

# Out of Focus

**A Snapshot of Public Funding to Reconnect  
Youth to Education and Employment**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Disconnected Youth: A Civic Crisis

New York City faces a civic crisis of “disconnected” youth and young adults. There are over 163,000 young people ages 16 to 24 who are neither in school nor in the labor force. When we add the number of “unemployed” young adults, who are actively seeking work but unable to find it, we have more than 220,000 young people who are not in school nor working nearly one in five of the total age group. These young people—largely youth of color from poor communities—are at high risk of becoming permanently disengaged from the labor market, threatening their ability to break out of the cycle of poverty and contribute to our economy and community. Their idleness represents a great waste of resources and human potential.

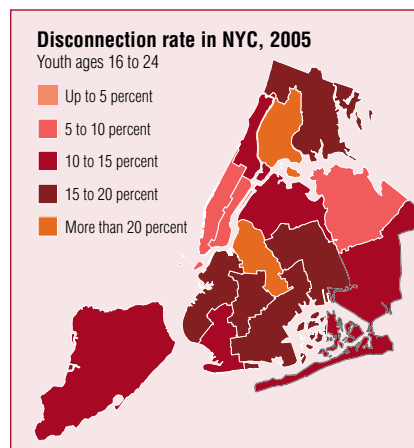
## Who Are Disconnected Youth?

Disconnected youth are overwhelmingly people of color: 43 percent are Latino and 30 percent are African American. The number of males and females is nearly equal, but when we do not count young mothers, there are nearly three times as many young men than women who are disconnected.

Nearly two thirds of the disconnected are ages 20 to 24, with only one third still in their teens. As a result, many in this larger, older group are ineligible for most youth services or obtaining a high school diploma—in New York, you cannot get a high school diploma if you are over 21.

Disconnected young people are highly concentrated in the city. In some neighborhoods, they make up over 20 percent of all people ages 16 to 24. Disconnected youth live in the same neighborhoods where schools are weak and jobs are scarce—where many young people need a second chance to succeed, but did not get a very good first one to begin with.

The number of disconnected youth has grown significantly in recent years, reaching its highest level—more than 167,000—at the lowest point of the economic downturn in 2003. Four years later, after an economic upswing and strong efforts at school reform, we find that the numbers have barely changed. If we are at the outset of another economic downturn, these numbers will



rise, this time even higher. We need to act now to keep the crisis from ballooning further.

### **The Consequences for New York**

Every New Yorker has a stake in this struggle. When our young people lack the skills that local industries need and are unable to support themselves, we all bear the financial costs—a weaker economy, a smaller tax base, and higher expenditures on public benefits. When our communities are not defined by participation in school and work, they are less safe and economically secure, and we are more divided.

A great opportunity is hidden within this challenge. In the coming years, the combination of industry growth and an aging workforce will produce sizeable new openings in the labor market. Young adults with the skills to compete for these jobs will be well positioned to move into these openings, earn real wages, and contribute to their families and the city's economy. We need to invest now to ensure that our young people become the workforce for tomorrow—we cannot afford to continue wasting their energy, talent, and potential. If we don't invest now, we will pay later.

### **Findings**

This report examines our current investments all the publicly provided education and workforce development funding streams available to re-engage young New Yorkers ages 16 to 24. We conduct our analysis with two questions in mind:

- Are existing services to reconnect youth enough to meet the needs of New York City?
- Are funding streams organized in a way that makes the most of our investments?

The short answer to both questions is no. Right now, we are not investing enough, nor are our investments organized efficiently. Existing funding is low, the scale of existing programs is too small, and our current efforts are not targeted to the specifics of the disconnected youth population. Funding streams are completely separate, making life difficult for organizations that provide services and nearly

impossible for youth trying to reconnect.

Existing public education and workforce funding serves no more than seven percent of New York City's disconnected youth in programs targeted to young people. We estimate that there are fewer than 12,000 program slots available specifically to re-engage young people: 5,500 program slots in the education system and 6,400 in workforce programs.

While the Department of Education has the largest pool of funds that could reach the population over 100 million, most of its programs are primarily designed to prevent disconnection among the 70,000 over age and under credited students that are still attending regular high schools. Only District 79 GED programs directly target disconnected youth but with just 5,500 program slots, these programs serve a small fraction of the population.

There are 85,000 disconnected youth who have not completed high school and are without a GED. Sixty-five percent of this population are between the ages of 20 and 24 and, as such, are unlikely or ineligible to return to school for a high school diploma or to District 79 for a GED. The options for these young people are limited. More than 12,000 young people seek GED or basic education through the adult education system, which is poorly designed to meet their needs. While almost one in five (17 percent) of people in the adult education system are between the ages of 16 and 24, adult education is not designed or funded to re-engage youth.

The most successful programs to re-engage youth are comprehensive. They utilize a youth development approach, offering basic literacy and numeracy through GED attainment, workforce readiness including career exploration, and training in "soft" and "hard" skills. These programs also provide assistance with job placement and retention, advancement in employment, and other life skill building activities.

The three programs identified by this study that are designed to provide these sort of comprehensive services Out of School Youth OSY, Job Corps, and the as yet unimplemented NYC Justice Corps together offer fewer than 3,000 slots for youth. These programs tend to cost more: the OSY program

administered by New York City Department of Youth and Community Development DYCD costs an average of 7,500 per participant. Other workforce programs do target disconnected youth, but are funded at lower levels. Nine hundred slots exist in the Young Adult Internship Program, which serves the most job ready disconnected youth. Another 3,700 slots are supported by two major City Council initiatives, which are funded at much lower levels.

More than 14,000 young people seek job placement services in the adult workforce development system, including the workforce development programs run by the New York City Department of Small Businesses Services SBS and the two Human Resource Administration HRA programs we examined, Begin Employment, Gain Independence Now

BEGIN and Parks Opportunity Plus POP . As with adult educational services, workforce development programs for adults tend not to be funded to deliver programming with the emphasis on development necessary for disconnected youth; programs that incorporate both teenage and adult populations can leave young people feeling out of place. Another limitation of the adult system for serving disconnected youth is that many young people cannot access Individual Training Accounts ITAs , the vouchers given to SBS workforce clients to purchase focused job training services. ITAs are targeted to unemployed individuals who have a high school diploma or GED, leaving out the approximately 50 percent of disconnected young adults who lack these credentials.

## Recommendations, In Brief

### *Expand Service Capacity*

- Expand eligibility of services to age 24. Too many young people age out of transitional programs, despite research that says they are not ready for adult systems. Expanded service to include young people up to age 24 will require increased investment, but some can be accomplished by merging certain adult and youth funding streams.
- Invest in more comprehensive workforce development programs. There are simply not enough available slots in evidence based programs that combine the education and workforce preparation that disconnected youth need to succeed, particularly for those who are too old to be eligible for a high school diploma. Doubling the number of existing program slots would cost approximately 22.5 million.
- More efforts to target low-level learners. We know that a vast number of disconnected youth and young adults have extremely low skill levels, and we need to make sure that our investments target them specifically.

