

Trends in NYC Youth Employment

POLICY BRIEF NO. 5

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SUMMARY

This brief discusses trends in youth employment and workforce development to set the context for efforts to improve economic outcomes for New York City (NYC) foster youth. Several common measures have moved in positive directions in recent years. The number and rate of youth disconnected from school and work has dropped as has the youth unemployment rate, while hourly wage rates have risen. However, these improvements mask some troubling trends showing high youth unemployment and stagnant earnings as well as racial and geographic disparities. NYC has a robust set of youth workforce initiatives, including several targeted at foster youth. Workforce experts credit these programs for contributing to improvements, but the absence of greater gains among youth during the tightest labor market on record is cause for concern. The negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will likely affect low-income youth of color disproportionately, erasing nearly all progress made in the rate of disconnection and increasing youth unemployment to pre-recession levels.

BACKGROUND

Employment during transition age years is associated with higher school attendance, stronger academic performance, and better economic outcomes in adulthood.² For transition-age foster youth, meaningful early work experiences are that much more important. Typical youth receive tens of thousands of dollars in material support during their transition years and several weeks a year of unpaid family help.³ Youth who “age out” of foster care often have few or no such supports. Those youth who do not age out rarely return or enter families that are able to provide anywhere near this level of support. Instead, most transition age foster youth must rely on their own capacity to earn an income and pay their bills.

Most foster youth struggle economically during their transition to adulthood. Young adults currently or formerly in foster care are significantly more likely to experience unemployment; past studies have that about half of that population is unemployed at the age of 24 and as many

¹ Many thanks to Mike Jolley for his contributions to this brief.

² Greene, K. M. and Staff, J. (2012), Teenage employment and career readiness. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 2012: 23-31. doi:10.1002/yd.20012; Leos-Urbel, J. (2014), What Is a Summer Job Worth? The Impact of Summer Youth Employment on Academic Outcomes. *J. Pol. Anal. Manage.*, 33: 891-911. doi:10.1002/pam.21780

³ Schoeni, Robert and Karen Ross. 2005. “Material Assistance Received from Families During the Transition to Adulthood,” Chapter 12 of *On the Frontier of Adulthood: Theory, Research, and Public Policy*. Edited by Richard A. Settersten, Jr., Frank F. Furstenberg, Jr., and Ruben G. Rumbaut. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

as 20 percent become homeless upon aging out of foster care.⁴ These results can be improved with early connection to the workforce. Foster youth who have some connection to the workforce between the ages of 16 and 18 are more likely to be employed during their mid-twenties and to experience other positive outcomes.⁵ Those who do not connect to the workforce before leaving foster care have only a ten percent or smaller chance of employment by their mid-twenties.⁶ By the time they reach their 30's, those who had been working or in school as teens and young adults earn significantly more per year, and are more likely to own a home, be employed, and report excellent or good health than those who had been disconnected as young people.⁷ However, foster youth face challenges of entering the workforce in a larger context. The next sections describe some of the trends in youth employment in New York City (NYC) and elsewhere.

Measuring youth employment and workforce participation

Developing indicators of progress in youth employment is challenging. By age 27, most adults have finished their formal education and live independently.⁸ In contrast, youth are a mix of several subpopulations who may be in a variety of educational programs (including secondary school, college, and vocational courses) and living arrangements (with parents/guardians, living independently, with friends, in dormitories, in supportive housing, shelters, or homeless) that may allow or require greater or lesser opportunities for workforce participation. A college student who is living with their parents and not working is in a far different situation than a young person living on their own who cannot find a job; the variety in subpopulations makes employment metrics difficult to discern.

