify the types of activities in which they were engaged, the types of help they received during the program, and the availability and quality of worksite supervision. The exit survey also asked participants about their perceived benefits of the program, their rating of the overall quality of their work experience, and if they would accept the same job next summer or during the current school year. The findings on program participants' activities and their assessment of the program provide insights as to how meaningful employment can lead to positive behavioral changes.

Skills and Values Learned on the Job and Help Received; Promoting Community Ties and Benefits

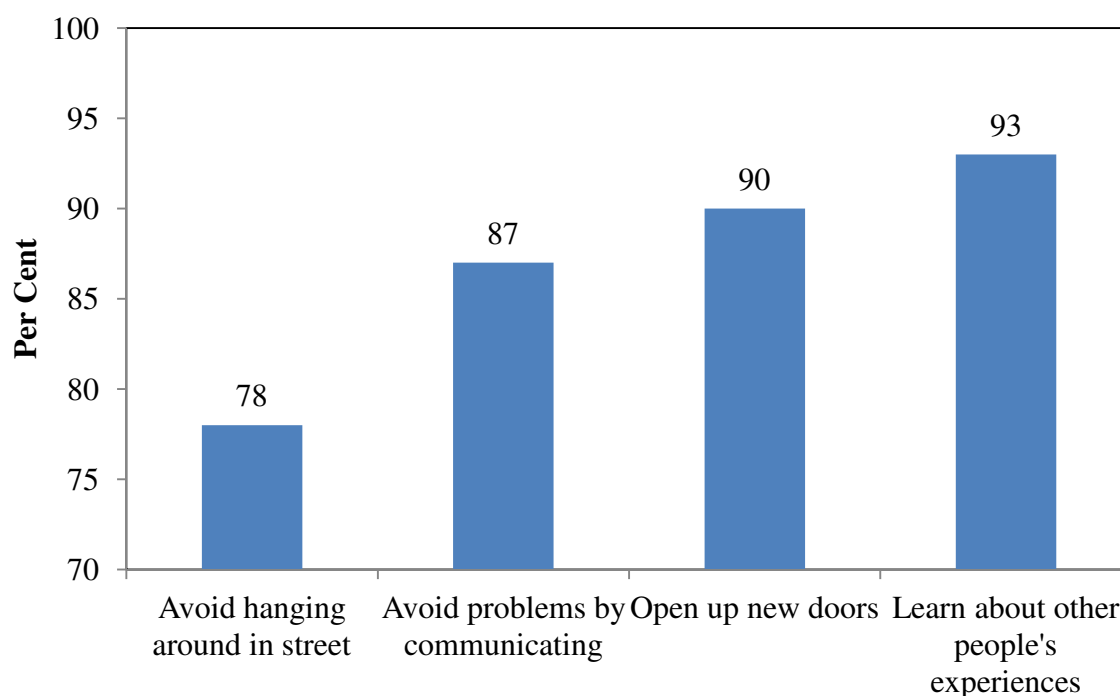
The summer program participants were asked about their level of engagement in the following six types of activities on the job:

- Participated in group talks with co-workers;
- Met new people that will help me move forward;
- Helped to solve problems;
- Learned about new options by talking to co-workers;
- Got trained in a new skill area; and
- Helped come up with new ideas to help the agency.

One-half of the participants reported that they engaged in each of the six activities. Over 60 percent of the participants reported that they had participated in group talks with co-workers or met new people that would help them move forward. Approximately half of the respondents reported that they had helped to solve problems at work, they learned about new options by talking to co-workers, or received training in a new skill area. Most of these skills comprise the “soft skills” that are frequently valued highly by employers and cited as a barrier to hiring additional teens.

Overall, high majorities of the participants reported that the program had provided various types of help ranging from positive assistance such as opening up new doors for the future to avoiding negative behaviors such as hanging around in the street. Ninety-three per cent of the youth completing the post-program survey reported that the program gave them an opportunity to learn about the experiences of others and how to respect different opinions. Most of the program participants indicated that they learned how to avoid problems by communicating (Chart 4).

Chart 4: Per Cent of Summer Program Participants Reporting Various Types of Help from the Program



The Quality of Worksite Supervision and Its Impacts on Program Participants

A key element of meaningful employment is quality worksite supervision. Each youth participating in the summer program was assigned a worksite supervisor to provide frequent work supervision, guidance, and counseling/mentoring services. In the exit survey, participants were asked “how supportive” their supervisor was in helping them with the job.¹² The allowable responses ranged along a five point scale from “extremely supportive” to “not supportive at all”. Seventy-five percent of the respondents noted that their supervisor was either extremely supportive or “very supportive” with another 20 percent noting that their supervisor was “fairly supportive”. Only 5 percent provided unfavorable ratings.