### *Coordinate Programs Across Various Agencies*

- Agree on outcomes, and ensure that services exist to reach them. Fund providers to offer enough services to prepare all youth to succeed in work or college and develop outcomes measures that reward incremental progress toward achieving work and educational credentials.
- Support assessment and referrals. To avoid replicating the lack of continuity in poor communities, the public sector should support connections across services so that young people end up in the programs that are right for them.
- Develop accountability. The city should identify an individual or office that is responsible for disconnected youth, and provide regular updates on our progress to reconnect them.
- Establish a reconnection hotline. The city needs to make it easy for young people to gather information and figure out how to get back on track.

# INTRODUCTION

New York City is home to 163,304 “disconnected” youth and young adults—individuals ages 16 to 24 who are neither in school nor in the labor force.<sup>1</sup> If we include those young New Yorkers who are unemployed but actively seeking work, the number increases by 60,175 to over 223,000 young people who are not in school and not working.

More alarming still is that the number of New York City’s disconnected youth remains high, despite economic fluctuations. In years past, youth connection to school ran “counter-cyclical” to the economy: during periods of growth, fewer young people remained enrolled in school, but more entered work, and during downturns when jobs were scarcer, school enrollment rates increased. As the Community Service Society (CSS) reported in 2005, however, this dynamic has not held through recent economic cycles: the economic downturn of 2001 did not result in increased school enrollment, and the subsequent improvement of the economy did not bring higher labor force participation rates for youth and young adults.<sup>2</sup> This new phenomenon has led to unprecedented and sustained levels of disconnected, idle young people, who as of 2003, at the height of the last local economic downturn, had grown to comprise 16 percent of their age group. Four subsequent years of job growth and significant public high school reforms aimed at improving graduation rates have barely moved these numbers—from 167,781 to 163,304, or 15 percent of the age cohort.<sup>3</sup>

The scale of the issue—approximately one out of every five New York City residents between the ages of 16 and 24 is not engaged in school or work—is daunting. But the future costs of the problem as it exists today should motivate the community to demand solutions now. We do not want to lose the economic benefits and tax revenues from tens of thousands not working. We also know that young people who are not on a path toward gainful employment too often become involved in crime and/or substance abuse. Incarcerating a young person costs over \$60,000 per year and substance abuse treatment costs an annual \$20,000<sup>4</sup>, as well as the individual’s inability to contribute to family and community. In other words, we face a choice: invest now in re-engaging these young people, or pay later for the consequences of our inactivity.

There are also social reasons for action, including the fact that young people within this age group are the main perpetrators and victims of violence. Connecting more of them to school and employment will keep them—and the rest of us—safer. Finally, this issue has a moral dimension: the large majority of disconnected youth are people of color from environments

of poverty and failed public systems.<sup>5</sup> We know that well to do young people who struggle in their late teens and early 20's often get second, third, and fourth chances to succeed—and routinely do. Our nation's poor, however, are rarely offered a second chance, even when their first one is sabotaged by poor households, bad schools, and crime ridden neighborhoods. Engaging and reconnecting these young people to the education and skills necessary for them to support themselves and contribute to New York's economy must be a priority for the city.

To reverse the trend of youth disconnection, policy makers will need a vision for and commitment to building a comprehensive system of supports and services to re-engage these young people at every level of skill and readiness. Research has shown that individuals who do not have a successful workplace experience by age 25 face sharply diminished chances of enjoying financial stability in their lifetimes.<sup>6</sup> Given the large number of young adults currently in this category, we must act now.

### **The Focus of This Work**

This report presents the first side-by-side look at all the publicly provided education and workforce development funding streams available to re-engage young New Yorkers ages 16 to 24. Discussions of policy solutions for disconnected youth typically include both measures to prevent youth disconnection and ways to re-engage young people who are already disconnected—often termed “recuperation”. Though the report touches on several public initiatives aimed at prevention, recuperation is the primary focus of this work; our belief is that little attention has been paid to what is available for the large number of those who do not succeed initially.

Research indicates that young people who aspire to jobs that pay middle class wages require a baseline level of math and literacy skill, as well as the ability to solve problems and communicate on the job<sup>7</sup>—the fruits of education and workforce readiness. As such, we examine the public education programs

offered or funded by the New York City Department of Education and the New York State Education Department, the two principal education presences in the city. On the workforce side, we consider the programs administered by the Departments of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) and Small Business Services (SBS).

As the first holistic look at the current agglomeration of funding streams that support service to disconnected youth, this report highlights two fundamental challenges. First, the level of services currently available to address this crisis is inadequate compared to the need. Second, there is no “system” as such: with virtually no exceptions, each of the programs discussed below was conceived and is administered in isolation from all other offerings. The result is a bureaucratic black hole that confuses youngsters and service providers alike. We hope that policy makers will recognize that this state of affairs is both inefficient and unfair—and that now is the time to build a comprehensive system, in which the range of services that disconnected youth need are coordinated to the point where every young person can access appropriate services to help him or her reconnect and start on a path to success.

### **Methodology**

In determining which services to include in this work, CSS first consulted a number of knowledgeable stakeholders—policy makers and service providers—to develop a list of all recuperation services in New York City funded through federal, state, and local education and workforce systems. CSS then surveyed each city and state agency to collect information, using a consistent protocol. The protocol asked for:

- A description of services funded;
- Intended outcomes of those services;
- Participation eligibility requirements;
- How a young person would access the services; and
- Funding and service levels for the current fiscal year (FY08).<sup>8</sup>

Each agency was contacted numerous times and provided with opportunities to review and confirm the information presented here.

## Limitations

This report should not be read as a comprehensive, all inclusive examination of reconnection services. Given the number of local, state, and federal public agencies and offices within them, as well as programs and contracts that are administered by outside providers in New York City, it was not possible for a non governmental entity to conduct a full inventory of publicly supported programs that offer services to the disconnected youth population. This effort covers only programs available to all New Yorkers through the public education and workforce systems.<sup>9</sup> As such, it excludes funding or programming available to certain subsets of young people looking to reconnect. Further work to examine services for specific sub populations of disconnected youth, such as those aging out of the foster care system or developmentally disabled individuals, would be a useful next step. New York City agencies that provide targeted reconnection services, but which are not examined here, include:

- Administration for Children’s Services;
- Department of Corrections;
- Department of Health and Mental Hygiene;
- Department of Homeless Services; and
- Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disability.