To discern employment patterns among youth in NYC, New York (NY) State, and nationally, we examined several metrics. These include the number and rate of disconnected youth (youth who are neither in school nor working), youth unemployment rates, teen idleness, and youth wage data. Many of these indicators are available through labor and economic data collected by state and federal governments. These metrics have some weaknesses. For example, the youth unemployment rate is an estimate derived from a larger survey not specifically aimed at youth employment and is not comparable to the general population unemployment rate. Still, together, this information provides a good picture of youth employment trends. None of these metrics,

⁴ Conclusions from 2011 and 2014, the most recent versions of the studies. Data collection for the next wave of findings is currently underway. See Courtney, M. E., Charles, P., Okpych, N. J., Napolitano, L., & Halsted, K. (2014). Findings from the California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH): Executive Summary. Chicago, IL: Chapin

Hall at the University of Chicago, p. 73-74; Courtney, M., Dworsky, A., Brown, A., Cary, C., Love, K., & Vorhies, V. (2011). Midwest evaluation of the adult functioning of former foster youth: Outcomes at age 26. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

⁵ Prepared by the Urban Institute, 2008: <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/31216/1001174-Coming-of-Age-Employment-Outcomes-for-Youth-Who-Age-Out-of-Foster-Care-Through-Their-Middle-Twenties.PDF>

⁶ Ibid. Measured in a 2008 study that has not been repeated.

⁷ See Measure of America "Two Futures: The Economic Case for Keeping Youth on Track," from the Disconnected Youth Series. <http://measureofamerica.org/PSID/>, last accessed July 9, 2021.

⁸ Judith G. Dey and Charles R. Pierret, "Independence for young millennials: moving out and boomeranging back," *Monthly Labor Review*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, December 2014, <https://doi.org/10.21916/mlr.2014.40>. Last accessed December 12, 2018.

unfortunately, are produced routinely for foster youth in NYC or in any other locality as far as we know.⁹

National, New York State, and New York City trends

Disconnected youth. The rate of disconnected youth, defined as teenagers and young adults between the ages of 16 and 24 who are neither working nor in school, has declined nationally, in NY State, and in NYC for eight straight years. The national rate has dropped to 11.2% in 2018 from the recession-fueled high of 14.7% in 2010.¹⁰ This translates to 1 in 9 young people, or roughly 1,500,000 fewer young people cut off from the resources and support offered by schools and employment. The single-year rate of disconnected youth for both NYC youth and NY State was 10.8% in 2018, the lowest in NY State since 2010.¹¹ Due to small sample sizes in the American Community Survey, trend data for NYC are only available as three-year averages that are not comparable to the rates cited above. Nonetheless, the NYC rates have the same trends, declining from 17.6% in 2012 to 13.0% in 2019.¹²

Though the number and rate of NYC disconnected youth declined over the past five years, many concerns remain. Disconnected youth are nearly twice as likely to live in poverty, more than three times as likely to have a disability of some kind, nine times as likely to have dropped out of high school, and more than twenty times as likely to be living in institutionalized group quarters as their connected counterparts.¹³

Native American, Black, and Latinx youth have rates of disconnection well above their White and Asian counterparts in nearly every state. 16.2% of Black NY State youth were disconnected in 2018, compared to 14.1% of Latino youth and 8.2% of White youth.¹⁴ These disparities are likely to be more drastic in NYC alone. Furthermore, rates vary by borough. The rate of disconnected youth in the Bronx is consistently almost a third higher than in the entire city, despite declines between 2012 and 2019 (see Figure 1). In 2016, one study found that the Bronx had the highest rate of disconnected youth of any urban county in the nation.¹⁵

⁹ Many of the statistics on youth employment come from either the Current Population Survey or the American Community Survey. Both sources are large surveys conducted in whole or part by the U.S. Census Bureau. Information from both surveys is often produced using a three-year moving average due to small sample sizes. For more information on these sources, see the Census Bureau website.

¹⁰ See “A Decade Undone” from Measure of America at <http://measureofamerica.org/youth-disconnection-2020/>, last accessed July 8, 2021

¹¹ See Measure of America available at <http://www.measureofamerica.org/DYinteractive/#National>, last accessed July 9, 2021.

¹² U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Public Use Microdata Sample File (2010-2016); retrieved from the Keeping Track database available at <https://data.cccnewyork.org/data/map/1252/disconnected-youth-16-to-24-years#1252/a/3/1439/62/a/a>, last accessed July 7, 2021.