One might well expect that the rating of the quality of one’s summer work experience would be associated with the quality of worksite supervision provided. To test this hypothesis, the work experience ratings of about 370 program participants were cross tabulated with their views on the degree of support they received from their worksite supervisor in doing the job. The higher the rating

¹² Ninety-seven percent of the YVP program participants responding to the exit survey stated that they had a worksite supervisor.

of the support of the job site supervisor, the higher was the per cent of participants who rated their summer work experience as very good.

Over 81% of those program enrollees who identified their worksite supervisor as being “extremely supportive” of them in doing their job rated their work experience as very good and another 18% rated it as somewhat good. When the participants identified their job site supervisor as being “very supportive”, two-thirds of them rated their work experience as very good. This share of “very good” ratings fell to 43% when the supervisor was described as being only “fairly supportive” and to 25% when the supervisor’s support for the work of the participant was rated as “not at all or not very” supportive. A chi-square test of the independence of these two variables led to a rejection of the null hypothesis at the .01 level. These two variables were significantly associated with each other. The quality of the summer work experience and the support of the job site supervisor were positively related.

Perceived Benefits of the Summer Program

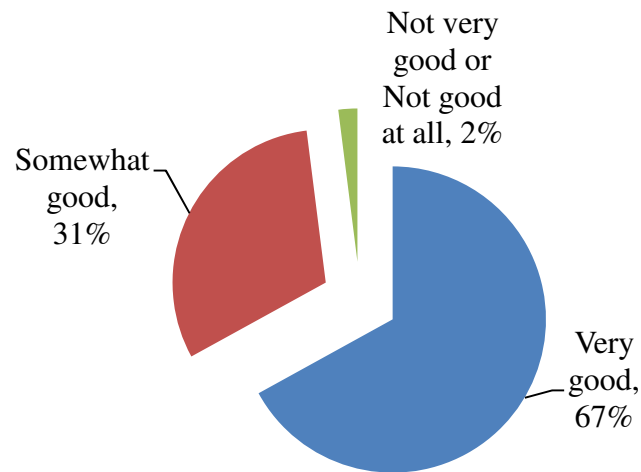
YVP summer employment program participants were asked to identify how their program experience benefitted them the most.¹³ The allowable responses included: financially, emotionally, mentally; other; or not at all. Findings for all participants combined revealed that financial benefits were cited most often, receiving 64% of the responses. Emotional benefits (including making them happy) received the second highest share at 24%. Given the high share of youth citing financial benefits being the greatest benefit, it is interesting to know how they spent their paychecks. When asked how they spent their money, 68% said buying clothes, shoes, or other personal items. However, 60% of respondents also cited giving part of their income to their mother or father and 17% gave to other relatives. Nearly half put money in savings accounts and 40% bought school supplies. Only 3% of the respondents reported using part of their earnings to purchase illegal substances.

Ratings of Summer Program Work Experiences

The post-program survey for summer 2012 participants asked them to rate the overall quality of their summer work experience along a four item scale that ranged from very good to not good at all. An overwhelming majority of respondents (98%) rated their job experience as very good or somewhat good. Only two percent said their job experience was either “not very good” or “not good at all”.

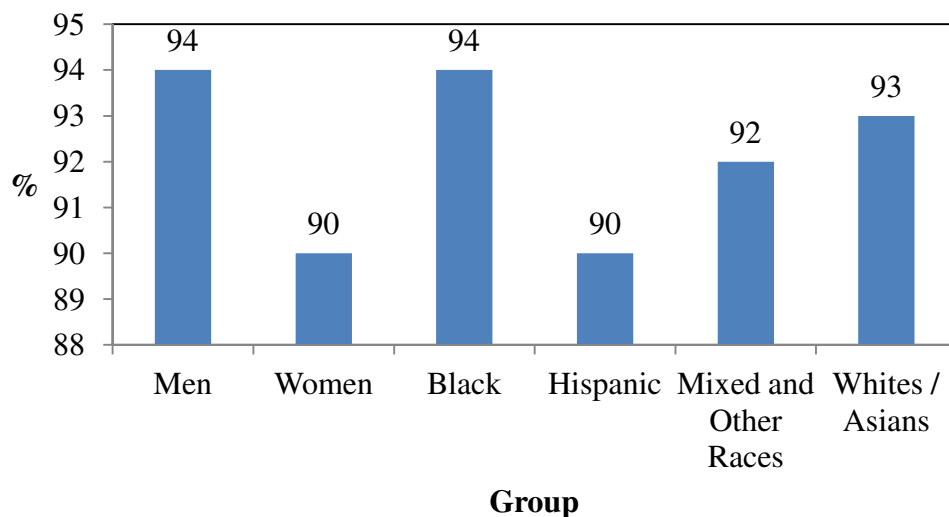
¹³ The questionnaires for the 2013 summer program will be modified to allow respondents to check all areas in which the program benefitted them.

