**Process Evaluation
of the
Demand-Side Youth Offender Demonstration Project
(Phase II)**

Final Report

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Submitted to

**Ms. Mary Vines
U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N-5641
Washington, D.C. 20210**

Submitted by

**McNeil Education, Training and Research
6320 Quadrangle Drive, Suite 180
Chapel Hill, NC 27517
(919) 493-1661**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Welfare-to-Work Partnership (The Partnership)[1], later known as Business Interface, Inc. (BI), was awarded funding by the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL/ETA) in January 2003 to conduct a Demand-Side Youth Offender Demonstration Project (DSYODP). Under this grant, The Partnership served as an intermediary in connecting employers in four sites with young ex-offenders and youth at-risk of court involvement between the ages of 18 and 25. The DSYODP initiative built on the experience of The Partnership in serving welfare recipients under a DOL grant for the Welfare-to-Work program.

Background

The DSYODP initiative also built on the experience of DOL/ETA through three rounds of the Youth Offender Demonstration Project (YODP), which began in 1999. The goals of the YODP were to assist youth at-risk of court or gang involvement, youth offenders, and gang members ages 14-24 to find long-term employment at wage levels that would prevent future dependency and would break the cycle of crime and juvenile delinquency.

McNeil Education, Training and Research (McNeil ETR) worked with DOL/ETA to conduct evaluations of both YODP and DSYODP Phases I and II. Phase II of DSYODP began in July 2005 when it received a Task Order contract from DOL/ETA to conduct a process evaluation of the demonstration project in four cities: Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, and Washington, D.C. The purpose of the evaluation was to determine:

> (1) the efficacy of the business intermediary model implemented by the grantee; and
> (2) the impact of the services delivered on the employment, earnings and retention of youth ex-offenders and youth at-risk of court or gang involvement.

Further, DOL/ETA expects that the evaluation will also "determine lessons from the implementation and operation of the DSYODP Phase II which can be shared with other communities wishing to replicate the business intermediary approach to serve ex-offenders and at-risk youth."

The basic strategy of the DSYODP model is to establish intermediary organizations in the demonstration cities, known as Business Resource Centers (Centers), whose primary purpose is to connect employers with youth. The "demand-side" component of the model comes from the demand by employers for persons who are qualified to fill positions they offer; thus, the employers are the primary customers of the Centers.

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[1] At the time of the award, the recipient organization was known as The Welfare-to-Work Partnership, though at the time of this report, the organization has subsequently become known as Business Interface, Inc.

For the youth participants, BI's objective was to identify positions that pay "retention wages" that take into account the family size of the participant and the cost of living in the specific city of employment. By providing retention and career advancement services to the participants after hiring, BI hoped to encourage retention in employment for a period of at least six months.

The substantial body of research on youth employment, youth involvement in the justice system, and the roles of employers and intermediaries reviewed for this research provided evaluators with a strong basis for understanding the goals of the DSYODP. Any evaluation of such programs must address their complexity by looking closely at the stakeholders involved and the various components of the model.

Approach

The evaluation of DSYODP includes two parts: the **process evaluation** of the Centers and an **outcomes study** of the youth's success in obtaining employment, retention, and earning wages that provide financial stability.

The process evaluation focused on the activities carried out by the Centers. The outcomes study focused primarily on the results of the matching process of meeting businesses' needs to fill vacancies through placing youth offenders and youth at-risk of court involvement in those positions.

There were two primary research questions of interest to DOL/ETA:

- How does the business intermediary approach identify and recruit employers and broker job placements for youth ex-offenders and youth at-risk of court or gang involvement? How *well* does BI identify and recruit employers who are willing to hire this target population? Does the use of the intermediary satisfy employers' needs? What criteria does BI utilize to hire BRC staff? What is the turnover rate of such staff? What are the performance requirements of such staff? Do they receive placement bonuses? If so, what are the results?

- How does BI connect youth ex-offenders and at-risk youth to the services of the demonstration project and to One-Stop Career Center services and other services available in the community? How *well* does the intermediary connect youth ex-offenders and at-risk youth to services? Does the use of BI's services reduce unemployment spells and otherwise improve employment outcomes for youth ex-offenders and at-risk youth? Does BI help youth avoid criminal activity and retain employment?

Evaluators developed a series of study questions organized into six main categories that reflected the interests of DOL/ETA and BI, addressing the main goals of the evaluation to assess efficacy of the business intermediary model and the impact of the services delivered on the employment, earnings, and retention of youth.

The six **categories of study questions** were:

- Development of a Network of Employers,
- Employer Outcomes,
- Project Organization and Staffing [at the Centers],
- Service Delivery to Youth,
- Participant Outcomes, and
- Referring Organizations.

Evaluators analyzed the questions in these categories to determine the data they would need to address the questions, the location of the data and the form they were in. Data were quantitative, located in the management information system (MIS) of BI and administrative data about employment and wages maintained by states in their unemployment insurance (UI) wage records. Other data were qualitative, collected through interviews with stakeholders in the demonstration cities: Employers, BI staff, youth participants, and youth development organizations from which BI recruited youth for placement.

MIS data were collected directly from BI, which prepared compact discs containing their entire record of data from the demonstration sites. UI wage records were received from the states that were willing to share their records. Evaluators collected qualitative data during one preliminary and three extended visits to each site. Quantitative data were analyzed to provide descriptive statistics about the employers, the intermediary organizations, referring organizations and youth. Multivariate regression analyses were applied to examine retention and wage levels. Qualitative data were used to provide rich text documenting observations and interview findings by veteran field staff.

Project Organization

BI's central office determined uniform goals for the staff across the demonstration sites as reported in Table ES.1. The Business Resource Consultant (BRC) was the primary contact with the employers, often with the help of the Center Managers. They were assisted by Human Resource Consultants (HRCs) whose main responsibility was to locate eligible and employable youth at youth development organizations, called referring organizations (ROs). The HRC screened each applicant for eligibility and for suitability for position openings located by the BRCs. The Retention Specialist (RS) followed up with clients after they were placed in employment to make sure that the match was effective and to reduce barriers that might affect the new employee's job retention.

Table ES.1. Goals for Each Position in a Center and Its Priorities

Position	Goals	Priorities
Manager	Manage staff to meet goals	Achieve placement and retention goals
BRC 1	5 placements/mo.; 90% retained	Develop business relationships
BRC2	5 placements/mo.; 90% retained	Develop business relationships
BRC3	5 placements/mo.; 90% retained	Develop business relationships
HRC	30 interviews; 15 referrals/mo.	Good audit; add new agencies; refer 15 "hire-able" youth/mo.
RS	90% retention rate	Make sure youth do not leave jobs
QCA	90% audit rate	Review files; receptionist; office help

A major hinderance for the demonstration was difficulty in finding and retaining BI staff. With this limitation, the intermediary model was fully operational in most sites for just over a year, and one site continued to experience staff turnover throughout the demonstration. Staff agreed that turnover was a limitation to the model that depended on building a complex network of trust-based relationships between BI and employers, ROs, and youth.

Business Involvement

BI recruited 602 businesses during the demonstration. These clients were drawn from small, medium and large businesses in a wide range of industries. Before working with BI, these businesses used few pro-active strategies for recruiting workers and they had openings for workers at all skill levels. Many of these business clients reported relatively high turnover rates for low skill workers but somewhat more stable patterns for skilled workers. The reasons workers gave for leaving the employ of these business clients were chiefly related to the jobs themselves: lack of interest, better advancement elsewhere, low pay, or lack of advancement.

Businesses that BI recruited were looking for help with screening and recruitment. Most had offender policies that would limit some offenders from being placed, especially if their offenses involved theft, violence or felonies. Most business clients did not, however, request Federal bonding to offset the risk they would have from hiring an offender. Tax credits for hiring hard-to place workers seemed more appealing to businesses.

From the site visit interviews, evaluators learned that BRCs used inductive processes to identify a small number of businesses that were always hiring entry-level staff, were open to hiring youth offenders or youth at-risk of court or gang involvement, and willing to pay the local retention wage. Once identified, BRCs knew they had to sell their services to the employers, and they worked hard to maintain contact to keep these reliable sources of job placements.

Employers reported being pleased by the services BI offered them. The employers noted the professionalism of the BRCs and the care they took to understand the nature of the employers' industry and its labor needs. They particularly appreciated savings in time and money by having pre-screened candidates from an organization that paid close attention to the specific job qualifications of their openings. While several employers commented that they were happy to give at-risk youth a chance, most said that the BI involvement strengthened their bottom line. Both the youthful job seekers and the employers reported that BI prepared candidates well for job interviews.

BI staff members targeted employers that had openings all the time, so it is not surprising that the employers were disappointed that BI could not provide the numbers of workers they needed. Sometimes BRCs encouraged a youth to take a position for lower pay, an inconvenient shift, or fewer hours after negotiating with employers to give a salary increase or improve the hours within six months.

Employers appreciated BRCs' efforts on their behalf, but they were not willing or able to pay for the screening and placement services that would make BI financially independent of DOL/ETA funding. Staff members at the Centers were exploring other ways to finance their operations but the offices were closed before they were able to complete such arrangements.

Referring Organizations

BI recruited 243 referring organizations (ROs), 87 during Phase II. BI made it clear to the ROs that its goal was to place participants in career-oriented jobs and not part-time or seasonal work. The ROs served many populations, not just youth, including welfare-to-work clients, displaced workers, and persons with disabilities.

BI worked with a variety of ROs, each offering a range of services to youth. The range of services included resume preparation, case management, work readiness, and soft skills training. ROs typically had a job placement service, so the BI engagement was not the only path youth had to employment. Few provided the follow-up services after placement, however, that BI offered.

ROs provided computer training and opportunities for clients to complete high school by taking and passing General Equivalency Diploma (GED) tests. Some offered English as a Second Language (ESL) training as well. Some of the strategies that developed from their partnership with BI involved prescreening workshops, job matching with employers, and one-on-one preparation.

Some ROs provided specific vocational training, such as health care, clerical skills and culinary experience. Most youth referred to BI arrived without such training or the training that the youth did receive did not match the needs of the businesses that were hiring at the time. The vast array of services offered by ROs could potentially have led to well-prepared BI candidates. Unfortunately, this was not always the case because many candidates were not job ready. BI staff in all the Centers mentioned their desire to receive better-qualified referrals from ROs.

Some clients required particular support services in obtaining work, such as assistance with transportation, child care and uniforms. Most of the ROs recruited by the Centers referred youth out to other organizations for childcare, housing, and health services rather than providing these services directly. ROs in all cities noted the difficulty in placing youth offenders, but BI was able to place some candidates that were offenders when the ROs were unable to do so.

Overall, most of the ROs evaluators interviewed were pleased with BI's involvement and enjoyed working with them. ROs appreciated the BI practice of giving feedback after youth screenings and job interviews. Good placements generally reflected well on the RO, and may have counted towards their own measures and goals.

Participant Characteristics

Across all four sites, 1,279 participants were enrolled. Out of these, 950 were determined eligible for employment and of those eligible, 413 were placed in employment at retention wages.[2] New York had the largest number of total and eligible participants with 436 total and 398 participants eligible for placement. Los Angeles was the next largest with 325 total participants and 273 eligible. Chicago had a total of 270 participants of which 152 were eligible. Washington, D.C. had the fewest number of participants overall, with 248 total and 127 eligible participants.

Most participants were at-risk youth, approximately 22 years of age, single and without children. Of the 395 participants at-risk, 388 were considered eligible due to poverty. The two largest ethnic groups served were African-Americans and Hispanics. Hispanics outnumbered African-Americans only in Chicago. There were slightly more females than male participants overall (51.9% female vs. 48.1% male), with greater variation among the sites.

Eighty-two of the 413 youth placed in employment were employed at the time of referral to the project. The largest proportions of youth employed at referral were in Chicago and Washington, D.C. Most of the placed participants were high school graduates.

Youth were largely recruited into DSYODP directly through the ROs. Youth also learned about BI from flyers posted on bulletin boards at the ROs, contact with other placed youth, or through friends in the DSYODP program. Youth reflected positive sentiments about the quality of preparation they received for employment. In general, the youth interviewed were pleased with having participated in a prescreening process, whether this was sponsored by an RO or BI.

Employment Outcomes

Of the 413 placements made by BI during Phase II of DSYODP, 18 were offenders. Overall, BI made fewer placements of either offenders or youth at-risk of court involvement during Phase II than it had during Phase I. Possibly, the decline in placements reflects the observation that the Centers were fully operational for fewer months in Phase II than in Phase I. These numbers do not include those who were placed at lower than the retention wage or for fewer than full-time

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[2] There are 440 placement records but 21participants were placed in employment more than once.

hours. There were a total of 511 youth achieving employment through the four Centers whether or not it was at the retention wage.

The industries that hired the most BI clients were information (e.g., telemarketing), hospitality, and "Other Services" (e.g., mailroom sorters or copier operators). In Chicago, the main industry for placements was healthcare; in New York, the most popular was information and in Los Angeles it was other services. There was no observable trend in the Washington, D.C. placements. Most placements across sites were in mid-size businesses. Most businesses hired one or a few BI clients, and individual ROs referred a small number of youth who were placed.