¹³ See Measure of America Disconnected Youth series, available at <http://measureofamerica.org/disconnected-youth/>, last accessed July 9, 2021.

¹⁴ See Measure of America available at <http://www.measureofamerica.org/DYinteractive/#National>, last accessed July 9, 2021.

¹⁵ See Measure of America, available at <https://ssrc-static.s3.amazonaws.com/moa/dy18.full.report.pdf>

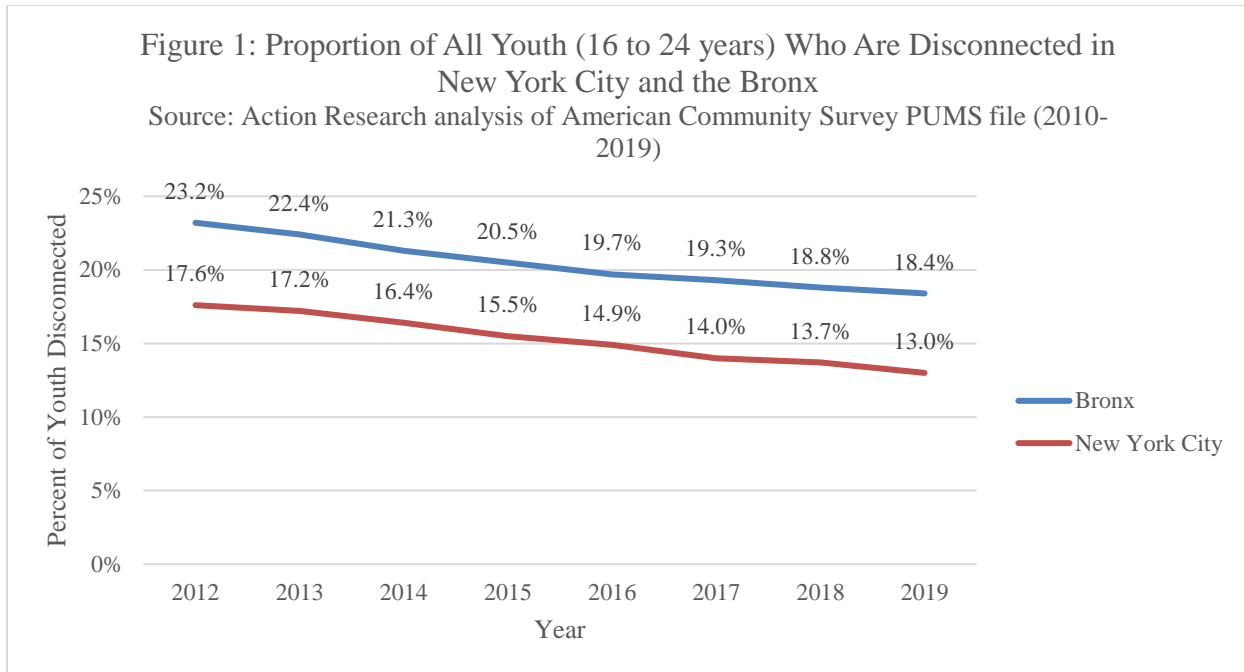


Figure 1: Proportion of youth 16 to 24 years old who are disconnected in NYC and the Bronx. Due to small sample sizes in NYC, data are available only in 3-year averages (i.e. 2016=2014-2016).¹⁶

Workforce researchers and advocates attribute NYC’s decrease in disconnected youth to several factors.¹⁷ Steady improvements in high school graduation and college enrollment rates have played a role in the decrease in disconnected youth.¹⁸ Many believe that gentrification has played a role, as there are fewer youth overall in NYC and a greater proportion of them live in middle- and upper-income areas with high rates of educational attainment and labor force participation. While few rigorous evaluations exist, the impact of more youth workforce development programs and an expansion of the Summer Youth Employment Program are believed to be contributing factors.

Youth Unemployment: Youth unemployment rates in NYC paralleled national trends over the last decade. Unemployment rates increased for young people ages 16 to 24 from 2008 to 2012, but steadily declined since (see Figure 2).¹⁹ The unemployment rate for youth 20 to 24 years old who are actively looking for work is roughly half the rate of the 16-20 group. In both age ranges, however, the youth unemployment rate is several times the adult unemployment rate.