With the exception of two important large scale City Council initiatives Jobs to Build On and NYC Works this report also does not cover the nearly 2 million in additional funding provided by the City Council to community based organizations for education and workforce development.<sup>10</sup> Each year, the City Council disburses funds targeted directly to a range of organizations, some of which provide services to disconnected youth. Given the small amount of funds dedicated to these services and

their vulnerability to change from one year to the next, we do not consider them part of the formal public response to the issue of disconnected youth. We have also excluded several initiatives that were budgeted in FY2008 but have yet to be implemented or to have set service targets for young people 16-24 as of April 2008.<sup>11</sup> Private funding, which often makes up valuable portions of the budgets of service providers to disconnected youth, is also excluded.<sup>12</sup>

This effort also does not include the range of services that we consider “supportive”: those not primarily aimed at getting young adults to connect to school or work, but which are crucial to remove barriers that stand in the way of achieving those goals. Such programs may provide young people with health care, food security, housing, or counseling for mental health and substance abuse.

Finally, the service and funding numbers presented in the funding snapshot are not completely consistent. For service levels, we have attempted to determine the service capacity of current public funding to reconnect youth and young adults. In some cases, we were able to obtain exactly that: the number of available “slots” open to prospective participants each year for a given funding stream. In other cases, we were only able to find out the number of individuals that had actually enrolled in a given service not the number of available slots. The funding snapshot attempts to make these distinctions as clear as possible. Similarly, it is difficult to compare the funding levels of programs directly operated by public agencies versus those that are contracted out to non governmental service providers. Where we have calculated per participant cost averages, we have not included the administrative costs for government agencies that contract out the complete operation of their programs. Again, we have tried to be as clear as possible about those distinctions.

# ANALYSIS of the SNAPSHOT

## Education Funding

Achievement of a high school diploma or GED test of General Educational Development certificate should be a basic outcome expected of all young people. Under the current structure of education funding outside high school, too few young people will earn diplomas or GEDs, and those who do not are cut off from the possibilities for advancement that those certifications confer. Although a high school diploma should be the primary goal for every youth, we must provide for the fact that too many have already missed this opportunity, and that despite our best efforts, many will continue to do so. We can hold high expectations for all youth while maintaining a robust system of alternative pathways.

***Most education funding is aimed at young people who are falling behind, but still connected.***

Of all of the programs and funding streams surveyed in this effort, the New York City Department of Education NYC DOE has the largest pool of funds. The NYC DOE spends over 100 million for Young Adult Borough Centers YABCs, Transfer High Schools, and District 79 GED programs. Under the Bloomberg administration, the NYC DOE has significantly expanded options for “over-age, under-credited” students to earn high school diplomas: there are over 15,000 such slots in YABCs and Transfer Schools, a more than five-fold increase since 2001. Although disconnected youth are eligible for some of these programs, very few of the 15,000 participants were previously disconnected. Most of the DOE programs are primarily designed to prevent disconnection for the 70,000 over age, under credited youth who are still attending regular high school not the 85,000 disconnected youth without a high school diploma.<sup>13</sup>

***There are not enough options for young people who will not return to high school.***

Approximately 85,000 young people 50 percent of New York City’s disconnected youth have not completed high school or obtained a GED.<sup>14</sup> There are significant limitations to how we serve these young people. For too many, attainment of a high school diploma is not an option, for two primary reasons:

- **Age eligibility:** New York City does not allow individuals over age 21 to receive diplomas.<sup>15</sup> This renders all 22 to 24 year olds ineligible for diploma programs, and effectively disqualifies 20 to 21 year olds who do not have near the 44 credits and five Regents Examinations required for a high school diploma. Yet, according to data from the Current Population Survey CPS , almost two thirds 65 percent of disconnected youth are between the ages of 20 and 24, and thus unlikely or ineligible to return to school.<sup>16</sup>
- **Setting:** Many high school dropouts are unwilling to return to the same type of formal school environments where they previously experienced failure. Older youth are often more likely to seek services from smaller community based organizations they trust.<sup>17</sup>

The only youth oriented educational services that specifically target dropouts are the 5,500 slots in District 79 D79 , the branch of the NYC DOE dedicated to providing GED and related services to individuals age 21 and under.<sup>18</sup> Tens of thousands of dropouts between the ages of 22 and 24 cannot access D79 services and are only eligible for adult education programs. Of the 5,500 D79 slots, approximately 1,000 are designed for those with below ninth grade reading levels these slots are referred to as “Adult Basic Education” if students enter at elementary school grade levels, and “pre GED” if they arrive at middle school grade levels.

Far too few program slots exist at the pre GED and basic education level. Yet the need to serve young adults at these lower educational levels is great: the majority of the city’s dropouts are individuals who were behind in their skills development,<sup>19</sup> and approximately 43 percent of young adults who sought services in the adult education system were in basic education or pre GED classes.<sup>20</sup> Research shows that GED attainment does improve labor market outcomes for individuals with low skills.<sup>21</sup> More importantly, young people without a

diploma or the equivalent are blocked from a number of jobs that require certification, as well as the possibility of college, where completion of associate’s and bachelor’s degrees confers even greater economic benefits.<sup>22</sup>

Programs that couple GED attainment with college placement have shown particularly strong benefits and were thus cited by the NYC Commission for Economic Opportunity CEO , the city’s anti poverty initiative, as one of its two recommendations for recuperating disconnected youth.<sup>23</sup> A few such programs are available to youth in New York City, but none have been developed under the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity, the agency created to implement the recommendations of the Commission.<sup>24</sup>

Despite the 85,000 disconnected young adults without secondary school diplomas, just 16,575 16 to 24 year olds in any type of publicly or privately funded program took a GED exam in 2006, with only 8,203 passing the test.<sup>25</sup> Our city cannot afford to let these young people reach adulthood without secondary certification. In this economy, employers are looking for workers who have at least a secondary school degree.<sup>26</sup> We must expand GED, pre GED and basic education programming for young adults who will not achieve a high school diploma.

***Large numbers of youth seek education services in adult programs.***

The majority of disconnected youth who receive education services do so through adult education programs, such as basic literacy, English for Speakers of Other Languages ESOL , or GED exam preparation. According to the Mayor’s Office of Adult Education, approximately 70,000 New Yorkers participated in these programs last year, including more than 12,000 17 percent between the ages of 16 and 24. With 80 million in combined funding, adult education is provided by:

- The NYC DOE Office of Adult and Continuing Education OACE ;

- Two separate funding streams that are funneled directly to local organizations from the New York State Education Department WIA Title II and Adult Literacy and Education ; and
- Two funding streams to providers from the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development NYC Adult Literacy Initiative and Neighborhood Development Areas .