Whether youth were at-risk or ex-offenders, all placements tended to work full-time as required by the project. Youth did, however, differ with respect to wages. At-risk youth tended to earn slightly higher wages on average than youth offenders. Overall, the placed youth earned an average of $9.52 an hour, which is notably less than the average wages documented in Phase I of the project ($9.65 for youth offenders and $10.27 for at-risk youth). Wages reported are based on the wage offered at the time of hiring, and some youth were prepared to work for lower wages just to get a job. Wages of those youth employed, but not counted as placements, were lower than youth who were counted as placed.

On average, males earned less than females and married participants earned higher wages than singles, although there were few married youth placed in employment. Hispanics earned higher average wages than African-American and other ethnic groups. Participants with higher levels of education earned higher average wages than participants with less formal education.

Evaluators found that termination data were not as reliable as placement data. Three of the four Centers were unable to hire a full-time RS even though some staff at each Center attempted to follow the placed youth. With that caveat, BI reported that about 20% of the placed youth terminated before the six-month period youth agreed to at hiring. The average retention time before termination for these youth was 7.3 weeks. The types of termination for those reported by the Centers were roughly equal between voluntary and involuntary terminations. The top five reasons for termination of the 82 placements reported were lateness or attendance problems (18.3%), poor performance (18.3%), disapproval of job or pay (14.6%), other job opportunities (9.8%), and personal, home-related or school conflicts with the job (9.8%).

UI Wage Comparison Study

Examining employment patterns with unemployment insurance wage (UI) records provides another vantage point for understanding the labor force outcomes for youth placed in employment by the intermediary compared to other youth employed without it. Because there was not enough time to observe the employment patterns for youth placed in Phase II, youth enrolled in BI during Phase I were used.

Of the four sites solicited for UI wage records, only Florida (Phase I included Miami, and it was replaced in Phase II by Los Angeles.) and Maryland provided DOL/ETA with the approval to use data for the purposes of evaluating DSYODP. Both Maryland and Florida provided records

matched to youth enrolled in Phase I. For these two states, evaluators requested the wage records for all youth enrolled as eligible in Phase I, whether or not BI had placed them.

Evaluators proposed a quasi-experimental study of outcomes using a comparison group of participants from Phase I of DSYODP. The comparison group consisted of those participants referred to the Miami or Washington, D.C. Centers and determined eligible for DSYODP but were not placed in employment through the efforts of the Centers. The distribution of characteristics for the comparison and placement groups was comparable by age, gender, ethnicity, educational attainment, marital status, offender classification, and number of children. Few of the youth were employed before enrolling in BI.

Only Maryland had enough youth in both the placement and comparison groups to test for a difference of wages between those placed by BI and those that found work by other means. The median weekly wages for these two groups of Maryland youth are $153.07 for placed youth and $87.67 for the comparison group, a significant difference at the .05- level using the Satterthwaite T-test of unequal variances.

Using the Maryland placement and comparison groups alone, evaluators tested a further variation to find that when individual characteristics were considered, a 1 percent increase in the number of employers a youth worked for was related to a 48 percent increase in average weekly income. Youth evidently left one employer for another as a faster way to increase wages than to remain with one employer and count on regularly occurring wage increases.

Wages had a significant impact on persistence in employment. Every $100 increase in average weekly wages, led to an increase of 5.9 times for the proportion of enrollment quarters in which the youth had UI wage records, holding other factors constant. In short, youth with higher wages stayed employed more than youth with lower wages. This suggests that, by itself, placing youth in employment is not enough to strengthen tenure. Placing youth needs to be accompanied with higher wages to ensure that youth persist in employment.

Youth offenders faired 0.158 times worse than youth at-risk for court involvement in the proportion of enrollment quarters in which youth had UI wage records. This finding reinforces the observation from earlier studies of the transition to work by youth offenders, that this population remains more vulnerable after placement than other youth.

Conclusion

The BI intermediary model provided services that employers appreciated. In this demonstration, youth from disadvantaged backgrounds, many of whom had never worked before, received employment at an average wage almost twice the national minimum wage. The application of the model was constrained by the short time the Centers were fully functioning, but the model warrants future applications in a more stable environment.

Some of the limitations observed in the demonstration include the following:

- Training programs were not well-matched to high demand industries in the sites. Skills that required longer-term training, like construction, were rare.
- Few offenders received placements; in New York, few were sent by referral organizations. Whether it is the demand-side model or just the limitations of this particular demonstration is not clear.
- Even with retention-level wages, many workers did not get benefits, and that is a limitation for workers with families.
- Youth development issues, punctuality, solving transportation and childcare challenges, completing high school, and acquiring soft skills continue to affect the labor force experience of these young workers—even with better paying jobs.
- Staffing levels were not complete at any site, and lack of staff or turnover was serious at all sites.
- DSYODP did not demonstrate viability after the DOL/ETA grant funding; there were sustainability options that were not pursued, but the question remains whether it is a sustainable model as a free-standing intermediary or as a component of a work-readiness effort.

Several benefits worth noting were observed during the demonstration:

- Business clients were pleased with the professional services and demeanor of the BRCs; they appreciated that the BRCs worked hard to understand their hiring needs; they appreciated that BI did not send candidates that it knew did not match the job position descriptions. In sum, BRCs did not waste the business client's time and did provide a service they needed and that saved them time and money.
- Businesses appreciated the pre-screening that BI performed before sending candidates; businesses and youth participants who were interviewed reported that the candidates were well-prepared for their interviews. Businesses reported that candidates were pre-screened for their particular openings, like giving a computer exercise before sending candidates out for a position with a telemarketing firm. Businesses were pleased that BI made sure that workers could pass their drug screening before sending candidates out.
- Small business clients were particularly happy for the free service because they had no money for their hiring processes.
- Business clients were pleased that the BRCs helped them meet their hiring needs, even with candidates that did not meet the BI placement criteria.
- ROs that had referrals placed were pleased at the kind of jobs BI found for their referrals and the level of the wages they received.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

A. Introduction

The Welfare-to-Work Partnership (The Partnership)[1], later known as Business Interface, Inc. (BI), was awarded funding by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) of the U.S. Department of Labor/ Employment and Training Administration (DOL/ETA) in January 2003 for a Demand-Side Youth Offender Demonstration Project (DSYODP). Under this grant, The Partnership served as an intermediary in connecting employers in four sites with young ex-offenders and youth at-risk of court involvement between the ages of 18 and 25. The DSYODP initiative built on the experience of The Partnership in serving welfare recipients under a DOL/ETA grant for the Welfare-to-Work program.

The DSYODP initiative built on the experience of DOL/ETA through three rounds of a similar project, the Youth Offender Demonstration Project (YODP), which began in 1999. The goals of the YODP were to assist youth at-risk of court or gang involvement, youth offenders, and gang members ages 14-24 to find long-term employment at wage levels that would prevent future dependency and would break the cycle of crime and juvenile delinquency. Its objectives were to identify effective community strategies that support youth in becoming work-ready and capable of attaining and keeping employment that will provide a future of economic stability and support civic engagement. Grantees were encouraged to build upon the services and partnerships already supporting target youth and fill in the gaps in service delivery and coordination.

McNeil Education, Training, and Research (McNeil ETR) has worked with DOL/ETA to conduct evaluations of both YODP and DSYODP Phases I and II. Phase II of DSYODP began in July 2005 when it received a Task Order contract from DOL/ETA to conduct a process evaluation of the project The first phase evaluation of the demonstration had not been completed, and The Partnership contracted with McNeil ETR in September 2005 to complete the evaluation and prepare a Final Report that analyzed the project's outcomes and implications for future efforts. McNeil ETR completed Phase I and then proceeded with the work of the Phase II evaluation.

This document constitutes the Final Report for Phase II. The next section provides a brief background of the DSYODP intermediary model and evaluation. Chapter II discusses the scope and nature of the evaluation approach as reflected in this *Final Report*. Chapter III covers a basic description of the structure of DSYODP, particularly in the four sites. Chapters IV-VII provide extensive information on business involvement in DSYODP, referring organizations that worked with youth, characteristics of the youth, and their employment outcomes. Chapter VIII presents further analysis of the project outcomes using a combination of data collected from the DSYODP sites and Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage data for youth enrolled in the project during Phase

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[1] At the time of the award, the recipient organization was known as The Welfare-to-Work Partnership, though at the time of this report, the organization has subsequently become known as Business Interface, Inc.

I. Chapter IX concludes the report with a discussion of the implications of the analyses conducted for the evaluation during both phases of the project.

There are several key terms repeated throughout this document. These terms are defined in the box below for your reference.

KEY TERMS

Business – any entity recruited by the Centers at the four sites for which a Business Needs Analysis Form was completed and a record created in the database. Generally these are for-profit businesses, but include non-profit and public organizations as well. Some portion of businesses recruited to the program subsequently hire DSYODP participants, but not all businesses in the database may have filled positions by the end of the grant period.

Intermediary – an entity that links businesses with individuals seeking employment. The scope of the activities entailed in that "link" varies greatly across intermediaries, and can include: job search, work experience, education, training, subsidized employment, placement, retention support, and advancement support. Intermediaries can be non-profit organizations, for-profit, educational institutions, and public or quasi-public organizations.

Referring Organization – an entity performing one or more functions under the DSYODP, including: (a) making referrals of qualified individuals for placement at business clients of the Centers; (b) determining the eligibility of participants for the DSYODP; and (c) providing a range of services that facilitate participants to be successful, from pre-employment preparation to specific skills training to additional services, as well as targeted training in specific fields, job placement services, and supportive services that help participants be successful after placement. Referring organizations can include Once-Stop Career Centers, MOU partners such as Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), other service providers, Criminal Justice Agencies, as well as employers referring individuals to DSYODP.

Participant – an individual for whom a Referral Form has been completed and a record entered in the DSYODP database. Participants must be between the ages of 18-25 at the time of enrollment and be either an ex-offender or at-risk of court involvement. Participants' circumstances are reviewed to determine if they meet the eligibility requirements for DSYODP, and if so, an Eligibility Form is completed and an eligibility record created, and an Intake Interview Form would be completed at the next stage in the process. If an eligible participant gains employment through DSYODP, data is entered on an Employment Information Form and an employment record created; at this time, determination is made as to whether the employment meets retention wage level standards, in which case a "placement" is recorded as well.

Placement – an eligible participant in the DSYODP project who achieves employment at a "retention wage" while enrolled in the project. Retention wages are a minimum threshold wage calculated based on the cost of living for each of the cities in which the project sites were located and the number of dependents. Youth must be employed full-time to be considered placements. Retention wages are discussed in more detail in Chapter VII.

B. Background

This evaluation of Phase II of DSYODP builds on the knowledge gained through the first phase of the demonstration. As stated in the Request for Quotations (RFQ), the purpose of the evaluation was to determine:

> (1) the efficacy of the business intermediary model implemented by the grantee; and
> (2) the impact of the services delivered on the employment, earnings and retention of youth ex-offenders and youth at-risk of court or gang involvement.

Further, DOL/ETA expected that the evaluation would also "determine lessons from the implementation and operation of the DSYODP-II project which can be shared with other communities wishing to replicate the business intermediary approach to serve ex-offenders and at-risk youth."

For both phases, BI helped businesses to "identify and capitalize on hiring, retention, and career advancement strategies outside the corporate mainstream." A demand-side approach recognizes the importance of initiatives that fit the hiring needs of employers, while also assisting individuals in gaining employment and greater self-sufficiency.

The basic strategy of the DSYODP model is to establish intermediary organizations, known as Business Resource Centers (Centers), whose primary purpose is to connect employers with youth. The "demand-side" component of the model comes from the demand by employers for persons who are qualified to fill positions they offer; thus, the employers are the primary customers of the Centers.

In addition, the Centers act as intermediaries with the organizations that can refer youth who have been screened and prepared for making applications to the employers with positions. The Centers also offer retention services for individuals who are hired, including assistance in obtaining appropriate work clothing, child care referrals, and transportation. This package of services, at no cost to the businesses, is expected to address employers' reticence about hiring young offenders or other youth "at-risk" of court involvement. Factors determining "at-risk" status are: 1) poverty, 2) drug and alcohol abuse, 3) gang involvement, and/or 4) a lack of supportive and/or stable family environment (*Technical Assistance Manual, Volume 2*, Business Interface, Inc.).

In terms of the participants, BI's objective was to identify positions that pay "retention wages" that took into account the family size of the participant and the cost of living in the specific city of employment. By providing retention and career advancement services to the participants after hiring, BI hoped to encourage retention in employment for a period of at least six months.

During Phase I of DSYODP, the Centers were located in Chicago, Miami, New York, and Washington, D.C. The Phase I contract concluded in August 2005. BI was awarded another round of funding in July 2005 to continue the project. During the transition into the second phase

of the project, BI underwent tremendous changes in terms of staffing and corporate structure. Initial funds from Phase I were depleted in spring 2005 and new funds had not been dispersed by DOL/ETA before incumbent staff began leaving the organization. BI executive staff members were restructuring the organization and hiring new personnel. BI also made changes to the Technical Assistance Manual (TAM) and implemented a Quality and Compliance division to monitor data quality and accuracy in reporting. These changes are covered in greater detail in Chapter III of this report. The next chapter presents the evaluation approach, including the evaluation design and methods of data collection and analysis.

Chapter II

EVALUATION APPROACH

In this chapter the overall approach to evaluation of the Demand-Side Youth Offender Demonstration Project (DSYODP), the evaluation design approved by DOL/ETA and the methods of data collection and analysis used to obtain and organize the information needed by DOL/ETA are presented.