¹⁶ See Keeping Track Database: <https://data.cccnewyork.org/data/table/1252/disconnected-youth-16-to-24-years#1252/1439/22/a/a>

¹⁷ This paragraph relies heavily on Lazar Treschan and Irene Lew. 2018. *Barriers to Entry*. JobsFirstNYC: New York, NY. Available at http://www.jobsfirstnyc.org/uploads/2018_Jobs_First_Barrirs_to_Entry_V2.pdf last accessed December 12, 2018.

¹⁸ For more information, see the education brief in this series.

¹⁹ For national youth unemployment rates, see: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/employment-and-disconnection-among-teens-and-young-adults-the-role-of-place-race-and-education/>

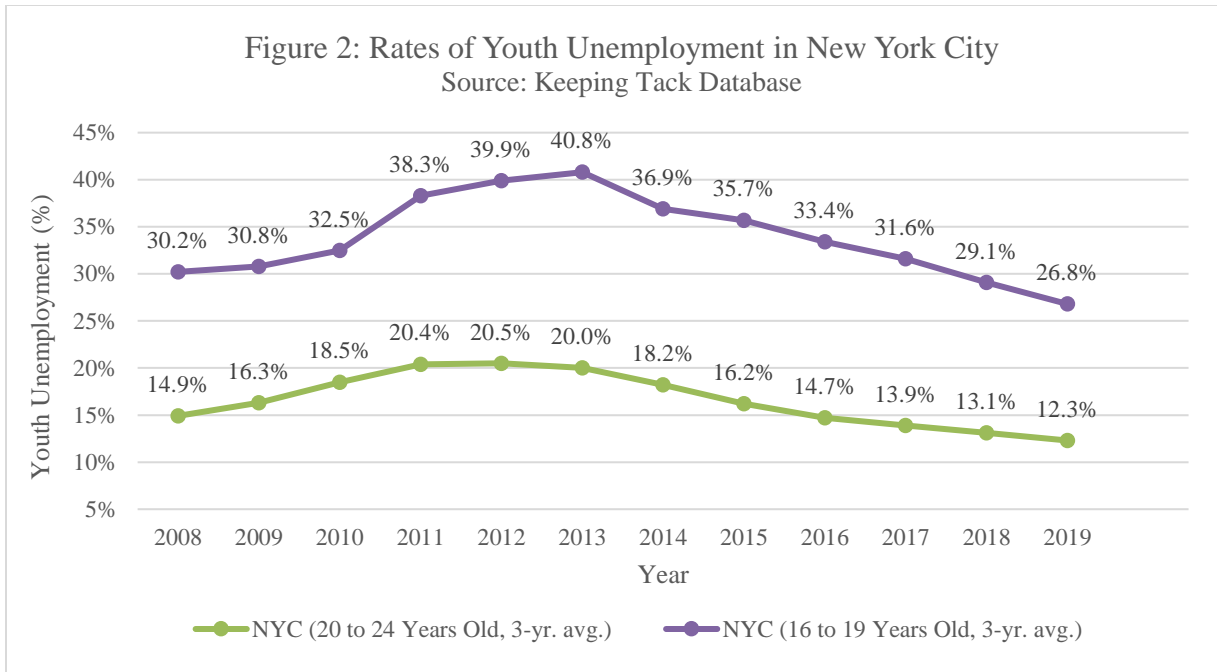


Figure 2: Unemployed youth 16 to 19 years old and 20 to 24 years old actively seeking employment in NYC from 2008 to 2019.²⁰ Due to small sample sizes of youth in NYC, data are presented in 3-year averages (i.e. 2016=2014-2016).

Though moving in the right direction, the gains are tepid compared to those seen in the adult population. The youth unemployment rates in Figure 2 move in a small range. In contrast, the adult unemployment rate, though calculated using a different method, dropped by half during that same period. In 7 of New York’s 59 community districts, the unemployment rate for youth 20 to 24 years old exceeded 20% in 2019. The fact that a large proportion of young people could not find work in a very tight labor market demonstrates an urgent need for more youth workforce programming.