Chart 5: YVP Summer Employment Program Participants' Views on the Quality of Their Work Experiences, 2012 (N = 367)



The exit survey also asked each participant whether they would accept this summer job next summer. The overwhelming majority of respondents (92%) responded that they would be willing to accept this same job. In each gender and race-ethnic group between 90 and 94 percent of the respondents replied that they would accept the same job in the next summer.

Chart 6: Per Cent of Summer Program Participants Who Would Accept Their Summer Job Next Year by Gender and Race-Ethnic Group



Similarly, the participants were asked, "If offered this job during the school year, would you take it? Sixty-seven percent said it was "very likely" that they would take it, and a combined 98% said "very or somewhat likely" they would do so. The next sections describe how these positive

employment and program experiences influenced the personal and social behaviors of program participants over the summer months.

Measuring Changes in the Risky, Deviant, Violent, and Delinquent Behavior of YVP Summer Program Participants and Comparison Group Members Over the Course of the Summer

Based on previous research findings on successful violence prevention efforts, the YVP summer employment program was designed to create connections with caring adults, including job site supervisors who could relate to the youth participants and provide important counseling, guidance, and work supervision. Specifically, program services were designed to help youth build upon their educational and career aspirations, encourage them to expand upon their career interests, and foster values that would promote accountability, social cooperation, respect for others, and constructive uses of time. In addition, many of the programs strived to reduce the willingness of youth to engage in illegal activities, to resort to violence to solve problems, to help curb personal anger, and to reduce exposure to urban crime and violence. The provision of the summer job was seen as a “carrot” to get youth involved in other program activities that would help build their skills and work values, address barriers to personal success in life, school, and their community, and shy away from both urban violence and other forms of deviant/risky behavior.

Given that the YVP summer employment programs were designed to address problems of urban crime, violent and deviant behavior, and trauma-related behaviors resulting from exposure to urban violence and deprivation, the pre and post-program surveys of both the YVP summer job participants and the comparison group collected information on their social isolation, risky/deviant/violent behavior, and their exposure to urban violence over the course of the summer.¹⁴ For each class of behavior, there were a number of different measures that were used to represent their behaviors. The total number of measures selected for analysis was twenty-two. They consisted of the following:

- Social isolation (2)
- Risky behavior (5)
- Deviant behavior (3)
- Violent or delinquent behavior (8)
- Exposure to urban violence (4)

¹⁴ The questionnaire asked about their behaviors in the 30 day period preceding both interviews.

These alternative behaviors were measured in somewhat different ways. For example, the violent behaviors such as “been involved in a violent fight in the past 30 days” were measured in a yes/no format. Other forms of behavior, including most risky behaviors (“used alcohol” or “smoked marijuana”), were measured along a continuum from 0 to 5 or more times during the past 30 days. The responses provided by each respondent at the time of the initial and follow-up interviews were compared to one another. If the individual shifted from being involved in this type of adverse behavior at the time of the initial interview to no involvement at the follow-up interview, this was considered an “improvement in behavior”.¹⁵ If the individual shifted from no engagement in this activity at the time of the initial interview to some involvement (drank alcohol, shoplifted) at the time of the follow-up or exit interview, this was considered to be a deterioration in behavior.

Comparative summaries of the findings on the number of measures in which summer job program participants and comparison group members either improved their behavior or experienced a deterioration in behavior over the summer months are displayed in Table 2. There were 22 separate measures of behavior which were tracked by the surveys of both program participants and comparison group members. For program participants, net improvements took place for 19 of these measures, including 7 of the 8 measures of violent and delinquent behavior. Of these 19 improvements, 13 were statistically significant at the .10 level or lower. Among the comparison group, most of whom did not work during the summer, improvements occurred on only 3 of these 22 measures, and only one of these three improvements (a reduction in the per cent feeling sad or upset because they had nothing to do) was large enough to be classified as statistically significant.