Prior to presenting a comprehensive description of the components of the Phase II evaluation approach and design, a brief overview of the process evaluation that was conducted for Phase I of DSYODP is provided to contextualize the evaluation approach developed for Phase II.

A. Overview of Process Evaluation of Phase I

An overview of the process evaluation of Phase I of DSYODP provides a useful foundation for understanding the scope of the evaluation for Phase II, which has been expanded in critical ways. Though the Phase I evaluation was actually conducted in two stages by The Urban Institute and McNeil ETR, the Interim and Final Reports for Phase I provide a comprehensive view of DSYODP as implemented and up through the end of the award, May 2005.

The evaluation conducted by The Urban Institute focused on the initial implementation of DSYODP at the four sites. Consequently, the process evaluation looked at the context and local settings of the four sites, staffing at the Centers, and the MIS designed for DSYODP. Site visits were conducted to the four sites, enabling qualitative data collection through interviews with staff at the Centers, businesses, and referring organizations. It was during the site visits that the issue of staff turnover surfaced, which continued as a topic of interest.

The use of the MIS and feedback from the staff on the MIS are well-documented in the Interim Report. The Urban Institute Interim Report also provides beneficial insights into the initial contacts made with potential business clients by the BRCs. The Interim Report offers information about the services available through the Centers to the businesses and to the participants, which of course are key components of the intermediary model. In addition, the Interim Report presents information about a number of referring organizations, obtained through interviews during the site visits; this provides a sense of the diversity among the referring organizations in terms of the types of services they provide and the youth with whom they work.

Finally, The Urban Institute included data in the Interim Report on three key elements of the intermediary model – businesses, participants, and referring organizations. Most data were reported through April of 2004; because the Centers continued operations into 2005, the data necessarily reflected only part of the award period.

The second stage of the evaluation of Phase I essentially picked up at the point where operations had ceased and thus a full database was available for analysis. The Welfare-to-work Partnership

(The Partnership) contracted with McNeil ETR to conduct data collection and analysis to produce a Final Report on the first phase of DSYODP.

The starting point for this second stage of the process evaluation was the development of study questions for Phase I. McNeil ETR reviewed the study questions developed by The Partnership and The Urban Institute, and produced an evaluation design that addressed the study questions based on the data available after the completion of Phase I. The principal focus of this evaluation was the analysis of the database, with its extensive information on businesses, referring organizations, and participants. A secondary focus was collecting qualitative information from businesses regarding their experience with DSYODP; this information was collected via telephone calls, since site visits were not as feasible or cost-effective within the timeframe. Some additional information was collected from BI regarding staffing and the continuation of service.

The Final Report for Phase I contains comprehensive descriptive data on the principal components of the model. The types of data in the Phase I Final Report established the minimum scope of evaluative information expected to be produced for Phase II. This includes information on business involvement, referring organizations, participants, and employment outcomes, which is covered in more detail in subsequent chapters.

Because BI continued to collect extensive data on businesses, referring organizations, and participants in Phase II, the range of information available for analysis was considerable. A challenge for Phase II was to keep the study's focus on the information that would be relevant for addressing the study questions, while also keeping in mind that other data may provide useful insights into the intermediary model, as implemented across the four sites.

The remainder of this chapter provides an extensive description of the components of the Phase II evaluation conducted during the period of the contract from July 2005 through June 2007. The main components of the evaluation design have been divided into two sections:

- Section B covers the evaluation design as outlined in the RFQ, and
- Section C covers the evaluation tasks carried out after the design was approved, specifically data collection and analysis.

B. Evaluation Design of Phase II

The evaluation of the DSYODP includes two parts: the **process evaluation** of the Centers and an **outcomes study** of the youth's success in obtaining employment, keeping employment once hired, and earning wages that provide a stable financial status.

The process evaluation focused on the activities carried out by the Centers as BI continued the work begun in Phase I. Site visits enabled the evaluation team to document the operations of the Centers, the nature of their intermediary relationships (e.g., working with businesses, referring and other local organizations, and youth seeking employment), and the services provided by the Centers' staff. For the three existing sites, the process evaluation documents the history of their

operations and the changes the sites have made between Phase I and Phase II. For Los Angeles, the process evaluation documents its start-up activities and progress toward full implementation.

The outcomes study focused primarily on the results of the matching process of meeting businesses' needs to fill vacancies through placing youth offenders and youth at-risk of court involvement in those positions. Thus, there are outcomes for both businesses and for youth that can be measured through the collection and analysis of data on placements, wages, and retention.

The evaluation design addresses the four main components identified in the Request for Quotations (RFQ):

1. A program logic model,
2. Evaluation (i.e., study) questions,
3. Methodologies to measure outcomes of the demonstration project, and
4. Data requirements necessary for the evaluation.

The study questions are the heart of the evaluation design. They follow from the goals of the evaluation and establish the specification of the data collection methods through identification of the sources of the data. In turn, data collection must be sufficient and appropriate to address each of the study questions through data analysis. Appendix B contains a full list of the study questions. In addition, information on the data requirements for Phase II are provided, focusing on the data elements needed in the MIS.

1. Program Logic Model

Logic models have steadily gained broader acceptance and use within the field of program evaluation in recent years and McNeil ETR has found logic models to be valuable tools in the design and implementation of evaluations. As stated in the RFQ, the logic model will "provide the framework for evaluating the project as well as communicating about the project to The Partnership and the Federal Project Officer (FPO)."

As also recognized in the RFQ, a logic model is not necessarily a static product, but rather an evolving picture that attempts to represent stakeholders' understanding of how a particular program works and to what end. Logic models surface diverse perspectives of program outcomes and the activities that could be designed to achieve the desired results, and hopefully reach common agreement on the roadmap for describing how the program will go from design to planning to implementation and to successful operation. As the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (2001) notes:

> *Evaluation – especially program logic model approaches – is a learning and management tool that can be used throughout a program's life – no matter what your stake in the program. Using evaluation and the logic model results in effective programming and offers greater learning opportunities, better documentation of outcomes, and shared knowledge about what works and why. The logic model is a beneficial evaluation tool that facilitates effective program planning, implementation, and evaluation.*

In Table II.1 the logic model for DSYODP is presented, representing the principal types of inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes that compose the demonstration in Phase II.

Several assumptions have been made in developing this logic model:

a. Short- and intermediate-term outcomes have been identified for participants and businesses, but not other entities involved in DSYODP-II.

b. Activities focus on the work done by staff at the Centers with participants, businesses, referring and other organizations. Staff at the Centers is viewed both as "inputs" (i.e., resources) in this logic model and also as intervening variables that can affect the outcomes for businesses and participants (e.g., through recruitment of businesses, services provided to businesses, preparation of youth for obtaining employment, and supporting retention).

c. Specific activities are <u>not</u> tied to specific outcomes; many activities need to be undertaken in concert in order for outcomes for participants and businesses to be achieved.

d. In general, the Centers are responsible for inputs, activities, and outputs, but outcomes are largely beyond their control because the outcomes, to a considerable extent, occur after the completion of the DSYODP grant. For example, the RS works with participants after they are placed, but given the number of placements per Center, that person will not have much time per participant to help ensure that "participants placed in jobs have skills, attitudes, and behaviors for success in employment (retention, advancement)" beyond the initial placement and follow-up period of six months.

e. There are numerous factors that affect the accomplishment of outcomes that are outside the sphere of influence of the Centers and are not reflected in the logic model, such as community characteristics, economic and employment conditions, and support for and investment in youth, as well as characteristics of the participants themselves, such as prior work experience, education and literacy levels, peer relationships, adult support and guidance, living arrangements, and criminal records.

Table II.1. Program Logic Model for Demand-Side Youth Offender Demonstration Project

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Short-term Outcomes	Intermediate-term Outcomes
• Funding • Existing organization • Potential collaborating partners • Organizational or interpersonal networks • Staff and volunteers • Facilities, equipment, and supplies	**Working with Businesses** • Assessment of demand for workers by local businesses • Identification and recruitment of businesses • Identification of specific positions available at businesses • Referral of participants to businesses **Working with Referring Organizations** • Identification of referral sources for youth participants • Identification of community resources for other support services • Center develops working relationships with area One-Stop Career Centers **Working with Participants** • Development of tools to assess work readiness of youth referred to the Center • Design and implementation of pre-employment services for participants • Referral of participants to businesses with positions available • Design and implementation of retention services for participants placed with businesses	• Number of positions filled by businesses • Number of youth completing work preparedness training or receiving support services to prepare for employment • Number and percent of youth achieving employment	• **Businesses** hire referrals from the target population during the period of the demonstration. • **Businesses** are satisfied with services provided by the Center. • **Participants** persist in employment for the duration of the six-month follow-up period. • **Participant** youth are placed at retention wage levels.	• **Businesses** continue to hire youth in the target population. (Businesses who hired referrals during Phase I continue to hire youth; new businesses recruited during Phase II hire youth throughout the period of the demonstration.) • **Participants** attain wage increases over time. • **Participants** attain job advancements. • **Participants** persist in employment beyond the initial six-month follow-up period. • **Participants** attain educational and vocational outcomes while employed. • **Participants** have no involvement with the justice system.

There are long-term outcomes that may be of considerable interest to BI and DOL/ETA that are not incorporated into the logic model. Because the focus of this logic model is on individual

participants and businesses, the model does not address outcomes for the larger community. However, as the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and others have noted, both logic models and outcomes can operate on more than one level, such as system- and community-levels. In the case of the DSYODP, the achievement of individual outcomes for participants and businesses may contribute to larger outcomes for the communities in which they reside. For example, an intermediate-term outcome might be that a group of businesses help to form a network of other employers to hire this target population. This could foster opportunities for more young adults over the long-term as well as strengthen local economic development.

2. Primary and Study Questions

In this segment the primary research questions as identified by DOL/ETA in its Request for Quotation (RFQ) are presented along with the hypotheses and study questions to provide a comprehensive outline for the focus and scope of the DSYODP Phase II evaluation.

Primary Research Questions

As stated in the RFQ, the primary research questions of this evaluation are:

- How does the business intermediary approach identify and recruit employers and broker job placements for youth ex-offenders and youth at-risk of court or gang involvement? How *well* does BI identify and recruit employers who are willing to hire this target population? Does the use of the intermediary satisfy employers' needs? What criteria does BI utilize to hire BRC staff? What is the turnover rate of such staff? What are the performance requirements of such staff? Do they receive placement bonuses? If so, what are the results?

- How does BI connect youth ex-offenders and at-risk youth to the services of the demonstration project and to One-Stop Career Center services and other services available in the community? How *well* does the intermediary connect youth ex-offenders and at-risk youth to services? Does the use of BI's services reduce unemployment spells and otherwise improve employment outcomes for youth ex-offenders and at-risk youth? Does BI help youth avoid criminal activity and retain employment?

These two sets of research questions structure the evaluation around the two principal target populations – businesses and youth participants – and reinforce the interconnectedness of the target populations, where BI acts as an intermediary between the two. In addition, the research questions introduce the other two key components of the process: staff at the Centers and community organizations that can refer youth and provide valuable services. The study questions in the next segment address each of the main components.

Study questions

Study questions follow directly from the goals of the evaluation stated in the RFQ, which are to "determine: (1) the efficacy of the business intermediary model implemented by the grantee, BI; and (2) the impact of the services delivered on the employment, earnings, and retention of youth ex-offenders and youth at-risk of court or gang involvement." For purposes of this evaluation, the efficacy of the model is addressed through the study questions concerning the interactions of the Centers with the key stakeholders (e.g., businesses, referring and other local organizations, and youth). The impact of services delivered is reflected in the study questions related to the outcomes achieved by placement of youth at employers paying wages expected to support retention in employment.

A series of study questions organized into six main categories reflected the interests of DOL/ETA and BI at this stage in the demonstration, addressing the main goals of the evaluation to assess efficacy of the business intermediary model and the impact of the services delivered on the employment, earnings, and retention of youth.

The six **categories of study questions** are:

- Development of a Network of Employers
- Employer Outcomes
- Project Organization and Staffing [Business Resource Centers]
- Service Delivery to Youth
- Participant Outcomes
- Referring Organizations

Within each category are a series of more **specific study questions**, as presented in **Appendix A**. These study questions reflect discussions with DOL/ETA in the evaluation design phase that determined the feasibility of collecting the data needed to address some study questions originally proposed by our evaluation team as well as by DOL/ETA during the initial kick-off meeting.

3. Methodologies to Measure Outcomes

One of the principal components of the evaluation concerns the measurement of outcomes of the demonstration. As noted in the RFQ, "This could be done with a true experiment design, using random selection and random assignment, or could use a quasi-experimental design with a well-designed comparison group, or other methodologies." The evaluation team gave considerable thought to the possible approaches for measuring outcomes and certainly recognized that other methodologies can be valuable in determining the outcomes of a particular program, or "treatment," when compared to outcomes under a condition of non-treatment. For example, random assignment is being used in the Impact Study of Round Three of the Youth Offender Demonstration.