Youth end up in adult programs for both structural and programmatic reasons. Structurally, young people “age out” of both diploma granting options and youth oriented GED programs: at age 22, individuals are no longer eligible for high school or District 79 services. Within the DOE, young people 22 and older can seek adult education services from the Office of Continuing and Adult Education OACE . Eligibility for programs outside of the DOE begins at age 16, and many young people ages 16 to 24 seek adult education services outside of the DOE for programmatic reasons. Many young adults feel they have been failed by the formal school system and will only re engage in programs provided outside of school settings. Adult literacy and education funds from the New York State Department of Education NYSED and the New York City Department of Community Development DYCD are funneled directly to community providers many of whom are neighborhood based organizations with unique connections to their communities to create and operate their own programs.<sup>27</sup>

Adult literacy and GED programs are not designed and are not funded to re engage youth. Studies have shown that young people, especially those who struggled early in life, have the greatest chance of succeeding in environments that provide a range of support for their cognitive, social, and emotional development.<sup>28</sup> Adult education programs, however, do not have the resources to provide this support: in New York City, adult literacy programs average close to 1,100 per participant. By contrast, the DOE funds its 5,500 District 79 program slots at approximately 11,000 per student.

## Workforce Funding

***Existing workforce development programs serve relatively few disconnected youth.***

While education programs provide the basic skills necessary for individuals to gain entry into and succeed within the workplace, the soft skills and supported work experience provided by workforce development programs are also important to help place young people on their path to the labor market. Unfortunately, few workforce development resources are targeted to youth. And, just as in education programming, there are few comprehensive programs available to re engage and prepare disconnected youth.

Research and evaluation have shown that comprehensive programs encompassing the following components are pre requisites for successfully engaging youth in the workforce:<sup>29</sup>

- Each young person feels that at least one adult has a strong stake in his or her labor market success.
- Programs are connected to employers and placement with one of these employers is possible.
- At each step of the program, each young person feels the need to improve his or her education and credentials.
- Program support is available for a long period of time.
- Effective connections are maintained between the programs and providers of support services.
- The program emphasizes civic involvement and service.
- Motivational techniques including financial incentives, peer support, and leadership opportunities are used.

The three programs identified by this study that encompass these components Out of School Youth, Job Corps, and the as yet unimplemented NYC Justice Corps—offer fewer than 3,000 slots for youth between them. These programs utilize a youth-development approach, offering basic literacy and numeracy through GED attainment, workforce readiness including career exploration , and training in “soft”

and “hard” skills. These programs also provide assistance with job placement and retention, advancement in employment, and other life skill building activities. But these programs are the exception to the rule: the large majority of available workforce development programs and services are designed for adults and ill suited to meet the needs of young people with skill deficits and little educational attainment, trying to gain a foothold in the labor market.

This study has identified that, in total, the city’s workforce programs serve approximately 7,160 disconnected youth. These programs are briefly described below, including the number of youth they serve and, where possible, the cost per participant:

- The Out of School Youth OSY program is designed to serve approximately 1,000 disconnected youth participants each year. Administered by the Department of Youth and Community Development DYCD<sup>30</sup>, OSY has a service period of one year, plus another year of follow up. OSY programs offer the most comprehensive services of any workforce initiative that serves youth, providing educational support, vocational training, stipends, and placement into education or work. Annual funding for OSY averages approximately 7,500 per participant.
- The United States Department of Labor directly operates Job Corps, a residential program for disconnected youth that serves just fewer than 500 New York City residents ages 18 to 25 per year. Job Corps helps young people learn a trade, get a GED, and find a job. Participants receive stipends throughout the program, which is funded at approximately 6,400 per participant.
- The NYC CEO has created the Young Adult Internship Program YAIP, which serves 900 youth per year. Also administered by DYCD, YAIP is an internship program for “the most job ready” disconnected youth and is funded

at close to 3,500 per participant, plus stipends. Although the eligibility for participation in YAIP requires no higher than a sixth grade reading level, its Request for Proposal RFP to prospective providers identifies the population of disconnected youth that have diplomas or GEDs as the program’s target. Participants receive a month of orientation services followed by placement in a three month internship.<sup>31</sup>

- The NYC CEO also has designed, but not yet implemented, the NYC Justice Corps, which is slated to serve 300 court involved youth per year in comprehensive education and workforce preparation programs.
- The Human Resource Administration (HRA) offers two intensive welfare-to-work programs that target adults, but which serve a substantial number of 18 to 24 year olds. Begin Employment, Gain Independence Now BEGIN is a 35 hour a week program that combines basic skill development, job training, and workplace experience it enrolled 880 young adults in FY07. The Parks Opportunity Program provides six month transitional employment to public assistance recipients, along with basic skills and job training it enrolled 882 young adults in FY07.
- Two major New York City Council workforce initiatives are slated to serve 3,700 disconnected youth this year. Three thousand slots are reserved through Jobs to Build On and 700 through contracts distributed by NYC Works. Per participant funding, program details, and accountability for Council initiatives are unclear and vary among providers, although many of the contractors are experienced providers of services to disconnected youth. We were only able to obtain funding data for the NYC Works youth programs, which average approximately 750 per participant.<sup>32</sup>

***The majority of young people in workforce development initiatives are in programs designed for adults.***

In New York City, the Department of Small Business Services SBS administers adult workforce programs, which are available to individuals over age 18. SBS has set for itself two primary missions: assist unemployed individuals in finding work, and facilitate the workforce needs of companies and, in some cases, industries and sectors.<sup>33</sup> The agency has enjoyed considerable success on both fronts, but the measures of that success—rapid job placement, retention, and wage gains—do not align with the needs of young people who lack basic skills and/or have little job experience.

Youth and experts in the field have noted that the Workforce Career Centers also known as “One Stops”, run by providers that have contracted with SBS, are not geared toward the needs of young adults with little workforce experience—much less being able to serve disconnected youth, many of whom are far from prepared to succeed in the workforce.<sup>34</sup> Through SBS’s Workforce system, 12,597 young adults ages 18 to 24 sought services in FY07 compared to the 7,260 in the young adult programs described earlier. Of those in the Workforce system, only 27 percent—3,416 of young adults were placed in jobs, compared with 47 percent of individuals age 25 and over who were placed into employment.<sup>35</sup> Similarly, the two HRA programs that this study covered—BEGIN and Parks Opportunity Plus—are aimed at adults and do not specify differential programming for younger individuals, despite the fact that a substantial portion of the programs’ clients are under age 25.<sup>36</sup>