Youth Wages and Earnings.²¹ Even among young people who find work, the trends are sobering. Because data are not readily accessible, we rely heavily on information reported by JobsFirstNYC rather than the source data.²² Among NYC young people (ages 18 to 24 years) in 2015, 57% made less than \$15 an hour.²³ Among part-time workers, 75% made less than \$15 an hour. Judging by the sectors in which young people work (sales, office and administrative support, and food services²⁴), many likely make minimum wage.

²⁰ See Keeping Track Database: <https://data.cccnewyork.org/data/table/1180/youth-unemployment-20-to-24-years#1180/1312/25/a/a>

²¹ Wages refers to the hourly rates paid by employers, while earnings refers to how much a person makes over a given period.

²² Wage rates by industry and sector are common, but the breakdown we want, wage rates by age in New York City, are not readily accessible. The JobsFirstNYC report cites census data as the source of their information, specifically the Current Population Survey and the American Community Survey.

²³ JobsFirstNYC, p. 28.

²⁴ JobsFirstNYC’s Analysis of the US Census Bureau’s 2013-2015 American Community Survey. See Pg. 10: http://www.jobsfirstnyc.org/uploads/2018_Jobs_First_Barris_to_Entry_V2.pdf

Fortunately, the increase in minimum wage in NY State will continue to benefit tens of thousands of NYC young people. After stagnating from 2010 (\$7.25 an hour) to 2015 (\$8.75) the minimum wage increased to \$11.00 in 2016. In 2019 the minimum wage rose to \$15.00 for large employers, and in 2020 to \$15.00 for all employers.²⁵

The stagnant earnings for young people and other low wage workers helped prompt these increases. Among full-time young adult workers (18 to 24), median earnings per year fell from \$28,000 in 2010 to \$27,000 in 2015.²⁶ Most employed young people who are not in school, work part time; that share increased from 52% in 2010 to 57% in 2015.

In sum, while the NYC economy rebounded sharply from the Great Recession, this rising tide did not carry all boats. We do not have economic outcome data for young people in foster care. Judging from the educational attainment of foster TAY and the employment outcomes in areas where many young people in foster care live, however, it is reasonable to believe that the dismal employment, wage, and earnings data for young people discussed above are even worse for those transitioning out of foster care. The effects of the pandemic will continue to hurt NYC's most vulnerable youth.

The Covid-19 Pandemic

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the NYC economy was expanding rapidly: the adult unemployment rate declined from 10.0% in 2010 to 3.6% in October 2018, the lowest rate in any month in the 42 years of data available.²⁷ The youth disconnection rate follows the unemployment rate closely, with young and less educated workers more likely to lose their jobs first. However, the NYC May 2021 unemployment rate was 9.8%, down from the historic 20.2% in May 2020 during the height of the pandemic.²⁸ Jobs are beginning to return to NYC, but the 12.5% loss of jobs in NYC from pre-pandemic to March of 2021 continues to exceed NY State and the rest of the nation - nearly 2.5 times higher than the 5% falloff nationally.²⁹

²⁵ See the Department of Labor History of the General Hourly Minimum Wage in NY State: https://labor.ny.gov/stats/minimum_wage.shtm and <https://www.ny.gov/new-york-states-minimum-wage/new-york-states-minimum-wage>. New York State defined large employers as those companies with 11 or more employees. For small employers (10 or less), the minimum wage will increase from \$10.50 on December 31, 2016 to \$15.00 on December 31, 2019.

²⁶ See: http://www.jobfirstnyc.org/uploads/2018_Jobs_First_Barrirs_to_Entry_V2.pdf

²⁷ See "Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program". New York State Department of Labor. Available at <https://www.labor.ny.gov/stats/laus.asp> last accessed December 12, 2018. This site has monthly unemployment rates dating from 1976.