In considering methodologies for DSYODP, there were a number of factors to take into account in determining which methods may be feasible. Assuming that participants from Phase I of

DSYODP are part of the evaluation of outcomes, it would not be feasible to retrospectively create a control group or other comparison group. Alternatively, for new participants in Phase II, using random assignment or creating control groups might be feasible in theory but very challenging in practice. In effect, this would require identifying a pool of youth in each city that are comparable to those youth participating in DSYODP-II, but for whatever reason have not been or will not be referred to a Center for assistance in obtaining employment. Then comparable data on these youth would need to be collected over time to generate information on outcomes as well as any services they may have received that were comparable to services received by participants in DSYODP-II. Simply tracking these youth over the period of the evaluation would be a challenging and costly endeavor in itself.

Four additional alternatives were considered that could have been used to place the outcomes for DSYODP-II in a relevant context by comparisons to other similar groups. These alternatives reflect comparison groups of increasing size and scope. Three alternatives were composed of datasets from the Youth Offender Demonstration Project: (1) approximately 150-200 youth in the two Employment Bonus programs from Phase III who had received workforce preparation and retention support services; (2) approximately 200 participants in Round Three for which data was collected on characteristics, comprehensive information on services planned and received, and employment and other outcomes; and (3) substantial data has been collected on three cohorts of participants from the three rounds of the Youth Offender Demonstration Project, through the Outcomes Study of Phase Three of the evaluation. A fourth alternative was state employment data for the four cities in DSYODP-II, which could have been analyzed by characteristics such as age, gender, and ethnicity.

For each of the four alternatives, there would be target populations expected to share, to varying degrees, the characteristics of those participants in DSYODP who achieve placement at retention wages. However, there are also various factors that lessen the comparability of the populations, such as the differing approaches of the "treatment" programs, the contexts in which the programs operated, the characteristics of the populations, etc. Consequently, an outcomes study using a comparison group of participants from Phase I of DSYODP was proposed. The comparison group consisted of those participants referred to one of the four Centers who were determined eligible for DSYODP but were not placed in employment at retention wages through the efforts of the Centers.

Our analysis of Phase I data found that participants in the two groups were similar in terms of age, gender, and marital status but differed with respect to ethnicity, educational attainment, offender status and number of children. UI wage data on employment, persistence, and earnings history were used as the measures of long-term outcomes for participants who were placed and for those who were not. For the independent variables, information was collected on the participants' demographic backgrounds, education, criminal history, and other factors that may affect their progress in obtaining and keeping employment, and increasing wages.

With any comparison group, questions can be raised about the degree to which the group is truly comparable to the group receiving the "treatment" offered through the program being evaluated. In many respects, the proposed comparison group seems to offer a particularly appealing means to addressing those questions. The comparison group in effect should have the same type of

participants as those who actually received the treatment, if it is assumed the principal treatment was the attainment of employment through DSYODP.

4. Data Requirements

In this section three principal components that address data requirements for the evaluation as specified in the RFQ are discussed: Quantitative data elements in the MIS, qualitative data collected primarily during site visits, and administrative data to be obtained from state agencies.

Quantitative Data Elements (MIS)

The data elements developed for the evaluation of Phase II of DSYODP were based primarily on two factors: The existing database created by The Partnership for Phase I and the study questions that were eventually approved for Phase II. However, during the evaluation design phase, DOL/ETA and the evaluation team determined that the potential value of adding data elements to the MIS was outweighed by the additional cost and time delays that would have been incurred by asking BI to make such modifications.

Qualitative Data

Qualitative data complements the quantitative data available through the MIS maintained by BI to help address a number of study questions for the Phase II evaluation. Data collection instruments were developed to obtain data primarily through the site visits to the four Centers (see Appendix C).

Administrative Data

As specified in the RFQ, ETA worked with the evaluation team to determine the "data specifications for administrative data to be solicited from BI or appropriate state agency administrative files… [which] will likely include UI wage records…" While other administrative data sets may have data on DSYODP participants in Phase I, the UI wage records provide the most complete and the most cost-effective data set that could be obtained and used in analysis for evaluation purposes.

Evaluators placed the principal focus on obtaining UI wage records from State Employment Security Agencies (SESAs) for those participants who obtained employment through DSYODP, and for a comparison group of eligible DSYODP participants not placed through BI. A primary advantage of UI wage records is that wages earned by participants can be obtained that potentially cover periods of employment before, during, and after their period of participation in DSYODP. Given that BI staff members monitored employment outcomes for a period of six months after an individual's employment start date, UI wage data could cover periods beyond the initial six-month follow-up period for Phase I participants.

There are some limitations for the use of UI wage data. For example, SESAs do not typically maintain data on the number of weeks worked within a quarter or the number of hours worked per week; thus, an aggregate amount for earnings in a quarter masks other information such as

whether the individual worked full-time and for the full quarter. In addition, some participants may have accepted initial employment outside the state in which the Center operated (e.g., Virginia for participants from the Washington, D.C. Center) or they may have moved to another state during or after the period of the demonstration (whether in the group of participants placed through DSYODP or in the comparison group), and their earnings may not be fully counted.

The process of obtaining UI wage data, including the timeline for processing and analyzing the data, is discussed in considerable detail in the next section.

C. Data Collection and Analysis

This section is divided into two parts: Data collection and analysis. Both sections distinguish between the evaluation process for administrative and field-based data.

1. Data Collection

Data collection encompassed three principal elements:

a. Management Information System (MIS)
b. Data Gathered During Site Visits
c. Administrative Data

The specification of data came directly from the study questions. A comprehensive table later in this section (Table II.5) relates the data sources and methods of analysis to each study question topic. In addition, the approach for the use of the MIS maintained by BI for the acquisition of data for the quantitative analysis is presented along with a description of the approach to the site visits and assignments of evaluators for the visits.

To answer the study questions for both the process and outcomes evaluation, evaluators drew upon an array of data sources at the four project sites, both quantitative and qualitative, that address the questions. These **data collection methods** included:

- <u>Semi-structured interviews</u> with program planners, staff at the Centers, representatives of referring organizations, businesses, youth and other stakeholders during visits to project sites;

- <u>Acquisition of data</u> from project MIS and administrative records systems (e.g., State Employment Security Agencies' UI wage records);

- <u>Review of program documentation</u>, including individual project progress reports from Phases I and II, and other relevant research reports and findings;

- <u>Observations</u> of project planning meetings and program operations; and

- System observations (e.g., identifying the interconnected systems that support project development and implementation such as local Once-Stop Career Centers, community and faith-based organizations, and other local resources that broker pre-screening and quality job training for area businesses).

To ensure validity and reliability of the data being collected, evaluators used standard triangulation techniques and multiple sources of information, as practical. In preparation for data analysis, evaluators, for example, compared data from different sources and attempted to identify and reconcile discrepancies. For example, to address the question "What has been the experience of the employers with the persistence of BI participants?" data were used from the MIS to provide quantitative data on retention, complemented by interviews with businesses that hired DSYODP participants.

Quantitative measures that represent the outputs and outcomes from DSYODP-II and from the UI wage records data were specified. Typically, measures indicate "number and percent" of participants, businesses, and referring organizations who have achieved a particular result (e.g., businesses recruited, participants placed). Data from the MIS was obtained at two points in the evaluation to conduct analyses and prepare the Interim and Final Reports.

MIS

Quantitative data on Phase II operations came mostly from the MIS. The MIS was developed prior to Phase II of DSYODP as a comprehensive relational database accessible to staff at each of the Centers. An IT Consultant at BI headquarters managed the system and various levels of accessibility were granted to BI executives and staff. BI staff members used the MIS, along with a system of paper forms, to track the activities and correspondence with business clients, referring organizations and participants.

The MIS was not modified for Phase II although the paper forms used by BI staff to record data and the accompanying Technical Assistance Manual were modified to reflect an increased emphasis on data quality assurance. McNeil researchers received MIS data used for this report in the form of an SQL database.

Data Gathered During Site Visits

McNeil ETR conducted a preliminary site visit and two follow up site visits to each BI location. The three visits assured that each site was visited at least every six months of the evaluation contract as required by the RFQ.

Since the staffs of three locations were reconstituted for Phase II, it took several months before a substantial number of placements were made. Los Angeles, on the other hand, was initiating the demand-side intermediary model for the first time. The preliminary visits provided evaluators with the opportunity to gather information on the transition from Phase I into Phase II and on the launching of Los Angeles as a new site. Two more visits, with opportunities to study business clients' and youth clients' experience, followed when there had been time to expand the demand-side model in each location.

Preliminary site visits

The preliminary site visits occurred between April and June 2006, based on the availability of local staff and the time it took for each site to become operational. A knowledgeable McNeil ETR evaluator, with field experience from the Youth Offender Demonstration Project Evaluation, made each visit. Each visit took approximately one day. The goals of the preliminary visit were to assist evaluators in developing an in-depth understanding of the status and context of each site and to help them design appropriate data collection protocols for the visits to follow.

Prior to visiting each Center, McNeil ETR worked with the BI Grant and Evaluation Manager to schedule the visit and allow for adequate staff preparation at each of the Centers. Letters were emailed to each Center Manager to explain the agenda and purpose of the visit, identify staff for interviews, and list documents and information to be collected by the researcher during the visit.

During the preliminary visits, McNeil ETR evaluators gathered qualitative data through interviews with all BI staff, observations of BI staff operations, and documents. The documents included quarterly reports sent by BI to DOL/ETA, job descriptions for BI employees, MIS data entry screens, business and referring organization contact lists, and reports on local employment conditions at each site.

Each preliminary site visit concentrated on the core activities of BI staff at the center, their interactions with business clients, referring organizations, service providers and youth. Evaluators probed BI staff during the interviews for information on their goals, strategies, challenges and successes with implementation/ resumption of the project. Evaluators observed the office layout and work environment at each center, interactions between staff and clients, and data entry and staff use of the MIS. After each visit, each researcher produced a preliminary site visit report using the preliminary site visit field guide. Appendix C contains the field guide for the preliminary visits.

The preliminary visit schedule and evaluator assignments are reported in Table II.2.

Table II.2. Preliminary Site Visit Schedule and Evaluator Assignments

Location	Evaluator	Date of Visit
Chicago	C. Robinson	May 22, 2006
Los Angeles	S. Jenks	May 5, 2006
New York	L. MacGillivray	April 19, 2006
Washington, D.C.	R. Stone-El	June 15, 2006

Follow-up Site Visits

The two follow-up visits to the BI project sites occurred in late fall 2006 and spring 2007. Timing of the second visit depended on the implementation status of the projects as well as the availability of local staff; the third visits needed to be completed by March 2007 to produce site visit reports in preparation for the Final Report on the demonstration. A key objective of these

visits was to interview business clients, referring organizations' staff and youth participants within the local BI network.

Table II.3 indicates the dates of the second and third visits.

Table II.3. Follow-up Site Visits

DSYODP Location	Evaluator(s)	Second Visit	Third Visit
Chicago	Corre Robinson	Nov. 13-15, 2006	March 13-15, 2007
Los Angeles	Stephen Jenks	Nov. 13-15, 2006	March 12-14, 2007
New York	Lois MacGillivray	Nov. 7-9, 2006	March 13, 2007
Washington, D.C.	Robert Stone-El	Nov. 7-9, 2006	March 27-29, 2007

The follow-up visits focused on aspects of the study questions that could not be understood through quantitative data sources, such as the MIS and UI wage records:

1. Identifying the strategies that BI staff used to recruit business clients, referring organizations and youth;

2. Identifying the strategies BI used to broker the relationship between youth and business clients, including the degree of workforce preparation BI provided and the time and extent of other services it delivered to youth;

3. Gaining the perspective of employers on their willingness to hire youth offenders, pay a retention wage, or alter hiring practices to hire project youth;

4. Gaining the perspective of employers about their experience in hiring youth clients and their satisfaction with the young workers' performance;

5. Examining the staffing of the local Center: performance expectations, turnover rate, reasons given for staff turnover, and reasons for staff persistence;

6. Assessing the degree of outreach by the local intermediary organization to local One-Stop Career Centers and to other service agencies with the mission to support youth offenders and youth at-risk of court involvement; and,

7. Reviewing MIS data on youth characteristics, services received, employment placements and wages earned, and clarifying ambiguities in the database.

Appendix C includes field guides for eight staff members interviewed during the second visit: Business Resource Manager, BRC, HRC, and RS at the Centers; Division Manager at BI; representatives of businesses who hired DSYODP participants; representatives of organizations who referred participants to DSYODP and provided services to participants; and the participants placed in retention wage positions.

The third site visit included interviews with businesses, participants, and referring organization contacts. Evaluators also conducted a focus group interview with staffs at three of the four sites

to capture each group's overall perceptions about the project's implementation, infrastructure and operations, data collection tools, project challenges, successes, and lessons learned. The site visit protocols for the third site visits can also be found in Appendix C.

In addition to the visits to the four Centers, the evaluation team conducted two site visits with corporate officials of BI. Evaluators interviewed the Executive Staff and IT Consultant at BI headquarters in Baltimore, MD on December 20, 2006, and followed up with a second interview with the CEO at the Washington, D.C. Center on March 27, 2007. The protocol for the first visit of these visits is included in Appendix C.

Administrative Data

Earlier in this chapter the basic evaluation approach proposed with respect to the specification of administrative data on the outcomes of participants in the DSYODP was discussed. The collection of these data provides information on the extent to which participation in DSYODP had an effect on earnings and other employment outcomes for participants. In this segment, a summary of the steps in the process undertaken for obtaining UI wage data is presented along with the approach for obtaining, processing, and analyzing the data.