Considerable research has shown that adult workforce programs are not effective in serving younger populations, which require a program approach that is mindful of their developmental transition.<sup>37</sup> As with adult educational services, workforce development programs for adults tend not to be funded to deliver programming with an emphasis on youth development; programs that serve both youth and adults can leave young people

feeling out of place. Another limitation of the adult system for serving disconnected young adults is that many of its clients cannot access Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), the vouchers that are given to SBS workforce clients to purchase focused job training services. ITAs are targeted to unemployed individuals who have a high school diploma or GED, which, as discussed earlier, leaves out the approximately 50 percent of disconnected young adults without these credentials.<sup>38</sup>

### **Across Both Education and Workforce Funding Streams**

***New York City has not integrated existing services for disconnected youth.***

As a quick glance at the public funding snapshot shows, there is no locus of responsibility for disconnected youth. We report on 17 different education and workforce funding streams that are dispersed across eight different public agencies, which report to three different deputy mayors within City Hall, as well as to various state and federal officials.<sup>39</sup> This decentralization has implications: namely, there is no common vision of desired outcomes or program standards, and there is no central repository or directory of services that could connect existing services to ensure that every young person gets the service he or she needs.<sup>40</sup> Because many young adults require a range of services, coordination of existing services is a crucial part of addressing the challenge of reconnecting youth.<sup>41</sup>

For young people seeking to reconnect who lack both the resources and, more often than not, the resiliency to navigate complex public systems, the dispersed and uncoordinated nature of services poses significant barriers to their reconnection. There are few places to turn to for help: the city’s 311 phone service contains little information on programs to serve disconnected youth;<sup>42</sup> no citywide resource book or Web site exists for young people looking to get back on track; and there is no unified strategy on the part of the city to reach out to and find disconnected youth. The majority of young people who access services discover their options through word of mouth,

the local efforts of individual providers, or sheer luck.

This fractured system also creates profound difficulties for providers of services to young people. Organizations committed to offering the comprehensive programming that research and experience show to be effective typically must apply for funding from different public sources, in the hopes of being able to combine them. Providers respond to RFPs from the variety of local and state agencies identified in the snapshot, each with separate contract and eligibility conditions. Worse, providers are generally on their own: most who receive public funds do not have information about other programs in the community to refer their clients for more appropriate or additional support. Providers do not get credit or incentives for referring a young person to a service offered through a different provider. In some cases, separate agencies that draw Workforce

Investment Act WIA funds are actually at odds: for example, a provider of OSY services to a young person cannot use a Workforce Career Center to help that individual find a job because the performance based WIA youth contract does not recognize job placement through a WIA adult service as a positive outcome.

There are, however, some examples of agencies that have made efforts to develop mechanisms to serve as “connective tissue” within their own programs. District 79 has recently established Referral Centers, which are centralized locations for young people to be assessed and referred to the program within D79 that best matches their individual needs. Other agencies and funding streams should similarly support developing the infrastructure for referral or coordination mechanisms to support young people seeking the mix of programs and services best suited to their needs.

## LOOKING AHEAD

Accomplishing the recommendations that follow will require real leadership. We need leadership to overcome an entrenched set of racially laced stereotypes about the population. Disconnected youth are not politically “popular,” and are commonly portrayed negatively when they are portrayed at all in the media. Many have been distanced or hardened by their previous lack of success in school or other formal settings, and some have only experienced positive feedback and support in the youth culture they share with their peers. But those who interact with young individuals know that above all, all young people seek an opportunity to contribute, become self-sufficient, and succeed. Each of them has hopes and dreams that, with the right support and encouragement, can be achieved.

Second, we need leadership that will help us overcome the “sticker shock” that will come with the price tag of investing in disconnected youth. Champions for this cause will have to show that the public return on these investments—real dollars saved on criminal justice, welfare, and other services, as well as increases in tax revenues and the economic benefits of an improved workforce—will far outweigh the costs.

Finally, we need moral leadership to engage us in deciding whether we want to live in a city where well to do young people get third and fourth chances at success, but poor youth—who may not have had a great first chance to begin with—never get a second one.

# CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

Existing funding available to re engage disconnected youth is not commensurate with the scale of the problem. We estimate that across all programs identified in this study, education and workforce funding serves no more than 30,000 of the city's 163,304 disconnected youth approximately 18 percent<sup>43</sup>. Further, a majority of those 30,000 are served in programs designed for adults, many of which cannot be counted on to produce strong results. Fewer than 12,000 young people, or 7 percent of the total population in need, are in targeted programs designed to serve young people who are trying to reconnect.<sup>44</sup>

To better reconnect its young people, New York City must sharply increase the levels of service it offers in order to achieve any kind of impact commensurate with the needs and size of the disconnected youth population. At the same time, to be as effective and efficient as possible, New York City needs to better coordinate services for disconnected youth while, at the same time, making them easier to access.

## Increase Level of Services

Existing public education and workforce funding serves no more than 7 percent of disconnected young people in targeted programs. New York City should aim to increase this service level to 15 percent 25,000 by 2010.

### ***Expand eligibility to 22- to 24-year-olds for services that target out-of-school youth.***

Data informs us that most disconnected youth and young adults 65 percent are between the ages of 20 and 24, yet relatively fewer services are available to this segment of the population. In particular, 22 to 24 year olds have few options but to seek services with the general adult population. However, research tells us that, until age 25, individuals are still in the formative stages of their personal, educational, and professional development and are not best served by programs intended for adults.<sup>45</sup> New York City should extend certain youth services, including District 79 and Out of School Youth OSY , to individuals between 22 and 24. This will require increased investment on the part of the city to complement state and federal sources that only provide youth with funding for these programs until age 21. Other cities have merged funding streams to serve individuals over 22 in programs which typically serve 16 to 21 year olds.<sup>46</sup> This

expansion alone could double the number of disconnected youth served.

***Provide more comprehensive, evidence-based workforce preparation programs.***

The disconnected youth population suffers from low skill levels and little workforce experience.<sup>47</sup> Research indicates that comprehensive workforce development initiatives are the most successful at re-engaging disconnected youth.<sup>48</sup> In New York City, comprehensive workforce programming is only available through the OSY, Job Corps, and Justice Corps programs, which have far too few slots less than 3,000 at current funding levels. Additional funding is necessary to supplement the limited WIA OSY dollars available for programs and opportunities that combine educational remediation and workforce exposure and training. Doubling service levels to 6,000 slots would cost approximately 22.5 million.

***Expand the service capacity of community-based providers.***

Many young adults will not return to a school setting an environment in which they have experienced failure. The fact that so many young people enter community based organizations for adult education is evidence that many of these groups have a unique ability to attract and earn the trust of young people. New York City should capitalize on the assets of community based organizations, while supporting them to develop infrastructure, programs, and connections to schools and businesses that will allow for maximum success.