²⁸ See "State Labor Department Releases Preliminary May 2021 Area Unemployment Rates." New York State Department of Labor. Available at <https://dol.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/06/state-labor-department-releases-preliminary-may-2021-area-unemployment-rates.pdf>, last accessed July 9, 2021.

²⁹ See James Parrott, "NYC jobs resumed their return in February and March after a flat four months," April 22, 2021. From the Center for NYC Affairs Covid-19 Economic Update Series, available at <http://www.centrernyc.org/reports-briefs/2021/4/22/nyc-jobs-resumed-their-return-in-february-and-march-after-a-flat-four-months>. Last accessed July 9, 2021.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the Covid-19 pandemic will erase the gains made in reconnection over the past decade, causing the disconnection rate to spike higher than it did in the Great Recession.³⁰ Low-income young people of color will likely be hit the hardest by the economic and social repercussions of Covid-19, facing a disproportionate share of trauma and grief along with increased rates of disconnection pre-pandemic.³¹ There was also a sharp decline in school enrollment during the pandemic that will likely continue in the coming years.³² With school and colleges closing or moving to online courses, many students who depend on school for meals and support and who do not have a home environment conducive to schoolwork will face new disconnection. Given the wide-ranging effects of the pandemic on the economy and educational system, Measure for America estimates that the number of disconnected youth in the United States could increase to almost 1 in 4 young people, nearly nine million teens and young adults.³³

Youth in foster care and foster families were also likely hit harder by the pandemic, with one in three NY foster parents losing their job or critical sources of household income during the first 8 months of the pandemic. One recent study found that foster family incomes have dropped, and with children home from school for months, the cost of household expenses for groceries, utilities and educational tools have grown higher. Particularly in NYC, foster parents were more likely than foster parents elsewhere to report job losses, incomes below \$35,000 and an inability to meet the needs of their foster children with the standard subsidies.³⁴

NYC’s Disconnected Youth Task Force, which met for the first time in 2019, will have significant work to do in a time of increased insecurity and financial struggle for young people. Their 2020 report included demographic studies of disconnected youth, analysis of existing support programs, and recommendations for both long and short-term strategies to reduce disconnection. Their suggestions cover re-engagement, prevention, and systematic changes to research and evaluation practices.³⁵

Thoughts on measuring employment, wages, and earnings for foster youth

The sources cited for most of the data presented above are the Current Population Survey and the American Community Survey. Neither source reports outcomes of foster youth. One study measuring employment outcomes for youth who age out of foster care linked child welfare, unemployment insurance, and public assistance administrative data, but this was produced as a

³⁰ <http://www.measureofamerica.org/DYinteractive/#Metro>

³¹ See “A Decade Undone” from Measure of America at <http://measureofamerica.org/youth-disconnection-2020/>, last accessed July 8, 2021

³² See “A Decade Undone” from Measure of America at <http://measureofamerica.org/youth-disconnection-2020/>, last accessed July 8, 2021

³³ See “A Decade Undone” from Measure of America at <http://measureofamerica.org/youth-disconnection-2020/>, last accessed July 8, 2021

³⁴ See Megan Conn, “New Survey Shows 1 in 3 New York Foster Families Lost Income in 2020, With City Hardest Hit,” November 2020. From The Imprint, available at <https://imprintnews.org/news-2/new-survey-shows-1-in-3-new-york-foster-families-lost-income-in-2020-with-city-hardest-hit/49450> last accessed July 9, 2021.

³⁵ See “Connecting our Future,” 2020 report from the NYC Disconnected Youth Task Force. Available at <https://cye.cityofnewyork.us/initiatives/disconnected-youth-task-force/>, last accessed July 9, 2021.

one-time study.³⁶ One 2002 study using administrative records from three states found that no more than 45 percent of youth aging out of foster care had any earnings in a given quarter, and a substantial portion of youth in each state had no earnings during the entire study period. Among those who did have earnings, mean yearly earnings were well below the poverty threshold at the time of the study.³⁷ This study has not been recently replicated or reported with New York data, and thus we cannot draw strong comparisons from their findings. It is possible, however, for the NYC Center for Innovation through Data Intelligence (CIDI) to acquire earnings data for this population by submitting foster youth identifiers to the NY State Department of Labor. Workforce participation rates could be imputed from this information.