Obtaining UI wage data requires a concentrated effort over many months to secure agreements with State Employment Security Agencies (SESAs). The **steps in the process** followed to determine the willingness of SESAs to participate and provide data composed the following:

1. McNeil ETR contacted DOL/ETA regional offices for assistance in working with SESAs.
2. DOL/ETA and McNeil ETR specified the UI wage data to be requested.
3. DOL/ETA submitted letters to SESAs requesting UI Wage Record Data.
4. McNeil ETR, with DOL/ETA assistance, negotiated with each SESA for production of data.
5. SESAs processed request and produced data.
6. McNeil ETR received data and undertook review and cleaning of data.
7. McNeil ETR prepared data for analysis.

Each of the seven steps in the process for obtaining UI wage data was projected to take at least one month, and potentially up to three months. Essentially the evaluation team had to "back into" the quarter of UI wage data that represented the last quarter for which data could be requested on DSYODP participants and have time for the remaining steps in the process. Working back from the contract completion date of June 30, 2007, the number of months needed for each step was estimated, resulting in the decision that the last quarter of UI data collected would be for the first quarter of 2006.

Because of the significant time lag for the collection and processing of UI wage data by the SESAs, McNeil ETR and DOL/ETA agreed that the appropriate population for collection and analysis of UI wage data would be participants in Phase I. As shown in Table II.4, UI wage data could be collected for an extended period, in effect covering all participants in Phase I regardless of when they were placed.

Table II.4. Quarters of UI Wage Data Requested

Qtr	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st
Year		'03				'04				'05				'06
Phase I	Pre	Pre	Prg	Prg	Prg	Prg	Prg	Prg	Prg	Prg	Prg	Post	Post	Post

Notes: Abbreviations are defined as follows: Pre: the period prior to the beginning of that Phase; Prg: the period of program operation of that Phase; Post: the period after the Phase (grant) has been completed

The number of quarters of data for any particular participant would of course depend on the actual quarter in which that individual began employment through DSYODP. Given that participants in Phase I had different periods and lengths of employment (i.e., numbers of quarters of wage data), the analysis needed to take into account the different bases of data. For Phase I, this could range from four to 12 quarters of wage data. In addition, participants' quarters of employment will vary even if they started employment in the same quarter. Some participants who began employment in the first quarter of 2004 may continue employment through the period of data extraction (e.g., first quarter of 2006) whereas others may have lost employment at some point during that period.

Average quarterly wages for each participant were calculated for each period before, during and after DSYODP while taking into account those quarters where youth were not employed. For Phase I, the earliest quarters that would serve as the "pre" quarters would be the fourth quarter of 2002 and the first quarter of 2003. However, for analysis purposes, the "pre" quarters would be determined for each individual participant based on his or her employment start date. "Post" quarters, obviously, encompass the period after Phase I of the project was completed. Data from these periods offer information on the extent to which youth persisted in employment and if differences in wage levels persisted for youth placed in employment during DSYODP relative to non-placed youth.

Based on McNeil ETR's experience with the collection of wage data for the Phase Three evaluation of the Youth Offender Demonstration, the evaluators expected that one or more states would not provide UI wage data. Initially DOL/ETA submitted letters to each SESA, representing the states in which DSYODP participants in Phase I were most likely to obtain employment (District of Columbia and Maryland for the D.C. site; Florida for Miami, Illinois for Chicago, and New York for New York City). New York indicated via a written response that they would not participate in the provision of UI wage data. While early negotiations with Illinois seemed to be positive, an agreement could not be achieved to the satisfaction of all parties. The final group of SESAs to provide UI wage data were Florida and Maryland.

2. Analysis

As discussed earlier, data analysis included both qualitative and quantitative methods that were organized around the study questions in the RFQ. In this part is a description of how each of these analytic techniques was applied with respect to each of the study questions. Table II.5 summarizes the core topics from each of the study questions, the data source or collection technique, and method of analysis used to assess the data collected.

Table II.5. Core Themes from the Study Questions, Data Source, and Methods of Analysis

Study Question Topic	Data Source	Method of Analysis
A. Development of a Network of Employers		
Approaches used to identify and recruit employers	interviews/ documents	description
Relative effectiveness of approaches	interviews/ observations	description
Employer willingness to pay retention wage	interviews/ MIS	description/ descriptive statistics
Challenges encountered and strategies used by Center staff	interviews/ documents	description
Level of business involvement in model	interviews	description
Expansion of employer pool over time	interviews/ MIS	description/ descriptive statistics
Types of employers	MIS	descriptive statistics
Types of industries represented	MIS	descriptive statistics
Types of industries with vacancies vs. those that hire youth	interviews	description
No. placements by employer and industry	MIS	descriptive statistics
No. of businesses w/ repeat placements	MIS	descriptive statistics
B. Employer Outcomes		
Are employer's needs for workers being met	interviews	description
Types of businesses w/ needs that are or are not being met	interviews	description
Fill rate	interviews/ MIS	description/ descriptive statistics
Adjustments made by Centers to meet vacancy needs	interviews	description
Expectations about future vacancies and skills required	interviews	description
Employer satisfaction w/ BRC and youth	interviews	description
Relative value of services	interviews	description
Reasons for working with BRC	interviews	description
Recommendations	interviews	description
Services requested by businesses	MIS	descriptive statistics
Skills and requirements for positions	interviews /MIS	description
Turnover rates of placements	MIS	descriptive statistics
C. Project Organization and Staffing		
Appropriateness of staff design and level of staffing	observations/ interviews	description/ descriptive statistics
Recruitment and selection of staff	observations/ interviews	description
Performance requirements and expectations of staff	observations/ interviews	description
Evaluation, incentives and performance	interviews/ documents	description
Staff turnover by center and position over time	interviews/ documents	description/ descriptive statistics

**Table II.5. Core Themes from the Study Questions, Data Source,
and Methods of Analysis** (Continued)

Study Question Topic	Data Source	Method of Analysis
Reasons for turnover	interviews/ documents	description
MIS level of operation	observatios/ interviews	description/ descriptive statistics
MIS enhancements	interviews/ MIS/ documents	description/ descriptive statistics
MIS training	observations/interviews/ documents	description/ descriptive statistics
Internal usage of MIS	observations/interviews	description/ descriptive statistics
Development and implementation of sustainability	observations/ interviews	description/ descriptive statistics
D. Service Delivery to Youth		
How needs of youth are assessed	interviews/MIS/ documents	description/ descriptive statistics
Extent of services received as identified by youth	MIS	descriptive statistics
Resources and networks used to facilitate youth job-readiness	interviews/ documents	description
Needs beyond those provided by grant	MIS/interviews	description
Strategies employed and their effectiveness on youth retention	interviews/ MIS/ documents	description/ descriptive statistics
E. Participant Outcomes		
Characteristics of youth (age, gender, classification, etc.)	MIS	descriptive statistics
Characteristics and placement	MIS	descriptive statistics / multivariate regression
Placement and retention wage levels	MIS/ UI wage data	descriptive statistics / multivariate regression
Benefits received by participants	MIS	descriptive statistics
Changes in wages	MIS/ UI wage data	descriptive statistics / multivariate regression
Retention and termination periods	MIS/ UI wage data	descriptive statistics / multivariate regression
Non-wage advancements	MIS	descriptive statistics
Certifications and licensures	MIS	descriptive statistics
Educational achievements	MIS	descriptive statistics
Recidivism and court avoidance by classification	MIS	descriptive statistics
Skills present/lacking at referral	MIS	descriptive statistics
F. Referring Organizations		
Types	MIS	descriptive statistics
Populations served	MIS	descriptive statistics
Services offered	MIS	descriptive statistics
Number of referrals by type of organization	MIS	descriptive statistics

The qualitative data were used to evaluate processes and systems within and across each of the four sites. They included in-depth descriptions of:

- Observations and semi-structured interviews made during site visits with center staff, business clients and referring organization representatives; and

- Data abstractions from records and documentation collected from the Centers, referring organizations and businesses involved.

In addition to text, these descriptions yielded tables, graphs and arrays of key features to support the discussion.

Qualitative analyses for this report consisted of case studies for each site, triangulation of themes based on comparisons of subject matter from staff interviews, observations and reports, and interpretive analysis of themes embodied within and across each of the case studies. McNeil ETR evaluators read and discussed each site visit report with respect to the interim and final analyses and identified themes and topics of concern to DOL/ETA. Then the evaluation team went through a comparable process for the overall site reports at the end of the third visits. Using NVivo, the evaluators devised analysis frameworks, (conceptual thematic categories that serve as a structural outline under which the text can be sorted), and imported the site visit reports into NVivo for querying.

Quantitative methods were used for the outcome analysis and entailed performing descriptive analysis and multivariate regression analysis of data collected from site visits, MIS data and UI wage records. Descriptive analyses yielded univariate statistics including frequencies, averages and other measures of distribution for key data elements. These are arrayed and presented in tables and graphs that enhance the qualitative descriptions.

Upon receiving the MIS data, McNeil ETR researchers extracted the SQL data into Access tables and Excel spreadsheets for cleaning, sorting and formatting. The resulting files were saved as comma-separated (CSV) files and then read into SAS for merging and analysis. Quantitative analyses of the outcomes consisted of descriptive statistics (i.e. frequencies, averages, etc.) and cross-tabulations for data elements relevant to the study questions. These are presented in tables and graphs and accompanied by text descriptions.

Including UI wage records helps to extend the analysis at the participant level, namely our capacity to predict employment, differences in youth wage levels, changes in wages, and differences in youth persistence over time using multivariate regression analysis. Since UI wage data are aggregated quarterly, descriptive statistics on average wages and the number of quarters youth are employed were used to frame the analysis. Since participants could begin and terminate employment at various points in any given quarter, their quarterly wage data were dissaggregated into weekly wages by using the dates participants began and terminated their employment.

Multiple regression analysis of MIS and UI wage data compared wage levels and employment outcomes for youth placed by the Centers and youth who were not placed by the Centers. Factors such as age, gender, education, family size, and industry were controlled for and their impact

estimated on the likelihood of employment (defined as placement by the Centers at retention wages), length of employment, average wages, and changes in wages.

In the next chapter, the implementation and resumption of DSYODP since Phase I up through the termination of the Centers' activities in March 2007 is discussed.

Chapter III

DESCRIPTION OF DSYODP PHASE II BUSINESS RESOURCE CENTERS

In this chapter, characteristics of the DSYODP Phase II sites are described, which include the headquarters and four Centers. The project organization and staffing at the four Centers is discussed along with the MIS utilized by the staff in the project.

A. Project Organization

Three of the four Centers from Phase I continued to the second phase of DSYODP: Chicago, Washington, D.C., and New York. Los Angeles was initiated as a site after BI received multiple invitations to locate in the Los Angeles County area. The headquarters also moved from Washington, D.C. to Baltimore, MD during Phase II of the demonstration while the Washington, D.C. Center remained.

As was noted earlier, the transition from Phase I to Phase II had significant impact on staffing levels and staff turnover at the Centers. Staff positions were also redesigned in the transition from Phase I to II. (A more extensive description of staff roles and responsibilities, recruitment, and backgrounds appears in the *Interim Report*, along with additional information about their use of the MIS and feedback on the MIS through the time of the first site visits.) During Phase II, each Center was expected to consist of a Center Manager, up to three BRCs, one HRC, one RS, and a Quality and Compliance Auditor (QCA).

The Center Managers replaced the Vice Presidents from Phase I but their roles essentially remained the same. Center Managers were responsible for supervising staff and training new staff, except the QCAs. Managers conducted outreach within the community and among workforce development professionals to make the mission of BI better known and understood, reported to Chief Executive Officer, and ensured that their staff met its goals and priorities. The goals and priorities are reported in Table III.1.

Table III.1. Goals for Each Position in a Center and Its Priorities

Position	Goals	Priorities
Manager	Manage staff to meet goals	Achieve placement and retention goals
BRC 1	5 placements/mo.; 90% retained	Develop business relationships
BRC2	5 placements/mo.; 90% retained	Develop business relationships
BRC3	5 placements/mo.; 90% retained	Develop business relationships
HRC	30 interviews; 15 referrals/mo.	Good audit; add new agencies; refer 15 "hire-able" youth/mo.
RS	90% retention rate	Make sure youth do not leave jobs
QCA	90% audit rate	Review files; receptionist; office help

The Center Managers acted as BRCs as well, except in Washington, D.C. where the manager was also the corporate Executive Manager and training specialist for a period of time. Two of the Center Managers worked with BI in Phase I: Luis Angomas in Chicago and David DuPuy in New York. Thressa Connor McMahon, Grant and Evaluation Manager in Chicago, served as the Quality and Compliance Manager during Phase I and took on a managerial role during Phase II after the Center Manager resigned.

BI added the HRC position in DSYODP Phase II. The HRC position was designed to work with ROs in identifying good candidates for enrollment at the Centers and with the BRCs to place them. BRC positions were refined so that they maintained exclusive contact with business clients without having to identify participants for employment. They also worked with an RS to broker employer-employee relationships as needed. The RS position remained the same throughout both phases of the project.

During Phase I, it counted against the retention score if a youth left one position for another, better one. In Phase II, such moves were condoned. Termed a "hand up," career advancement activity was not counted against a Center's retention percentage score.

In Phase II, the QCA replaced the Program Assistant in performing Center audits. Each QCA verified the data entries of the other staff and reported the data to the QC Supervisor in Chicago. The QC Supervisor served as a Quality and Compliance staff person during Phase I.