On three of these 22 measures, program participants experienced a deterioration in their behavior over the summer, with two of these three measures involving exposure to violence. None of these three negative changes were large enough to be categorized as statistically significant. In substantial contrast, among the comparison group, a deterioration in behavior took place among 19 of these measures, with 9 of them being statistically significant. Clearly, the improvements in behavior among the participant group were both more pervasive and larger than those of the comparison group. The detailed results for each class of behavior are summarized separately below.

¹⁵ If the individual simply reduced his incidence of engaging in this behavior, e.g., drank alcohol only 3 times versus 5 or more times at the initial interview this was not considered an improvement in behavior. The same held true for measuring a deterioration in behavior.

Table 2: Comparisons of the Number of Measures in Which YVP Summer Employment Program Participants and Comparison Group Members Obtained A Net Improvement or A Deterioration in Behavior and the Statistical Significance of Such Changes Between the Initial and Follow-up Interviews by Type of Behavior

Program Participants				
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
Type of Behavior	Number of Improvements	Number of Significant Improvements	Number of Deteriorations in Behavior	Number of Significant Changes
Social isolation	2	1	0	0
Risky behavior	5	5	0	0
Deviant behavior	3	3	0	0
Violent or delinquent behavior	7	4	1	0
Exposure to violence	2	0	2	0
Total measures	19	13	3	0

Comparison Group				
	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)
Type of Behavior	Number of Improvements	Number of Significant Improvements	Number of Deteriorations in Behavior	Number of Significant Changes
Social isolation	1	1	1	1
Risky behavior	1	0	4	3
Deviant behavior	0	0	3	3
Violent or delinquent behavior	0	0	8	1
Exposure to violence	1	0	3	1
Total measures	3	1	19	9

Changes in Violent and Delinquent Behavior

The initial and exit/ follow-up interview questions on violent and delinquent behavior asked about involvement in physical fighting, carrying weapons, attacking other people with weapons, damaging property, and shoplifting. Improvement rates on each of these eight measures over the summer are displayed in Table 3 for each group separately.

YVP employment program participants improved their behavior in seven of these eight areas. On only one measure (carrying a gun in the past 30 days) was there a deterioration in behavior, but it was both quite small (under one percentage point) and not close to being statistically significant. On the other seven measures, the program participants showed some improvement in behavior with the percentage point sizes of these improvements ranging from 1.5 to 7.3 percentage points. Five of these

changes were large enough to be classified as statistically significant. The biggest changes in undesirable behavior were reductions in attacking others with a weapon other than gun, damaging somebody else's property, and being involved in physical fights. The last reduction was the highest at 7.3 percentage points.

Table 3: Comparisons of the Percentage Point Improvements⁽¹⁾ in the Violent or Delinquent Behaviors of YVP Summer Employment Program Participants and Comparison Group Members Over the Course of the Summer

	(A)	(B)	(C)
Violent / Delinquent Behavior	Per Cent Program Participants	Per Cent Comparison Group	Net Difference (A - B)
• Been involved in a physical fight	7.3**	-2.0	+9.3
• Carried a gun in past 30 days	-.9	0	-.9
• Carried a knife in past 30 days	1.5	-.7	+2.2
• Attacked or threatened someone with a gun	2.1*	-2.0	+4.1
• Attacked or threatened someone with a weapon other than gun	3.9***	-1.3	+5.2
• Picked on someone by chasing them	3.9***	-3.9*	+7.8
• Damaged or destroyed someone else's property	3.9***	-2.0	+5.9
• Avoided paying for an item I should have paid for	1.5	-1.4	+2.9

Note: (1) A positive number implies that the group was less likely to be engaged in this type of behavior. A negative number implies that the group was more likely to engage in this negative behavior over the summer. (2)* implies significance at .10 level; ** implies significance at .05 level; *** implies significance at .01 level.

The comparison group failed to achieve any improvement in their delinquent or violent behavior over the course of the summer. One measure (carrying a gun in past 30 days) showed no change at all, but some modest deterioration took place in the other seven measures, ranging from -.7 to -3.9 percentage points. Only one of these changes (picked on someone by chasing them) was statistically significant.