Another source of information, albeit less reliable than official statistics, is the Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) Youth Experience Survey, administered for the first time in 2018.³⁸ According to the 2021 edition of the survey, 15% of youth reported that they had a job or paid internship, which was a decline from 26% the previous year. Sixty-six percent of foster youth ages 13 to 20 years reported that they wanted to work but did not have a job. This held true for youth ages 18 to 20 years as well, as the survey showed that 63% wanted to work but did not have a job.³⁹ Foster youth who were unemployed but wanted to work reported that they did not have adequate support in areas such as finding places that are hiring, learning what jobs to apply for, learning interviewing skills, learning how to create a resume and fill out a job application, and struggled to arrange dependable transportation. The Youth Experience Survey may prove useful for monitoring the impact of the workforce supports developed specifically for foster youth.

CONCLUSION

Important measures of youth workforce development have improved in recent years. These improvements are important. Rates of disconnected youth and youth unemployment in NYC have declined, while the minimum wage has increased. Despite these significant improvements in NYC, the larger picture remains bleak. Full-time employment for youth has not grown and earnings have stagnated despite a growing economy.

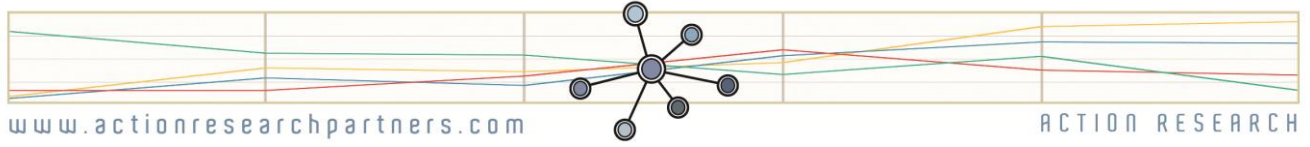
Future trends are hard to predict, particularly with the devastating effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. The increased minimum wage offers the opportunity for young people to earn considerably more even in part-time and entry level jobs, but those sectors were hit hardest by shelter-in-place orders and saw skyrocketing unemployment. Though trends until 2020 were promising for the future of youth employment, more work is needed to support vulnerable

³⁶ Prepared by the Urban Institute, 2008: <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/31216/1001174-Coming-of-Age-Employment-Outcomes-for-Youth-Who-Age-Out-of-Foster-Care-Through-Their-Middle-Twenties.PDF>

³⁷ Urban Institute 2014, “Supporting Youth Transitioning Out of Foster Care” Issue Brief 3: Employment Programs. Available at <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/43271/2000128-Supporting-Youth-Transitioning-out-of-Foster-Care-2000128-Supporting-Youth-Transitioning-out-of-Foster-Care-Employment-Programs.pdf>.

³⁸ See <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/acs/pdf/data-analysis/2018/ACSYouthExperienceSurveyMay152018.pdf> for 2018 version, <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/acs/pdf/data-analysis/2021/YES2021.pdf> for 2021.

³⁹ See Pg. 27: <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/acs/pdf/data-analysis/2021/YES2021.pdf>



populations in the wake of the pandemic. Foster youth in particular will need increased support in these changing times.

Appendix: NYC youth employment and workforce supports

The NYC Department of Youth & Community Development (DYCD) provides a number of workforce-related programs for young people. One of DYCD's largest programs, the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), provides paid summer work experiences for many NYC youth, serving approximately 70,000 young people in 2017.⁴⁰ SYEP is funded primarily through city tax levy funds, with contributions from NY State, the federal Community Services Block Grant, and private donations. The Campaign for Summer Jobs, a coalition of approximately 100 community-based organizations and other agencies, have advocated strongly for increased and more consistent state funding for SYEP.⁴¹ SYEP was not able to offer in-person work placements for 2020, but nonetheless had more than 35,000 participants in their virtual programming. Hopefully, the program will be able to return to its former success in the years following the pandemic.⁴²

NYC administers several other workforce initiatives for young people. The Work, Learn & Grow program is also locally funded, through support from the New York City Council. This program is an extension of SYEP that allows for youth to continue their career readiness training and employment throughout the school year. Another extension of SYEP, the competitive Ladders for Leaders program, provides participants with training and paid internships at several corporations and is funded by the NYC Center for Youth Employment and the Mayor's Fund to Advance NYC. Another program funded through local tax levy funds, the Young Adult Internship Program (YAIP), is a more advanced 14-week internship program that serves disconnected young people ages 16 to 24.