B. Staffing

Staffing was integral to the successful implementation of the model, yet recruiting and retaining staff proved to be difficult for all four Centers. No location was fully staffed at the time of each of the evaluator site visits. Los Angeles had hired an entire staff in October 2005 that needed to be replaced by March 2006, and all of the Washington, D.C. staff left their positions within two months of the first visit.

Initially, all the hiring was to be arranged by the human resources staff at BI headquarters, and the need to hire for all four Centers in July-August 2005 delayed the hiring everywhere. In New York, one BRC was hired by October 2005 and three other staff members were hired in December. The QCA was hired in April, the day before the preliminary visit. Because the Los Angeles staff left by March 2006, the team in place (minus an HRC) was just completing its orientation training at the time of the evaluator's preliminary visit in May 2006. In Chicago, there were three staff members in place in May 2006, with these staff covering multiple roles. At the time of the Washington, D.C. preliminary visit in June 2006, the staff members were all new. The manager was from the corporate staff covering for an unfilled position, and the rest of the staff had been hired in January and March 2006.

Staffing issues at headquarters confounded staffing concerns at the Centers. The human resources person in place at the beginning of the grant left the firm before the hiring was completed. The finance officer left the firm in early 2006. The information technology (IT) staff

person left the firm, and a new IT specialist left the firm shortly after arriving. The MIS was not updated with new staff names, and reports were delayed as a result of the IT transitions.

All the managers reported that Center and headquarters turnover had to be brought under control because it interfered with their ability to meet BI goals and to honor relationships they developed with business partners. Across the four sites, there were potentially 28 job positions (seven at each site) to be filled at any point in time (not including executive and administrative staff). Of the 28 positions, 10 had a single person for the duration of the grant, 11 had two persons in the position, and three had three persons fill the position.

Staff worked hard according to manager reports, and many considered the work to be a "labor of love" for young people who lack many advantages in life. Staff reported that the work was not a "9 to 5" job because the youth clients often needed help on weekends and evenings. RSs held workshops on budgeting and banking on Saturdays, and took youth to get their driver's licenses. BRCs often received multiple calls from anxious new workers until they settled into their jobs.

All the Center Managers had business backgrounds. Their hiring philosophies differed by Center. New York's BRCs and HRC held master's degrees but had no previous workforce development experience. While the Los Angeles staff was less formally educated, they had decades of workforce and human services delivery experience. The average ages in New York and Los Angeles were about 40 years while the Washington, D.C. staff's average age was 25 years. All the Centers aimed to hire culturally diverse staff that matched the cultural backgrounds of their clients. Some staff members in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles were also bi-lingual in English and Spanish.

C. Management Information System (MIS)

To develop uniform processes across the organization, BI revised its Technical Assistance Manual (TAM) used during Phase I and maintained use of a centrally designed MIS to capture common information from all Centers. The MIS began as a Microsoft Access database that allowed the staff to enter new business information, new participant information and activities regarding businesses, referring organizations and participants. Each section of the MIS corresponded to one of the paper forms. Data were entered directly into the MIS from the paper forms. For example, information about a new business was both collected on the Business Needs Analysis (BNA) form and entered into the BNA table in the Access database.

Drop-down menus were developed for some kinds of information and Centers could produce reports from any module completed on site. Center staff members were responsible for entering data in the appropriate screens from the approved forms. Depending on whether a specific staff member had authority to make corrections or updates, a Correction or Update Form was completed and approved by the Center Manager and Auditor. Centers reported that the MIS responsibilities of the missing staff were not maintained, and it was unlikely that anyone retroactively completed these data.

Some reports about Center activity were generated by the corporate office, rather than by the individual Centers. Centers were not credited with placements until the Program Auditor Approval Module (PAAM) report was verified through the central Quality and Compliance office. Managers expressed frustration over delays in receiving the PAAM report.

Overall, staff reported that the Microsoft Access MIS was user-friendly, and the multiple forms were easy to manage. The problems that arose were less about the MIS than the burden of data entry, computer crashes, slow administrative responses, and lack of IT support. For example, in Washington, D.C. the MIS database was only on one computer, so all the staff had to use one staff person's computer to enter data. Staff members at several Centers also used extended hours to enter data because they did not have time to enter it during regular working hours.

In September 2006, BI officially converted its Microsoft Access database to SQL Server accessible on the Internet. The transition to a new database format was part of an overall upgrading of BI's information systems. In December 2006, the Centers received new faxes, phones, copiers and MIS login IDs. Each component was linked to a central server at the BI headquarters via a Local Access Network (LAN) connection.

The new MIS transition was challenging for staff members in each of the Centers. Staff reported having to learn how to use the new system abruptly without adequate training. Some data were lost during the change over and printouts of reports and forms were misaligned relative to what was visible on screen. Staff did appreciate the speed and similar appearance of the SQL screens to the paper forms, although the reporting features were limited under the new system.

Some staff members were more dependent on the MIS than others to perform their job duties. The QCAs, QC Supervisor and Grant and Evaluation Manager were heavily dependent on the MIS to generate reports for headquarters and DOL/ETA. The database transition complicated both their responsibilities in that there were often discrepancies between the paperwork submitted by Centers to the QCA and information in the SQL database. To compensate, staff relied on paperwork for accuracy and for a brief period during the implementation, the Grant and Evaluation Manager used both the old Access database and the new SQL database to generate her quarterly reports to DOL/ETA.

Problems in the new MIS were addressed gradually through an electronic Help Desk implemented by BI's IT Consultant. Staff members appreciated the Help Desk but lacked confidence in the quality of data as a result of the implementation. Initially, the new MIS affected staff productivity and the capacity of executive personnel to provide DOL/ETA with timely and accurate reports. Near the end of the project, a flood at the central office in Baltimore damaged the server and cut short access to the database. Staff members were unable to access the MIS for several weeks but paper records were completed.

Center Managers also used "white boards" of various kinds to track progress and placements. The Center Manager in Washington, D.C., in the role as Executive Manager, prepared a spreadsheet that enabled Centers to array the participants available for placement along with demographic information and skill sets. According to Center Managers, it solved the problem of knowing which candidates were available and would be good matches to openings uncovered by

BRCs. Los Angeles used this spreadsheet form while Chicago and New York staff utilized a wall-mounted white board system for tracking recruitment activity and morning meeting discussions. The limitations of using the white boards were that they were not tied to the MIS database, which required staff members to duplicate the process of data entry by hand.

In the next section, the businesses recruited by BI and the involvement of BI with business clients is described.

Chapter IV

BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT

This chapter of the Final Report on DSYODP describes the businesses that BI recruited to place youth clients. The chapter is divided into two sections: A quantitative description of the businesses recruited by BI based on the data collected in the MIS and a qualitative description, based on data collected from evaluation visits to the four cities, of how BI and these businesses interacted to place youth job seekers.

A. Characteristics of Business Clients

The quantitative data BI collected about the employers with which it worked describes the industries, the size of their revenues, and the number of their employees. When they were contacted by the BRCs, businesses were asked about their current job openings, their typical retention rates and the reasons for job turnover. Potential employers were asked about their expectations for education and training, benefits and support services, and their willingness to hire offenders.

The employers' responses to these queries were recorded on the Business Needs Analysis (BNA) forms, entered into the database locally, and then forwarded to the central database BI maintained. Table IV.1 to Table IV.12 report these features of business clients recruited for the four cities in the demonstration.

Table IV.1 reports the total number of businesses recruited during both phases of the demonstration (602) and the total number recruited in Phase II (203). Businesses recruited during Phase I remain relevant in Phase II because BRCs depended on the entire list of business clients they recruited to place youth in Phase II.

**Table IV.1. Total Number of Businesses Recruited by Business Interface
and Total Businesses Recruited in Phase II**

City	Total Businesses Recruited		Total Phase I	Total Phase II	Percent of Total Recruited in Phase II
	Number	**Percent**			
Chicago	202	34%	163	39	19%
Washington, D.C.	132	22%	90	42	32%
Los Angeles	111	18%	NA	111	100%
New York	157	26%	146	11	7%
Total	602	100%	399	203	34%

The number of clients BI recruited ranges between 111 and 202 among the demonstration cities and the recruitment pattern varied. Data suggest that three of the four demonstration sites depended on the early years of business recruitment for Phase II. Los Angles, new to DSYODP

in Phase II, recruited 100 percent of its business clients in Phase II, while Chicago (19%) and New York (7%) recruited relatively few new businesses in Phase II. Washington, D.C. recruited 32 percent of its businesses in Phase II.

BRCs recruited business clients of varying sizes as measured by the number of employees and the size of revenues. Tables IV.2 and IV.3 report these size differences.

Table IV.2. Total Recruited Businesses by Employee Size

City	Fewer than 50 Employees		50 to 400 Employees		More than 400 Employees		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Total
Chicago	51	25%	107	53%	44	22%	202
Washington, D.C.	53	40%	38	29%	41	31%	132
Los Angeles	22	20%	40	37%	47	43%	109
New York	38	24%	57	36%	62	40%	157
Total	164	27%	242	40%	194	32%	600*

*Two businesses are missing data. Row percentages are presented for each site.

Table IV.2 reports size differences by employees in three categories: Business clients with fewer than 50 employees, those with 50 to 400 employees, and those over 400 employees. All four demonstration sites recruited businesses in all three employee size categories. BRCs in Chicago favored mid-size businesses while Washington, D.C. recruited more small businesses. Both Los Angeles and New York recruited the largest proportion of large businesses, but they recruited almost as many clients with a medium-size workforce as well.

Table IV.3. Total Recruited Business by Annual Revenues

City	Less than $500, 000		$500, 000 to $5million		Over $5million		Total
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Chicago	35	17%	94	47%	73	36%	202
Washington, D.C.	18	14%	42	32%	72	54%	132
Los Angeles	5	5%	45	41%	59	54%	109
New York	37	23%	67	43%	53	34%	157
Total	95	16%	248	41%	257	43%	600*

*Two businesses are missing data. Row percentages are presented for each site.

There are three categories of businesses by annual revenue: Less than $500,000, between $500,000 and $5 million, and over $5 million. Considering the business clients by the size of their total annual revenue indicates a somewhat different pattern from the comparison by number of employees. The business clients in Chicago are predominately from the middle revenue category as they were by the number of employees. While Washington, D.C. clients were chiefly from the smallest category by employee size, the majority of its clients were from the largest category when considered from a revenue stand point. Businesses recruited in Washington, D.C. were mostly stores or franchises associated with national chains. The clients in Los Angeles were

from the largest of the three size categories by either measure while the New York clients were from the middle category by revenue and the largest category by employee size.

Another way of examining the business clients recruited by BI is to consider the industries it drew from. Table IV.4 provides the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) definitions for BI's business clients.

Table IV.4. Total Recruited Businesses by Industrial Classification in Rank Order

NAICS Title	Chicago	Washington, D.C.	Los Angeles	New York	Total
Other Services (except Public Administration)	10	17	41	38	**106**
Health Care and Social Assistance	47	10	20	12	**89**
Retail Trade	23	24	10	17	**74**
Accommodation and Food Services	16	23	5	18	**62**
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	31	6	1	13	**51**
Finance and Insurance	6	5	6	19	**36**
Construction	11	13	3	7	**34**
Transportation and Warehousing	4	13	8	9	**34**
Administrative and Support, Waste Management, and Remediation Services	15	9	0	6	**30**
Manufacturing	15	1	7	1	**24**
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	1	4	1	6	**12**
Wholesale Trade	9	0	1	0	**10**
Public Administration	4	1	1	2	**8**
Information	4	2	0	2	**8**
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1	1	1	4	**7**
Utilities	1	3	1	1	**6**
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2	0	1	1	**4**
Educational Services	2	0	1	1	**4**
Total	**202**	**132**	**108**	**157**	**599***

*Three businesses are missing industry data.

Table IV.4 ranks the industries of business clients for all four demonstration sites, but the predominant industries within a site might differ. Note that "Other" services not elsewhere classified, is the single largest category for the four cities together and for both New York and Los Angeles. For Chicago, healthcare is clearly the predominant industry while it also had the most clients from the field of professional, scientific and technical services. Washington, D.C. has a more varied industrial profile with more retail and hospitality clients than any other industrial group. Taken together, service industries of all kinds are more represented than manufacturing, utilities, information, or management fields.

When BRCs contacted a potential business client, they inquired about its current methods of locating employees and the kinds of employees it was trying to hire. BRCs recorded this information on the Business Needs Assessment form. Tables IV.5 and IV.6 report these features of recruited business clients.

Table IV.5 indicates that business clients favored a cluster of job search procedures almost equally: Company website, employee referrals, direct applications, and newspaper advertisements. Only four percent of the businesses used a pro-active approach to matching candidates to positions through an employment agency, so the business intermediary approach was an innovation for almost all the firms.

Table IV.5. Recruitment Methods Used by Recruited Businesses Before BI Services

Recruitment Method	Chicago	Washington, D.C.	Los Angeles	New York	Total	Percent
Company Website	51	25	16	42	**134**	22 %
Employee Referrals	76	25	4	23	**128**	21%
Direct Applications	16	21	56	29	**122**	20%
Newspaper	26	40	16	36	**118**	20%
Community-Based Organizations	10	4	6	13	**33**	6%
Other Website	5	11	3	7	**26**	4%
Employment Agencies	13	1	4	5	**23**	4%
Post Flyers	5	5	5	2	**17**	3%
Total*	**202**	**132**	**110**	**157**	**601***	**100%**

*One business is missing information in LA.