The net differences in delinquent/violent behavior were in favor of the program participant group on seven of the eight measures. The size of these differences in rates of improvement ranged from lows of 2.2 percentage points (carrying a knife in past 30 days) to 5 to 6 percentage points for

attacking someone with a weapon other than a gun to a high of 9.3 percentage points for reducing physical fighting.

Changes in Risky Behavior and Social Isolation

Earlier youth violence prevention research has found that engaging in risky and deviant behaviors or being social isolated is a predictor of future violent behavior.¹⁶ On each of the five risky behaviors measured in the surveys (drank alcoholic beverages, engaged in sexual activities), the YVP summer employment program participants experienced a statistically significant improvement in their behaviors, with the size of these differences ranging from 3.5 to just under 8 percentage points. In contrast, the comparison group improved on only one of these five measures (engaged in sexual activities) and did worse on the remaining four, with two of these declines in behavior being in the 5-6 percentage point range and statistically significant. On all five risky behavior measures, the participant group outperformed the comparison group, with the net differences in improvement rates ranging from 3 to nearly 13 percentage points (Table 4).

On the social isolation measures (“stayed at home because afraid to leave the house”), the program participants achieved a modest one percentage point net improvement that was not statistically significant. In contrast, the comparison group was characterized by a statistically significant -4 to -5 percentage point net deterioration in this behavior. The net difference in improvement rates was +5 percentage points for the program participants. On the second isolation measure (“feeling sad or upset because of nothing to do”), both groups achieved a large positive, statistically significant change in behavior between 16 and 17 percentages points with the comparison group doing slightly better (one percentage point) than the program participants.

¹⁶ J. David Hawkins, et.al., Predictors of Youth Violence, Juvenile Justice Bulletin, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, April 2000.

Table 4: Comparisons of the Percentage Point Improvements in the Social Isolation and Risky Behaviors of YVP Summer Employment Program Participants and Comparison Group Members Over the Course of the Summer

	(A)	(B)	(C)
Behavior	Per Cent Program Participants	Per Cent Comparison Group	Net Difference (A - B)
Risky Behavior			
• Drank alcoholic beverages	+7.8*	-5.0*	+12.8
• Smoked cigarettes or other tobacco	+3.5*	-2.5	+6.0
• Used marijuana	+3.8*	-1.2	+5.0
• Used or sold illegal drugs	+4.2*	-5.8*	+10.0
• Engaged in sexual activities	+6.2*	+3.1*	+3.1
Social Isolation			
• Stayed at home because afraid to leave the house	+9	-4.4*	+5.3
• Felt upset or sad because of nothing to do	+15.6*	+16.7*	-1.1

Note: * implies the difference for this group was statistically significant at either the .10 or .05 level.

Changes in Deviant Behavior

Deviant behaviors include telling lies or spreading false rumors, not listening to parents or teachers, and skipping classes without a valid excuse. For the participants, improvements took place on each of these three measures. The size of these improvements ranged from 2.7 to 6.7 percentage points, and each change was statistically significant at either the .01 or .10 level.

Table 5: Comparisons of the Percentage Point Improvements in the Deviant Behaviors of YVP Summer Employment Program Participants and Comparison Group Members Over the Course of the Summer

	(A)	(B)	(C)
Deviant Behavior	Per Cent Program Participants	Per Cent Comparison Group	Net Difference (A - B)
• Told lies or spread rumors	+2.7*	-4.6**	+7.3
• Not listened to your parents or teachers	+6.4***	-6.4**	+12.8
• Skipped classes without an excuse	+6.7***	-4.9*	+11.6

Note: * implies significance at .10 level; ** implies significance at .05 level; *** implies significance at .01 level.

For the comparison group, the results on deviant behavior change were quite the opposite. On each of the three measures, behavior among the comparison group experienced some deterioration over the course of the summer. They were more likely to tell lies about others, not listen to their parents, and to skip classes without any valid excuse. The sizes of these adverse shifts in behavior of the comparison group ranged from -4.6 to -6.4 percentage points, all of which were statistically significant at either the .05 or .10 levels.

The net differences between the improvement rates of participants and comparison group members on the three measures of deviant behavior were quite large. They ranged in value from 7.3 percentage points to approximately 12 to 13 percentage points for not listening to parents and skipping classes without an excuse.