***Expand educational and workforce programs for low-level learners.***

Considering the low skill attainment of so many disconnected youth, more investment in programs that serve the lowest skilled is critical.<sup>49</sup> More basic education and pre GED programs should be available through District 79 of the Department of Education, as well as through literacy and workforce development service providers throughout the city. These basic education programs should be guided by

a common set of standards and outcomes, and they should serve as pathways to higher level services. Most importantly, these programs should be funded adequately. Young people who face a long road to attainment of a diploma or GED require comprehensive services to keep them engaged and build confidence, as well as to improve their workplace and life skills. In many cases, young people will need stipends and/or the opportunity to make money as they prepare to enter the workforce.

New York City should also provide incentives to accept lower skilled participants by defining incremental educational steps as reimbursable outcomes.<sup>50</sup> Currently, most city contracts are performance based, meaning that participants must achieve relatively advanced outcomes such as certification GED or career skills, job placement, and retention in order to qualify a program for funding. This system of reimbursement encourages providers to find participants who are the closest to meeting those goals.

**Improve Coordination of Services**

To get greater impact from its current investments, New York City should coordinate programs across various agencies so that any youth who wants to reconnect can find the right option for him or her. The National League of Cities recently released research indicating that cross agency collaboration is the first step toward making an impact on disconnected youth.<sup>51</sup> To achieve this difficult but necessary goal in New York City, we recommend the following actions:

***Provide appropriate services for youth at all levels of skill and work readiness.***

Services must be available for every young person at the point when and where they need those services. Too many young people seeking educational credentials and workforce development programs are turned away because the programs they encounter are not designed to serve them. Disconnected youth represent a diverse population in terms of age, skill level, and experience. Our programmatic responses must be able to meet their diverse needs we

should be able to support those who need basic skills and remedial education before they can achieve a high school diploma or a GED, as well as those who are work ready and need only minimal support to get on a track to success.

Participants who can still achieve a high school diploma should be directed to programs that can provide that opportunity. For those whose age or other circumstances render a high school diploma unrealistic, the city should ensure that programs leading toward GED attainment serve as a place to reconnect and get on the path to success. Completion of a GED program whether provided by a public agency or community organization should have formal connections to college and/or career options. We should also consider the GED as an on ramp for young people who may lack the confidence or desire to return directly to high school.

Across them, these programs should offer the full range of services for all levels of learners from basic education to “pre GED” training and, finally, to GED preparation. It is important to provide participants, particularly at the higher end of the age range 21-24, with work opportunities and/or stipends. Many young adults are independent and many have their own families. Programs must be designed so that work and/or stipends are an integrated part of the experience. Whether a young person is pursuing a high school diploma or a GED, programs must provide education alongside a full set of workforce preparation services, including exposure to the world of work, skill development, and supported employment such as internships and other on the job experiences.<sup>52</sup>

***Fund service providers to conduct assessments and to make referrals.***

We must align and connect disparate programs so that young people can advance from the services that were appropriate for them at their initial point of reconnection to the longer term outcomes of educational attainment and remunerative employment. Young people who walk into any door within the system should be assessed and appropriately referred on site, to

providers that can meet their individual needs. Providers who conduct assessments and make referrals should receive some funding, even when they do not end up serving the young person. Programs need to be structured so that providers have the necessary information and incentives to identify appropriate “next steps” for program participants so that a young person who begins a GED with one provider and builds enough skills and confidence to re-enter high school can seamlessly transfer from one program to the next. Currently there are several barriers to such an interconnected web of services: providers do not get any credit for assessing and referring clients to other providers who may be better able to serve them, and providers do not have up to date and accurate information about other services that are available in order to make appropriate referrals.

***Establish a reconnection services hotline.***

The city should establish and advertise a reconnection hotline connected to 311 and Web site that provide information about all programs and are staffed by caring individuals who can counsel young people on the services that will be right for them, based on their skill levels, interests, where they live, and their other responsibilities. We need to simplify how a young person can learn about and access the range of options available to them, across both programs and funding streams.

Creating a centralized information service will not be an easy task. It will require compiling a comprehensive inventory of all services available to reconnect young adults. This inventory would include services for education, workforce, housing assistance, health and mental health, and more.

***Build accountability for progress on reconnecting young adults.***

The city should identify a center of administrative responsibility for disconnected youth. In order to ensure accountability, the Mayor’s Management Report should include regular updates on numbers and trends in the disconnected youth population.

## Acknowledgements

This project builds on, and is indebted to, multiple previous efforts. Mark Levitan's 2005 report "Out of School, Out of Work... Out of Luck?" first reported the demographic details of this issue, and the Center for an Urban Future (CUF) built upon that work to highlight ways New York City could incorporate this future workforce. The Youth Development Institute, through various program initiatives, has long sought to raise awareness of this population and build the capacity of organizations to serve it. Private funders, led by the Clark Foundation, supported a project called the Young Adult Task Force, which engaged a range of key stakeholders in the development of recommendations for how to deal with the growing number of disconnected youth. The Department of Education has made bold efforts to expand its options for those at risk of becoming disconnected. More recently, private funders have established an intermediary organization to assist the front level groups serving disconnected youth, and providers have also joined and formed an advocacy coalition to seek increased public investment and other reforms on behalf of the population.

Methodologically, this report was inspired by joint publications from CUF and the New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals to catalog the range of public funding for workforce development programs. This project differs in that it focuses on 16–24 year olds who are not in school or working, and attempts to provide a deeper description of the programs and funding streams examined here.

Many individuals deserve credit for this report. At the Community Service Society, Jeremy Reiss, Sabine Salandy, and, above all, Sylvia Reimers were key contributors. Anthony Ng, Bret Halverson, Evelyn Fernandez Ketcham, Michelle Yanche, Peter Kleinbard, and Rae Linefsky served as reviewers of draft versions their feedback is greatly appreciated. David Jason Fischer provided significant and invaluable editorial assistance. We also owe a major debt of gratitude to the staff at the public agencies that provided us with information for this report.