Under the oversight of the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development, DYCD also administers NYC's share of federal funds under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), formerly the Workforce Investment Act.⁴³ WIOA funds provide support for several youth workforce development programs such as the Out-of-School Youth (OSY) program, recently rebranded as the Train & Earn program. Train & Earn provides job training and placement, counseling, and career planning for disconnected NYC youth ages 16 to 24 who meet income requirements. On the other hand, the In-School Youth (ISY), or Learn & Earn program, targets income-eligible youth who are 14 to 21 years of age and enrolled in high school. In 2015, the Mayor's Fund to Advance NYC founded the NYC Center for Youth Employment (CYE), an organization focused on youth workforce development.⁴⁴ CYE provides capacity-building services, shares best practices, gathers data, and brokers private/public partnerships in the field.

NYC employment and workforce supports for foster youth

⁴⁰ DYCD SYEP 2017 Annual Summary:

https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dycd/downloads/pdf/2017SYEP_Annual_Summary.pdf

⁴¹ See: <http://www.campaignforsummerjobs.com/>

⁴² See SYEP 2020 Annual Summary:

https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dycd/downloads/pdf/2020SYEP_Summer_Bridge_Annual_Summary_12_22.pdf

⁴³ See <https://labor.ny.gov/workforcenypartners/wioa.shtm> and <https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr803/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf>

⁴⁴ <https://cye.cityofnewyork.us/>

Recently, youth employment efforts have focused on serving vulnerable youth, including foster youth. In addition to ACS' resources like the Youth Employment & Opportunities Locator,⁴⁵ ACS created the Office of Employment & Workforce Development Initiatives in 2016, which has been involved in the creation of pilot programs focused on foster youth workforce development.⁴⁶ Several of these pilot programs involve strategic partnerships and innovative approaches to professional learning and capacity building for foster care providers.⁴⁷ For example, a group of city agencies received training and technical assistance based on the Young Adult Work Opportunities for Rewarding Careers (YAWORC) curriculum delivered by The Workplace Center at Columbia University in partnership with ACS. This professional development training is designed to build staff capacity to develop their own distinctive labor market strategy and to prepare foster youth for meaningful careers. Another ACS capacity building initiative supported by the Pinkerton Foundation focuses on enhancing foster care agency staff capacity through a mentoring/internship program model.⁴⁸

In addition to working with CBOs and private grant-makers to develop workforce supports for foster youth, ACS has also partnered with other city agencies, including DYCD. One such partnership is the Vulnerable Youth service option of SYEP. Due to limited funding and high demand, SYEP participants are selected by lottery. Under the Vulnerable Youth service option, however, funding has been set aside so that eligible foster youth (and several other vulnerable youth populations) are prioritized. ACS and DYCD have taken a similar approach with the YAIP program. Known as YAIP Plus, this program provides specialized workforce development supports for foster youth participating in internships. While existing efforts help many young people, many TAY still struggle in the labor market. In 2018, the NYC Interagency Foster Care Task Force generated a report emphasizing the continued need for additional employment and workforce development support for transition-age youth exiting foster care.

⁴⁵ See: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/acs/youth/youth-employment.page>

⁴⁶ See ACS' Foster Care Strategic Blueprint: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/acs/about/fcstrategicblueprint.page>

⁴⁷ See Task Force Report: <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/acs/pdf/testimony/2018/TaskForceReport.pdf>

⁴⁸ See Task Force Report: <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/acs/pdf/testimony/2018/TaskForceReport.pdf>