Changes in Exposure to Violence

Among the objectives of the YVP employment programs was that of reducing the exposure of program participants to various forms of violence over the summer by keeping them off the streets to avoid being confronted by other violent youth and adults. There were four questions on urban violence that appeared on the questionnaires administered to both the participants and the comparison group. They included questions on whether the respondents had been punched, kicked or beaten by someone they did or did not know, whether they had been attacked or threatened by a weapon other than a gun, and whether someone had showed them a gun.

For the program participants, there were small improvements in three of these four measures of exposure to urban violence. However, none of these changes were large enough to be classified as statistically significant. In none of these four areas of exposure to urban violence did the participants experience a significant improvement over the course of the summer.

For the comparison group, the changes in exposure to violence were zero in two areas, close to zero in a third, and increased significantly in the fourth area (someone showed you they had a gun). An additional 3.3 per cent of the comparison group experienced such an outcome over the summer, a change that was statistically significant. The net differences in improvements in these four areas of exposure to urban violence were positive in favor of participants in three areas and negative in one area (being punched or kicked by others). The net differences were typically quite small except for “being shown a gun” in which participants fared four percentage points better than the comparison group, a statistically significant difference.

The Independent Impacts of the YVP Summer Employment Program on Selected Risky, Deviant, Delinquent, and Violent Behavior of Program Participants: Findings of a Multivariate Statistical Analysis

The above findings on the social isolation and the risky, deviant, and violent behavior of YVP summer employment program participants and comparison group members during the summer/early fall of 2012 were based on the experiences of both groups separately with comparisons of the two sets of outcomes. While program participants in the ABCD program were chosen by lottery, the characteristics of the “control group” differed in a number of statistically significant ways from both the ABCD group of participants and the combined group of YVP summer program participants from the seven agencies serving youth including the Boston Private Industry Council, Boston Rising, Safe Street, Teen Empowerment, and YOU.

Given the statistical significance of the differences in the demographic characteristics of the program participants and comparison group members and the geographic neighborhoods of the residences of these two groups, we cannot directly compare the changes in the behavior of the two groups over the summer and attribute all differences to the effects of the program alone.¹⁷ To estimate the independent impacts of program participation on the risky, deviant, delinquent, and violent behavior of participants, we conducted a wide array of multivariate statistical analyses of their

¹⁷ Pure random assignment of the pool of applicants for summer jobs to the participant and control groups would have allowed such direct comparisons to estimate impacts. Only applicants to the ABCD administered summer jobs programs were assigned to the “control group”.

behavior changes over the summer. The primary statistical tool was binary logit analysis in which the key dependent variables (dichotomous variables) were measures of improvement or deterioration in their risky, deviant, and violent behaviors over the course of the summer.¹⁸ A listing of all dependent and independent variables appearing in these analyses and their definitions are presented in Appendix A of this report.

The first set of logit regressions is focused on whether an individual would experience an improvement in his/her behavior over the course of the summer. Persons who moved from engaging in this adverse behavior (bought or sold illegal drugs or involved in a physical fight) in the month before the initial interview to no adverse behavior in the month before the exit interview was considered to have “improved”.

Findings for 12 separate measures of improved behavior are presented in Table 6. In all twelve cases, the estimated marginal impact of the summer jobs program on the probability of favorable behavior change was positive. The sizes of these percentage point impacts varied from lows of 6 to a high of 8 percentage points (use of marijuana). In 10 of these 12 cases, the estimated coefficient was statistically significant at the .01, .05, or .10 levels. In the four models of delinquent/violent behavior, two yielded positive and statistically significant impacts for the summer employment program. These involved a lower probability of engaging in a physical fight and a lower likelihood of damaging or destroying someone else’s property. In the models for the four risky behaviors, the estimated improvements in behavior were significant in all four cases and ranged from 6 to 8 percentage points. The models for the three deviant behaviors also yielded significant improvements in behavior, ranging from four to seven percentage points.

¹⁸ We also ran a series of linear probability models based on regression analysis and a set of multinomial logistic models in which there were three dependent variables of interest: no change in behavior, improved behavior, or a deterioration in behavior. The findings of the linear probability models were quite close to those of the logit regression.