BRCs recruited business clients who were likely to have positions they could fill. Table IV.6 shows that most of the openings available in recruited companies were in the unskilled and skilled worker categories for which BI youth were more likely to qualify. Although many youth were lacking in specific workforce skills, some youth such as those completing Job Corps, had a trade certificate that would qualify them for a skilled position.

Table IV.6. Types of Positions Businesses Were Seeking When Recruited by BI (N=602)

Site	Unskilled Positions		Skilled Positions		Management Positions		Total
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Chicago	108	36%	170	56%	20	7%	**305**
Washington, D.C.	90	38%	112	48%	30	13%	**234**
Los Angeles	90	37%	105	44%	46	19%	**241**
New York	118	49%	95	40%	25	10%	**240**
Total	**406**	**40%**	**482**	**47%**	**121**	**12%**	**1020**

Row percentages are included for each site.

A factor in selling the business intermediary approach to business clients was a commitment by the youth placements that they would remain on the job for six months. A question for BRCs was what the job retention rate was for these companies before placing youth clients. They also wanted to know the reasons departing employees reported for leaving. The rates of retention varied between skilled and unskilled workers. Tables IV.7 and IV.8 indicate these differences.[1]

[1] The basis for calculating the retention rate is not clear, that is, there is no indication on the BNA form as to whether this rate is based on a 60-day or a six-month basis. There is no guidance in the Technical Assistance Manual, but data gathered during our field interviews suggest that different industries have different standards for reporting retention. This would mean that the bases differed across business client reports.

Table IV.7 reports retention rates for unskilled workers among recruited business clients. The majority of employers reported employee retention averages of 50% or higher for unskilled employees, except for Los Angeles where the retention rate for most employers was between 40% and 50% among unskilled employees.

Table IV.7. Typical Unskilled Worker Retention Rates of Recruited Businesses
Before Using BI Services (N=600)*

Retention Rate	Chicago		Washington, D.C.		Los Angeles		New York		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than 40%	8	4%	16	12%	13	12%	30	19%	67	11%
40% - 50%	32	16%	17	13%	41	37%	40	26%	130	22%
50% - 75%	93	46%	52	40%	39	36%	46	29%	230	38%
75% - 85%	47	23%	30	23%	11	10%	20	13%	108	18%
Greater than 85%	22	11%	16	12%	6	5%	21	13%	65	11%
Total*	**202**	**34%**	**131**	**22%**	**110**	**18%**	**157**	**26%**	**600**	**100%**

*Two businesses are missing information.

Table IV.8 indicates that businesses in some cities were able to retain higher numbers of skilled employees on average. Business clients in Chicago and Washington, D.C. reported most skilled employee retention rates at 75% or higher. In Los Angeles and New York the skilled employee retention rates are reported at 50% or higher.

Table IV.8. Typical Skilled Worker Retention Rates of Recruited Businesses
Before Using BI Services (N=600)*

Retention Rate	Chicago		Washington, D.C.		Los Angeles		New York		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than 40%	2	1%	9	7%	3	3%	17	11%	31	5%
40% - 50%	16	8%	9	7%	14	13%	12	7%	51	8%
50% - 75%	47	23%	41	31%	48	44%	48	31%	184	31%
75% - 85%	88	44%	49	37%	33	30%	42	27%	212	35%
Greater than 85%	49	24%	23	18%	12	11%	38	24%	122	20%
Total*	**202**	**34%**	**131**	**22%**	**110**	**18%**	**157**	**26%**	**600**	**100%**

*Two businesses are missing information.

Table IV.9 reports the main reason business clients say their employees offered for leaving positions. The most commonly reported reason for leaving a job was overwhelmingly a lack of interest in the work. The next four reasons cluster around the jobs themselves: Advancement found elsewhere, low pay at the existing position, no opportunity for advancement, and lay-offs. Two reasons given relate to the workers' circumstances: Transportation and child care issues. Finally, lack of benefits and temporary disabilities complete the list.

**Table IV.9. Reasons Recruited Business Give for Turnover
Before Using BI Services (N=602)***

Reason	Chicago	Washington, D.C.	Los Angeles	New York	Total
Lack of Interest	88	65	21	67	**241**
Advancement	9	16	27	33	**85**
Low pay	24	9	23	15	**71**
No advancement opportunity	25	9	14	21	**69**
Lay-off	29	19	8	10	**66**
Poor transportation	22	7	12	1	**42**
Childcare issues	3	4	1	5	**13**
No benefits	2	3	3	4	**12**
Temporary Disability	0	0	0	1	**1**
Total	**202**	**132**	**109**	**157**	**600***

*Two businesses in LA were missing information on turnover.

The BRCs also investigated the services business clients expected BI to offer them, and the services were almost evenly divided between screening job candidates and recruiting them.

Placing youth offenders in jobs with retention-level wages was a major consideration for the Demand-side Youth Offender Demonstration Project. Consequently, BRCs asked potential business clients if they had a policy about hiring offenders and the nature of the policy. Table IV.10 reports the business clients' responses.

Table IV.10. Recruited Businesses' Offender Policies (N=602)

	Have Policy		Policy				
	Number	Percent	Theft	Drug Use	Felonies	Violence	Other
Chicago	187	93%	101	54	104	121	1
Washington, D.C.	76	58%	37	21	35	47	7
Los Angeles	46	42%	35	17	27	38	3
New York	56	36%	30	18	44	29	0
Total	**365**	**61%**	**203**	**110**	**210**	**235**	**11**

Percentages are calculated as a proportion of the total number of businesses recruited for each site.

Overall, sixty-one percent of the businesses recruited by BI had offender policies. Convictions involving violence were the strongest barrier across all sites. Virtually all the business clients recruited in Chicago reported having offender policies, and these affected candidates involved in violent crimes, felonies of any kind, and theft. Over half the businesses in Washington, D.C. reported offender policies affecting applicants with histories of violence, theft, or felonies. Forty-two percent of the businesses recruited in Los Angeles maintained policies about hiring offenders, especially those with histories of violence or theft in their backgrounds. About one-third of the New York business clients had offender policies, and the main concern was with applicants with convictions for felonies.

When BRCs recruited clients, they inquired about the training services and employer benefits the clients would expect. Tables IV.11 and IV.12 report businesses' responses.

Table IV.11. Additional Services Requested by Recruited Businesses (N=602)

Training/Education Services	Chicago	Washington, D.C.	Los Angeles	New York	Total
Training					
Industry Specific	97	42	61	43	**243**
Basic Job Skills	90	53	44	19	**206**
Vocational	17	9	1	6	**33**
Financial Management	7	4	0	1	**12**
Education					
GED	69	33	62	54	**218**
ESL	31	4	26	3	**64**
Basic Literacy	29	20	1	13	**63**

The training services requested by businesses were categorized as industry specific, basic job skills, vocational skills or financial management skills. Industry-specific includes such skills as familiarity with computers for the telemarketing jobs while vocational skills mean having certification or experience in a trade, such as heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC). Having basic job skills means that the entry-level workers have solved work readiness issues, such as punctuality, dependability, transportation, and child care. Financial management skills include being able to open a bank account and making life choices that allow a worker to live within available means.

The education services requested were GED, ESL, and basic literacy. GED refers to a general equivalency diploma that is earned by passing a series of tests that approximate high school content knowledge and skills. ESL refers to English as a Second Language instruction for non-native speakers. Basic literacy is instruction that brings a student to a level of reading, calculating and writing needed for work activities and safety.

Table IV.11 suggests that Chicago employers had the most expectations that BI would locate workers who had industry specific and basic job skills. Although less often demanded, the employers in other cities prioritized these two types of skills as well.

Most employers who noted education services expected BI to locate workers with GEDs. Chicago and Los Angeles also expected that BI would find workers who would have ESL instruction if they were not native speakers. Chicago, Washington, D.C. and New York expected that BI would find workers with at least basic literacy. Some businesses also requested additional help from the BRCs and these benefits are reported in Table IV.12.

Table IV.12. Benefits Requested by Recruited Businesses (N=602)

Requested Benefits	Chicago	Washington, D.C.	Los Angeles	New York	Total
Federal Bonding	9	6	0	8	23
Tax Credits	80	18	4	15	117
Health Insurance	7	9	13	2	31
Transportation	31	5	4	4	44
Uniforms	80	16	23	8	127
Totals	**207**	**54**	**44**	**37**	**342**

The benefits that employers requested included Federal bonding, tax credits, health insurance, transportation and uniforms. Federal bonding is a program that provides low-cost insurance to employers willing to take a chance on hiring offenders. In some cases, a sponsoring organization will purchase the Federal bonds and offer them to business clients as incentives to hire persons the sponsor is recommending. Tax credits provide a tax reduction for businesses willing to hire hard-to-place workers, such as offenders. Providing health insurance is a way for businesses that do not offer benefits to receive some assurance from a sponsoring organization that a new worker will be reliable because s/he is able to get medical attention as needed.

Transportation and uniforms are services frequently offered by sponsoring organizations to assist low-income workers in attaining stable work. Businesses that asked for transportation assistance usually were asking that someone provide bus or subway tokens/passes to see the entry-level worker through to his/her first paycheck. Similarly, some positions required that a new worker provide his/her own uniform and/or tools. Sponsoring organizations may have been asked to find new or good used clothing, tools, work shoes, tool belt, etc. to help a new worker meet the uniform requirements.

Table IV.12 shows that few of the employers requested Federal bonding, but more were interested in receiving a tax credit, particularly in Chicago where 80 businesses requested this benefit. Few business clients requested health insurance, the most requests coming from Los Angeles. Chicago employers were more likely to ask that new workers receive transportation assistance than business clients in any other city. Chicago clients were also more likely to ask the BRCs to help new workers with finding required uniforms than employers in other cities.

The information that follows was drawn from a qualitative analysis of the final site visit reports prepared by the evaluators for each site.

B. Relationships between Business Clients and Business Interface

Data for this section came from the interview protocols prepared for site visits to the demonstration cities. The questions of interest to DOL/ETA about employers shaped the site visit interviews that are reported in this section, including:

- How does the business intermediary approach identify and recruit employers and broker job placements for youth ex-offenders and youth at-risk of court or gang involvement?
- How *well* does BI identify and recruit employers who are willing to hire this target population? and,
- Does the use of the intermediary satisfy employers' needs?

The evaluation visit protocols listed 17 questions that helped the site visitor to understand the business, how it connected with BI, what jobs it offered entry-level workers, and the level of satisfaction with BI referrals. Evaluators asked these questions about business clients of the BI staff. During the second and third site visits, evaluators also contacted employers that were clients of the Centers to ask these questions of them directly. The majority of these interviews were conducted in person at the place of business. If that proved difficult to arrange, the interviewer conducted some interviews by telephone. The evaluators documented the responses they received in field notes that became accounts of their site visits. McNeil ETR then prepared an NVivo qualitative analysis of these documents by coding them for the topics of interest.

Table IV.13 identifies the employers contacted by McNeil ETR evaluators, their industries and the occupations held by BI placements. The narrative that follows includes reports from both staff and business representatives.

Table IV.13. Employers, Industries and Work Provided to Youth

Employer	Industry	Occupation
Chicago		
"W" Hotel Chicago Center	Hospitality	Customer Service
LifeSource	Blood Banking	Call Center Operator
Intercontinental Hotel	Hospitality	Customer Service
Allstate Insurance	Insurance	No Placements
Woodbridge Nursing Pavilion	Nursing Home	Certified Nurse Assistant
Little Sisters of the Poor	Nursing Home	Certified Nurse Assistant
Los Angeles		
TeleInterpreters	Professional Services	Administrative Support
Inter-Con Security	Security	Security Guard
Securitas Security Services	Security	Security Guard
Universal Protection Services	Security	Security Guard
Florence Filter	Manufacturing	Administrative Support
Neway Packaging	Manufacturing	Customer Service
New York City		
FreshDirect	Home Delivery Grocer	Packers, Runners
St. Moritz Security Services	Security	Security Guard
King TeleServices	Call Center	Call Center Operator
Pitney Bowes Management Services	Administrative Services	Administrative Support
FJC Security Services	Security	Security Guard
Metro One	Security	Security Guard
Washington, D.C.		
Simply Wireless	Cell Phones	Sales
Jiffy Lube	Auto Maintenance	Lube Tech
America's Best Contacts & Eyeglasses	Prescription Eyewear	Receptionist
Avis Budget Group	Auto Rental	Customer Service

1. Recruiting Business Clients

From the site visits, evaluators learned that the BRCs considered a number of factors in choosing employers to contact. They considered companies that looked for entry-level workers, were hiring all the time and were willing to pay the local retention wage.

All four Centers took an inductive approach to locating such businesses. They searched the Crain's publication, local want ads and the Internet. They looked for industry trends, such as the explosive growth of the security industry, and they attended career fairs. Los Angeles had the advantage of a Center director who had been in private sector employment for many years. She brought her network of colleagues and contacts that fueled the search for appropriate companies in the area. Chicago developed a particular focus on placing healthcare aides, particularly Spanish-speaking females while the New York Center did not find healthcare employers willing to pay the retention wage.