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## Notes

1. Data from the Current Population Survey (CPS); this figure averages the numbers of individuals ages 16 through 24 that were not enrolled in school, nor in the labor force in 2006 and 2007. This report continues to use the definition of "disconnection" from Mark Levitan, "Out of School, Out of Work... Out of Luck?" Community Service Society of New York, January 2005. That report defines the "disconnected" as those who are not in school and are out of the labor force, and does not include "unemployed" individuals who are not working but actively seeking work and/or recently engaged in work unemployed individuals are considered part of the active labor force. Levitan 2005, which used 2003 data from the Current Population Survey CPS, found approximately 168,000 disconnected, and 56,000 unemployed, youth in New York City.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid and data from the 2006 and 2007 supplements to the Current Population Survey. The CPS updates show that the disconnected youth population has gotten younger, with an increase in the proportion of 16 to 19 year olds that make up the population.
4. Paul von Zielbauer, "Rikers Houses Low Level Inmates at High Expense." The New York Times, January 16, 2004.
5. Levitan 2005.
6. Andrew Sum, "Leaving Young Workers Behind," National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education and Families, 2003. Andrew Sum et al, "Confronting the Youth Demographic Challenge: The Labor Market Prospects of Out of School Youth" Sar Levitan Center, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD, 2000. Also, Besharov, D.J., and Gardiner, K. "Preventing Youth Disconnectedness," in Besharov, D.J., editor, *America's Disconnected Youth: Toward a Preventative Strategy*, Washington, DC. CWLA Press, 1999.
7. Richard J. Murnane and Frank Levy, "Teaching the New Basic Skills: Principles for Educating Children to Thrive in a Changing Economy," 1996.
8. Some agencies were not able to provide FY08 data; where this is the case, the funding snapshot notes the fiscal year to which the

- information corresponds.
9. Our analysis of education and workforce agencies is not comprehensive it is only concerned with reconnection services, not the various valuable programs that assist young people who are already connected to enhance their skills or advance. For example, the Summer Youth Employment Program SYEP, the city's largest workforce development program for youth, is not included because nearly all of its participants are young people who are enrolled in high school or college. Similarly, the New York State Apprenticeship Program, administered by the New York State Department of Labor, is not included because most of its participants enter directly from school or work.
  10. We have included two major City Council workforce development initiatives whose funding far exceeds that of any other legislative initiatives, each of which targets disconnected youth as a priority population for service. In addition, the New York City Council is channeling nearly 2 million in additional funds in FY08 to organizations and companies providing educational, workforce development, or related support services to youth and low income adults. Approximately \$1.4 million is distributed to 20 different service providers through discretionary funding administered mainly by DYCD. The individual awards cover a broad range: from 3,000 to one community group for ongoing free adult and family literacy classes serving low income residents, to 225,000 to another organization for providing social services to residents and at risk youth in the Boro Park area. In addition, City Council Legislative Initiatives will distribute \$50,000 to 26 different organizations in FY08. Again, the awards vary greatly in scope: from 1,000 to one provider for financial responsibility programs for Brooklyn teens to 122,000 to another for "youth and young adult services." From: City Council Fiscal Year 2008 Adopted Expense Budget: Disclosure of Council Discretionary Allocations.
  11. This includes initiatives by the NYC Small Business Services Department, which is developing employment projects targeting specific sectors and populations —Work Advancement and Support Center, Sector Focused Career Center, and Employment Initiative for New York City's Probation Population but has yet to set targets for youth or young adults within these projects. We are including NYC Justice Corps, an initiative developed by the New York City Commission on Economic Opportunity with John Jay College which is discussed later in this report, which has yet to be implemented but has set service targets and released an RFP to prospective providers.
  12. Particularly noteworthy private funding sources targeting young adults in New York City include the Clark Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Robin Hood Foundation, the Altman Foundation, the Pinkerton Foundation and the Tiger Foundation. Several privately funded initiatives have also invested in evaluations, which provide lessons from that further public or private efforts can build on.
  13. JoEllen Lynch, "Presentation to the Commission on Economic Opportunity," Office of Multiple Pathways to Graduation, NYC Department of Education, June 22, 2006, p. 10. The presentation cites a Parthenon Group study funded by the DOE that identified 70,000 young people that were in school but off track in terms of progress toward graduation over age/under credited, and 68,000 16 to 21 year olds that were out of school. The presentation labels the 70,000 in school youth as the "Focus of the Multiple Pathways Initiative." For clarification, whereas the rest of our paper focuses on the 16–24 age group, the NYC DOE materials are concerned with young people 16–21, due to the fact that the way the DOE allocates its funding does not allow its diploma granting programs to serve individuals over age 21.
  14. Levitan, 2005. The report finds that half of disconnected youth approximately 85,000 do not have a high school diploma. This figure should not be confused with the 68,000 figure in the prior reference. That figure refers to 16–21 year olds who have dropped out of high school. The 85,000 figure represents disconnected youth of a wider age range 16–24 without a diploma or equivalent, but do not include those individuals without diplomas or equivalents who are in the labor force.
  15. Other cities, such as Philadelphia, do allow for individuals to receive high school diplomas over age 21 by combining the funding streams that target youth and adult education.
  16. CSS analysis of 2006 and 2007 CPS supplements. There are approximately 57,345 disconnected youth ages 16–19 13 percent of that age group and 106,498 disconnected young adults age 20–24 17 percent of that age group.