Table 6: The Estimated Impacts of Participation in the Summer 2012 Jobs Program on Selected Social Isolation, Risky, Deviant, and Violent Behaviors of Youth in Boston

Measure of Behavior	Impact on Improved Behavior	
	(A) Size in Percentage Points	(B) Sig. of Change
Stayed at home because afraid to leave	5.6	.02
Drank alcoholic beverages	7.1	.03
Used tobacco	5.8	.01
Used marijuana	8.0	.02
Bought or sold illegal drugs	2.4	.10
Told lies or spread rumors about someone	4.2	.01
Did not listen to parent	7.1	.03
Involved in a physical fight	5.7	.05
Skipped classes without excuse	5.5	.10
Attacked or threatened someone with a weapon other than a gun	2.0	Not Sig.
Picked on someone by chasing them	.6	Not Sig.
Damaged or destroyed someone's property	3.2	.10

Our second set of logit regression models are designed to estimate whether participation in the YVP summer employment program reduced the probability of experiencing a deterioration in behavior over the course of the summer; e.g., shifted from not being involved in physical fighting at the time of the initial interview to fighting over the summer. Seven different behaviors were chosen for this analysis, including three risky behaviors and two violent behaviors. Findings are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: The Estimated Impacts of Participation in the Summer 2012 Jobs Program on Deteriorations in Selected Social Isolation, Risky, Deviant, and Violent Behaviors

Measure of Behavior	Estimated Impact on Deterioration in Behavior	
	(A)	(B)
	Size in Percentage Points	Sig. of Change
Stayed at home because afraid to leave	-4.3	.05
Drank alcoholic beverages	-4.0	.10
Used tobacco (smoked cigarettes)	-1.5	Not Sig.
Used marijuana	2.0	Not Sig.
Involved in a physical fight	-1.9	Not Sig.
Picked on someone by chasing them	-2.1	.05
Not listened to parents	-6.1	.01

For six of these seven behaviors, being a summer jobs participant reduced the probability of experiencing a deterioration in behavior over the course of the summer, and four of these six changes were statistically significant. These significant changes included a reduction in the probability of drinking alcoholic beverages, staying at home because one was afraid to leave, and not listening to one's parents. The estimated impact for the last variable was the largest at 6 percentage points.

Similar to our previous findings on changes in behavior for the participants and comparison group members separately, the above findings of the two sets of logit regression models are also quite favorable. They reveal that participation in the summer jobs program can generate independent impacts on improvements in risky, deviant, and violent behavior over the course of the summer and help prevent these young adults from engaging in various adverse behaviors (picking on others, drinking alcohol) over the summer. Clearly, the positive behavioral changes among program participants indicate that meaningful employment can help reduce youth engagement in violent behavior and several types of risky and deviant behaviors that are predictors of committing future violent or criminal activities. These very positive behavioral changes add to the other social benefits of the summer jobs program and increase its overall economic worthwhileness.

Conclusions and Future Policy and Research Considerations

The 2012 YVP summer employment programs evaluation had several objectives. One of the objectives of the evaluation was to measure net job creation effects through the use of a comparison group. Based on the follow-up survey of comparison group members, slightly over 70% of the comparison group was jobless all summer and only 1 of 5 were able to obtain an unsubsidized job. One half of those who did work were employed for less than 20 hours per week, and only half were able to obtain at least 6 weeks of employment. As a result, the net job creation effects of the YVP summer employment programs were found to be quite high. Furthermore, the early post-program employment rate of program participants was estimated to be twice as high as that for the comparison group (35% vs. 17%).¹⁹ Very high fractions of both the jobless participants and comparison group members reported that they wanted a job at the time of the exit/ follow-up surveys. The unemployment rate of the comparison group was estimated to be 75%.

The evaluation also was designed to assess the quality of work opportunities to ensure that the opportunities provided to youth met the criteria of meaningful employment. The majority of program participants engaged in key activities (participated in group talks with co-workers or met new people that will help them move forward) that will support their soft skills development, a set of skills that employers cite as a barrier to hiring teens. Program participants received help from their supervisors and the program in the form of learning about other people's experiences, learning how to avoid problems by communicating, and having new doors opened up for them. When asked to rate the overall quality of their work experience, 98% of respondents stated it was very good or somewhat good. The quality of summer work experiences and support received from worksite supervisors were positively related.

Another primary objective of this study was to determine if meaningful employment can lead to a reduction in youth violence and behaviors which have been found to be predictors of violent and criminal behavior. Entry and exit/ follow-up program surveys were conducted with YVP program participants and a comparison group to measure changes over the summer in violent, risky, and deviant behavior, feelings of social isolation, and exposure to violence. Among program participants, net improvements in behavior over the course of the summer took place in 19 of the 22 areas examined (social isolation, risky, deviant, delinquent, and violent behaviors). Thirteen of these 19

¹⁹ As revealed above, the employment estimates for the participant group were based on their expected employment status at the time of the exit survey. They either would continue with their summer job or had lined up a new job for themselves after the program ended.

changes (including delinquent and violent behavior) were large enough to be classified as statistically significant. The biggest changes in these two areas were typically largest for men. Among the comparison group, net improvements in behavior took place in only 3 areas over the course of the summer, and only 1 of these changes was large enough to be categorized as statistically significant. YVP summer employment program participants experienced a net deterioration in behavior in only 3 areas, none of which was large enough to be classified as statistically significant. Comparison group members experienced deteriorations in behavior in 19 areas, 9 of which were statistically significant. A separate set of multivariate statistical analyses of the findings on the independent impacts of the YVP employment program on changes in participants' behavior found similar, statistically significant behavioral improvements. The behavioral findings indicate that high quality employment programs targeted to serve Boston's disadvantaged 14-21 year olds can reduce their involvement in violent and delinquent and other adverse social behaviors. Collectively, the employment and behavioral findings suggest that the YVP summer employment program helped achieve very desirable labor market, economic, and social policy goals.

Future research on the YVP summer employment program should continue to track program participants' employment and program experiences and social behaviors during the program, including the collection of more information on their job duties, types of new skills learned, weekly hours of work, and weeks of employment.²⁰ The use of a control group to estimate program impacts should also be continued with sustained efforts to guarantee a true random assignment to the participant and control groups to facilitate estimates of impacts on employment and social behaviors. More information on the actual post-program employment and schooling experiences of participants through at least the early winter also would be desirable. Efforts to boost post-program employment opportunities for participants should be promoted given their high desire for jobs and their serious difficulties in acquiring them on their own.

²⁰ While such information was collected for the comparison group, the surveys for participants did not include similar questions.

Appendix A

One of the final sections of this research report is devoted to a multivariate statistical analysis of the estimated impacts of being a summer program participant on their risky, deviant, delinquent, and violent behaviors and exposure to urban violence over the course of the summer. A listing of the dependent and independent variables appearing in this analysis and their definitions are presented below. The complete results of the comprehensive set of logit regression analyses are available from the authors on request.

Variable	Definition
Dependent Variables	
Improved	Behavioral outcome change during the summer program 1 = If the participant has improved 0 = If other (stayed same or deteriorated)
Deteriorate	Behavioral outcome change during the summer 1 = If behavior deteriorated 0 = Stayed same or improved
Independent Variables	
Female	The gender of the respondent 1 = If female 0 = If male
age_17_18	The age of the respondent 1 = If 17 or 18 at the time of the initial survey 0 = Otherwise
age_19_p	The age of the respondent 1 = If 19 or older at the time of the initial survey 0 = Otherwise
White	The race\ethnic status of the respondent 1 = White or Asian 0 = All other
Black	The race\ethnic status of the respondent 1 = Black, not Hispanic 0 = All other
Hispanic	The race\ethnic status of the respondent 1 = Hispanic 0 = All other

Other	The race\ethnic status of the respondent 1 = Other or mixed races 0 = All other
Low_income	The income status of the respondent's family 1 = If the respondent belongs to a low-income family as measured by eligibility to receive free or subsidized lunches at school 0 = All other
Neighborhood of Residence	
Name of the neighborhood. There were three neighborhood variables in the model: Mattapan, Roxbury, and other. The base neighborhood is Dorchester	The neighborhood of residence of the participant 1 = If the participant resided in the neighborhood 0 = If the participant resided in another neighborhood
Living Arrangements	
Mother_o	The living arrangements at the time of the initial survey 1 = If the respondent lived with mother only. Father is not present 0 = All other
Other_Arr	The living arrangements at the time of the initial survey 1 = If the respondent lived with his father only, by himself, with other relatives, etc. 0 = All other
School Status	
g_8_10	Schooling status of the participant 1 = The participant will be enrolled in grades 8 through 10 during the next school year 0 = Other grades
g_11_12_p	Schooling status of the participant 1 = The participant will be enrolled in grades 11 through 12 the next school year 0 = Other grades
graduated	Schooling status of the participant 1 = The participant has graduated from high school 0 = Has not graduated from high school