17. Based on anecdotal evidence from providers and young people, including a focus group conducted with youth participants at the New Heights Neighborhood Center on November 2, 2007, and a meeting with service provider organizations on May 14, 2007, both facilitated all or in part by the Community Service Society.
18. District 79: Alternative Academies and Programs D79 is responsible for administering programs to young people age 21 and under toward achievement of a General Educational Development (GED) diploma. D79 provides or supports various programs in DOE school facilities and community based organizations. It is also responsible for educational programs in many involuntary settings for youth e.g. incarceration, long term suspension, drug treatment centers, as well as assistance to pregnant and parenting students.
19. Office of Multiple Pathways to Graduation, New York City Department of Education, "Summary Findings of Research and Development Work on Overage Under-Credited Youth in New York City," October 25, 2006.
20. Statistics from the NYC Mayor's Office of Adult Literacy, which cites that of the over 12,000 16-24 year olds that receive adult literacy services, 43 percent were in Adult Basic Education/pre-GED classes, 46 percent in English as a Second or Other Language classes, and only 11 percent in GED classes.
21. Murnane, R. J., Willett, J. B., & Tyler, J. H. (2000). "Who Benefits From Obtaining A GED? Evidence From High School and Beyond." *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 82(1), 23-37. Murnane, R. J., Willett, J. B., & Boudett, K. P. (1999). Do Male Dropouts Benefit From Obtaining a GED, Postsecondary Education, and Training, *Evaluation Review*, 23(5), 475-502.
22. According to the Census Bureau, over an adult's working life, high school graduates earn an average of 1.2 million; associate's degree holders earn about 1.6 million; and bachelor's degree holders earn about 2.1 million. Day, J.C., & Newburger, E.C. 2002. *The Big Payoff: Educational Attainment and Synthetic Estimates of Work-Life Earnings*. Current Population Reports, Special Studies, P23-210. Washington, DC: Commerce Dept., Economics and Statistics Administration, Census Bureau.
23. The New York City Commission on Economic Opportunity, "Increasing Opportunity and Reducing Poverty in New York City," Report to Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, September, 2006.
24. One example of a CUNY Prep Transitional High School, an innovative program that was created in 2003 by CUNY using workforce funds see DYCD OSY programs in the funding snapshot to develop a "GED high school," from which graduates are placed into CUNY colleges. Although no new such schools have been created, the NYC CEO has increased funding to CUNY Prep.
25. Figures from the 2006 GED Testing Program Statistical Report from the American Council on Higher Education, and the New York State Education Department.
26. Murnane and Levy 1996.
27. The support that District 79 provides to community based organizations is in kind, consisting of NYC DOE teachers and sometimes breakfast and/or lunch; not money to develop all aspects of a program, as with adult education funding.
28. Nancy Martin and Samuel Halperin, "Whatever It Takes; How Twelve Communities are Reconnecting Out of School Youth." American Youth Policy Forum, Washington DC, March 2006.
29. Zuckerman, 2004.
30. DYCD administers two workforce programs not covered here: the Summer Youth Employment Program, which offers seven-week summer jobs to 44,000 youth, the vast majority of whom are enrolled in high school or college, and the In School Youth program, which provides funding to organizations to support students who are enrolled but struggling in high school.
31. City of New York, Request for Proposals: Young Adult Internship Programs, Department of Youth and Community Development, 2007.
32. Jobs to Build On is an outgrowth of NYC Works funding, and the 3,000 slot estimate was based on an assumption that Jobs to Build On would continue with the 20 percent allocation to disconnected youth in the original NYC Works contracts.
33. David J. Fischer, "Work in Progress," Center for an Urban Future, June 2007.
34. Ibid.
35. SBS reported that 3,416 of 12,597 16-24 year olds 27 percent were placed in work. Overall, 17,212 of 41,671 active customers were placed in jobs, leaving 13,797 job placements from 29,074 customers 47 percent for those age 25 and over.
36. In FY07, BEGIN enrolled 5,178 individuals, 880 of whom 17 percent were ages 18 through 24; Parks Opportunity Plus enrolled 6,924, of whom 882 13 percent were 18-24.
37. Zuckerman 2004.
38. Fischer 2007.
39. DYCD reports to the Deputy Mayor for Education and Community Development; SBS reports to the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development; and HRA reports to the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services. Officials at those levels of government oversee state and federal education and workforce funding streams.
40. The City Charter does mandate an Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC), comprised of all the organizations that provide funding for youth. The ICC is managed by the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) as a quarterly discussion of youth issues, not as a vehicle for service coordination.
41. Wald, M. and Martinez, T. "Connected by 25: Improving the Life Chances of the Country's Most Vulnerable 14-24 Year Olds," William and Flora Hewlett Foundation Working Paper, Stanford University, November 2003. The authors argue that disconnected services replicate the lack of continuity that many young adults experience in their households and communities; conversely, the public sector needs to compensate for this dynamic with strong connections between the supports it offers to young people.
42. As part of this effort, staff members of the Community Service Society made calls to 311 between August-October, 2007, for information on basic education, GED, and job preparation programs for youth. The hotline was unable to provide the callers with information about GED or workforce development programs for youth, other than SYEP and the Out of School Youth program.
43. This estimate of less than 30,000 is comprised of: the 5,500 slots in District 79; the 12,000 young adults in adult education programs; the 7,160 across workforce development programs; and the 3,416 who were placed in employment through Workforce Career centers. These numbers add up to approximately 27,000, to which we should add an unknown number of disconnected youth who do return to high school through transfer schools or YABCs we also must subtract an unknown number of young people who may have received services through multiple programs to avoid double counting.
44. The estimate of less than 12,000 is comprised of: 5,500 slots in District 79; 1,000 in OSY programs; 900 in YAIP; 500 in Job Corps; 300 in NYC Justice Corps; and 3,700 youth targeted slots in the two council funded workforce development programs.
45. Elizabeth Fussell and Frank Furstenberg, "The Transition to Adulthood During the 20th Century: Race, Nativity and Gender," from the forthcoming "On the Frontier of Adulthood: Theory, Research, and Public Policy," edited by Richard A. Settersten, Furstenberg and Ruben G. Rumbaut (University of Chicago Press).
46. Other cities merge funding streams to allow expanded age eligibility in Philadelphia, "Twi Lite" high schools serve young people 17 to 24.
47. Levitan 2005 and previously discussed data from the NYC Mayor's Office of Adult Literacy.
48. Martin and Halperin 2006.
49. Ibid.
50. The New York City Department of Education has recently begun to use such a "value add" model of performance measurement for its schools.
51. National League of Cities, "Beyond City Limits: Cross System Collaboration to Reengage Disconnected Youth," Washington, D.C., 2007.
52. The New York City Young Adult Task Force, "The Time Is Now." New York City, November, 2005. With support from foundations, leading NYC youth services experts engaged in a visioning and planning process that articulated the need for a unified system to reengage young people. Such a system would include a uniform in-take and referral system that would identify the specific needs of a young person seeking services; direct them to the appropriate providers; and have uniform data collection systems and common outcome measures. The Jobs First initiative, a project funded by Tiger and Clark Foundations, is beginning system-building efforts by focusing on increasing the capacity of service providers to attain measurable outcomes through providing technical assistance, supporting demonstrations of comprehensive reconnection services, and building partnerships with employers.

### **Additional Research from the Community Service Society**

*Out of Work in NYC: How Jobless New Yorkers Struggle to Get Ahead*, by David Fischer, Jeremy Reiss, Christine Molnar, and Sabine Salandy, July 2008.

*The Unheard Third 2007: Bringing the Voices of Low Income New Yorker to the Policy Debate*, by Elisabeth Ryden Benjamin and Jeremy Reiss, June 2008.

*Making the Rent: Who's at Risk? Rent Income Stresses and Housing Hardship among Low Income New Yorkers*, by Victor Bach and Tom Waters, May 2008.

*Mapping Poverty in New York City: Pinpointing the Impact of Poverty, Community by Community*, by Tom Waters, March 2008.

*Cornerstone for Coverage: Toward a Universal Health Plan for New York*, by Elisabeth Ryden Benjamin and Arianne Garza, December 2007.

*Closing the Door 2007: The Shape of Subsidized Housing Loss in New York City*, by Tom Waters and Victor Bach, May 2007.

*Unemployment and Joblessness in New York City, 2006*, by Mark Levitan, February 2007.

*Poverty in New York City, 2005: More Families Working, More Working Families Poor*, by Mark Levitan, September 2006.

*Shortchanging Security: How Poor Training, Low Pay and Lack of Job Protection for Security Guards Undermine Public Safety in New York City*, by Nancy Rankin and Mark Levitan, May 2006.

*Out of School, Out of Work . . . Out of Luck? New York City's Disconnected Youth*, by Mark Levitan, January 2005.

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