All the BRCs knew that they had to sell employers on their services. In New York, the manager prepared a script, called "Talk Track," that all the BRCs used in telephone conversations with prospective employers. Chicago, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. BRCs believed that they needed to meet employers face to face to convince them that these youth were serious about working and would give them good value for their wages. The Washington, D.C. Center assumed that they had only a few minutes to convince a new employer that the service was effective and free. The manager of the Los Angeles Center made a particular point of contacting public political officials to convince them that the BI services were a benefit to the community; it is the only Center that had an on-going relationship with juvenile corrections offices, Juvenile Alternative Work Services and Los Angeles County Probation.

All the Centers believed that it was important to develop dependable relationships with a few good sources of employment rather than maintain a scattershot of companies that they could not serve well. This strategy allowed the Centers to focus on certain employers that:

- Had job openings all year long,
- Offered jobs with characteristics and requirements that the Centers could match reliably,
- Met the minimum retention wage requirements,
- Understood the youth being referred and were willing to give them a chance,
- Offered full-time employment that also provided a career path,
- Processed hiring decisions quickly,
- Were located along major public transportation routes, and
- Treated young workers with respect.

Staff at the New York Center commented several times that its stability was an asset in developing and maintaining such relationships. The staff in Washington, D.C., on the other hand, reported that staff turnover made these relationships hard to develop. One employer emphasized that the BI services were valued, but that the current BRC was the third person they worked with in one year.

The employers that met all or most of these characteristics included such industries as:

- Security firms,
- Optical sales,
- Auto repair and maintenance,
- Auto rentals,
- Nursing homes and hospitals,
- Legal support services,
- Back office operations,
- Call Centers, and
- Hotels and dining facilities.

The range of training programs provided by the referring organizations (ROs) limited the range of industries for which youth were prepared. Computer skills and customer services offer a range of applications in the workforce, but some rapidly expanding industries that hire entry-level workers, such as construction, building maintenance, and landscaping were not considered because the youth were not offered training in these fields. In Los Angeles the ROs offered little training, and the BRCs searched for jobs in any industry that would hire participants at the retention wage.

Some employers were realistic that youth would not want to stay in entry-level positions for long. Pitney-Bowes in New York assumed that youth would be moving on in time, and arranged flexible hours if the employee wanted to stay in school and work too. LifeSources, an employer in Chicago, needed registered nurses and was willing to schedule hours to allow the certified nurse assistants to continue studying. Chicago staffs were exploring positions at employers, like Target, that would also offer such flexibility. The America's Best Contacts and Eyeglasses and Jiffy Lube in Washington, D.C. described the career paths a youth could follow if he/she liked the work. At Jiffy Lube, for example, new employees were informed of a possible career path:

- Lube Tech,
- Third Keyholder,
- Assistant Manager, and
- Manager.

Jiffy Lube was uniquely fond of the DSYODP project because of their long history in working with formerly convicted youth.

2. Services to Businesses

The four Centers provided multiple services to business clients. The employers served by the four Centers reported that BRCs offered them what they needed, including:

- A professional approach,
- Candidates that match the job requirements closely,

- Candidates pre-screened to address issues—personal, such as drug use or offender status, and professional, such as appropriate resume and proper attire,
- A steady stream of candidates for multiple openings,
- Willingness to negotiate hours, shifts and wages,
- Follow-up with employers and placements to be sure that the match was working out,
- Savings of time and money, and
- Free services.

Employers at all four sites reported on the professional demeanor of the BRCs. They appreciated that the BRCs had good listening skills and that they took the time to learn something about their industry and their specific circumstances. Several employers specifically mentioned that BI staff took a hands-on approach to its work. These employers reported that BI staff took the employers' point-of-view in developing the relationship, and they compared favorably with other services that just wanted to "get a body placed." A Chicago employer reported that she held BI to a higher standard than other organizations because of her experience with good placements.

At each Center, interviewed employers reported that BI staffs worked hard to understand the specific work requirements for the positions that they needed filled. In New York, BRCs wrote detailed position descriptions for openings that were then sent to the ROs. Other Centers kept spreadsheets of requirements to match with youth applicants in their database. Employers reported that the care BI took in matching candidates to positions had reduced turnover and the amount of time they needed to spend preparing the candidate for the work. As one security employer in New York reported, BI candidates arrived "floor-ready." A Chicago employer reported that turnover had been reduced 5-10% since he hired from BI.

Centers worked hard to make sure that youth were ready for their job interviews. The Centers learned what factors to examine to screen candidates for positions that were available. New York City used its threshold questions to screen youth initially. The youth needed to:
- Arrive on the day and time arranged,
- Know the name of the person at the Center he/she came to meet, and
- Know the employer whose position for which he/she was applying.

The youth, literally, needed to meet these expectations to enter the Center and be interviewed. All four of the Centers reported interviewing candidates before sending them to the employer interview. They reviewed the youth's resumes to be sure that they were sufficiently detailed to address the responsibilities of the jobs for which they were applying.

Both Los Angeles and New York staffs coached youth to have a positive attitude about their job prospects saying, "This may not be the job you want but it will get you the experience for the job you want." In Los Angeles, the example was given that security services experience was a requirement for Transportation Safety Authority positions that paid well and had benefits.

BRCs learned that qualifications needed for employment varied. Some positions did not require a high school diploma if the candidate had other skills, such as strong verbal skills in the case of telephone call Centers. In Los Angeles, one security firm wanted younger applicants because the

employee would have to patrol an area on bicycle. In Los Angeles, the staffs found that if the candidate's qualifications were strong, the employer would provide all the needed training.

Offenders were considered on a case-by-case basis at one security firm, but were not considered at all by a car rental agency. A call center had no concerns about a youth offender if the crime involved did not entail violence because there was no direct customer contact. Other employers did not want to consider offenders because of legal issues and did not distinguish the kind of work or work setting an offender would occupy. The effort that BRCs made to understand the industries and the employers they served allowed them to place clients who might otherwise have not been considered at all.

Employers reported that the youth arrived for their interviews with a good understanding of the positions, and the youth interviewed reported that BI had prepared them well for their job interviews. The Washington, D.C. Center reported that it initially heard complaints from the employers that the candidates were not passing drug tests. It changed its screening process to be sure that candidates could pass these tests lest the employers lose trust in BI's referrals. One Washington, D.C. employer reported, however, that he would hire a BI referral before considering those referred from other sources.

Employers at all sites appreciated the effort BI staffs made to understand why a recommended client was not hired. Employers saw this as another example of the Centers' efforts to have employers' interests in mind and to keep learning how to do their work better.

The Centers reported that employers often needed multiple employees at one time. One Chicago employer reported needing 20 to 40 employees every other week; three Los Angeles employers reported having 25 to 60 openings at any one time; and a New York security services employer needed all the candidates that BI could find.

The Centers struggled to meet these demands, but in the interest of serving employers, they referred candidates even if not all of them met the qualifications for being counted as a BI placement. Many ROs had job seekers above the 25-year-old age limit; and BI staff would recommend them along with those who met the age criterion. BRCs in New York and Los Angeles were also willing to negotiate for the retention wage. They might accept a placement at fewer than full-time hours if the employer gave reasonable assurance that the job would become full-time. They accepted night shift placement if doing so would gain the retention wage. In Washington, D.C., youth offenders were prepared to take positions below the retention wage to demonstrate to employers that they were work-ready and were finished with their legal problems. Employers appreciated the effort the BRCs made to get them the workers they needed and in a timely way.

Only New York had a full-time RS, but all four Centers followed-up with clients after placement. Employers appreciated that BI remained involved to be sure a participant was successful and to assist if there was a problem. Some Human Resource offices did not track the retention of new employees. Once the person was hired, he/she could be assigned to multiple sites, and only the local manager would know if he/she were still working. The Human Resource contact remained appreciative that someone was following up with the placement.

A theme throughout the employer interviews was that working with BI saved them time. They cited the good matches and the pre-screening as the two most valuable services that BI offered them. Part of the time saving was the readiness of the person to work; part was the reduced turnover, which saved them the new recruitment effort. The Washington, D.C. Center reported that one happy customer, Simply Wireless, recommended BI to Cingular Wireless.

Since a number of the employers were small operations, they appreciated that BI services were free. They typically did not contract with a firm to search for candidates, relying on newspapers and Internet searches. With BI, these employers found better candidates in less time.

None of the employers was willing to pay enough for placements to substitute for the DOL/ETA funding. Two employers in New York were considering out-sourcing their Human Resources operation and wanted BI to consider bidding for it. Several New York BRCs believed that they could operate a work readiness program that would make them eligible for workforce training dollars. Between the outsourced private work and public training dollars, the BRCs believed that they could maintain a financially viable intermediary service. The operation closed before such options could be pursued.

The Centers learned what barriers were difficult to overcome in serving businesses:

- The lack of enough, well-prepared candidates,
- The youth and immaturity of some clients,
- Turnover due to wage and benefits issues, and
- The lack of transportation options.

Every Center reported difficulty in finding enough well-prepared candidates for the position openings that existed. Some of the ROs that were effective in preparing work-ready candidates graduated only a handful of youth at a time. Some youth remained unprepared, even if they had completed high school and had other work experience. One Chicago employer reported that the clients referred had poor communication skills, and this was an area of weakness that BI staff in other Centers also recognized.

Even though BI used a retention wage as a way to induce youth to remain employed at least six months, the wage was too low for some clients to maintain independent living. Some employers, moreover, offered the retention wage but not benefits, a problem for workers with family obligations.

The lack of a vehicle and a driver's license limited the options for some clients. In Chicago, LifeSource was reluctant to hire BI youth because the employer needed workers in a suburban office and that required a car. In Los Angeles, the job opportunities were all over the LA Basin, and it was difficult to find positions that clients could access from public transportation. In Chicago, the job openings were all near the BI Center, and in New York, jobs were sought that could be reached from the subway system.

Summary

In this chapter, the characteristics of business clients were examined when BI recruited them and the interactions of the BRCs and business clients once they were working together were described. The descriptions at the time of recruitment are drawn from BI's central database of Business Needs Analysis forms. The interactions after recruitment are based on site visit interviews with BI staff, business clients, and youth.

Over the period of performance, BRCs in each demonstration city recruited over 100 business clients. These clients were drawn from small, medium and large businesses in a wide range of industries. Before working with BI, these businesses used few pro-active strategies for recruiting workers and they had openings for workers at all skill levels. Many of these business clients reported relatively high turnover rates for low skill workers but somewhat more stable patterns for skilled workers. The reasons workers gave for leaving employment of these business clients were chiefly related to the jobs themselves: lack of interest, better advancement elsewhere, low pay, or lack of advancement.

Businesses that BI recruited were looking for help with screening and recruitment. Most had offender policies that would limit some offenders from being placed, especially if their offenses involved theft, violence or felonies. Most business clients did not, however, request Federal bonding to offset the risk they would have from hiring an offender. Tax credits for hiring hard-to-place workers seemed more appealing to businesses.

Many employers requested BI to locate workers with industry-specific training, basic work skills and vocational training; few expected BI to specify financial management as a required skill. Some employers expected BI to locate workers that had earned their GEDs, received ESL instruction if not native speakers, or had at least basic literacy education. Few business clients expected BI to assure that workers would have health insurance or transportation assistance, but businesses in Chicago expected help with locating uniforms for its new (mostly healthcare) workers.

The primary employer study questions posed by DOL/ETA for the DSYODP were:

- How did the business intermediary approach identify and recruit employers and broker job placements for youth ex-offenders and youth at-risk of court or gang involvement?
- How *well* did BI identify and recruit employers who are willing to hire this target population? and
- Did the use of the intermediary satisfy employers' needs?

From the site visit interviews, evaluators learned that BRCs used inductive processes to identify a small number of businesses that were always hiring entry-level staff, were open to hiring youth offenders or youth at-risk of court or gang involvement, and willing to pay the local retention wage. Once identified, BRCs knew they had to sell their services to the employers, and they worked hard to maintain contact to keep these reliable sources of job placements.

Some employers were willing to consider hiring offenders while others were not. The number of placements was limited more by the paucity of work-ready youth than the employers' attitudes or the number of job openings.

Employers reported being pleased by the services BI offered them. The employers noted the professionalism of the BRCs and the care they took to understand the nature of the employers' industry and its labor needs. Employers liked the experience of having BRCs contact them if a referral was not hired in order to learn better how to improve quality. They particularly appreciated savings in time and money by having pre-screened candidates from an organization that paid close attention to the specific job qualifications of their openings. While several employers commented that they were happy to give disadvantaged youth a chance, most said that the BI involvement strengthened their bottom line.

Both the youthful job seekers and the employers reported that BI prepared candidates well for job interviews. BI staff reviewed resumes, held mock interviews, and gave candidates exercises to make sure that they were confident if asked to demonstrate work-related skills. Employers were pleased that BI staff remained engaged with youth after placement to assist them with their transition to work.

Employers reported that few entry-level workers would remain in those positions for long. Some made it possible for their employees to continue with their education; some showed the newly hired a career path open to them. Other employers reported that their industry was used to high rates of turnover and did not expect the young workers to stay longer than the six-month period to which they had agreed.

BI staffs targeted employers that had openings all the time, so it is not surprising that the employers were disappointed that BI could not provide the numbers of workers they needed. Sometimes BRCs encouraged a youth to take a position for lower pay, an inconvenient shift, or fewer hours after negotiating with employers to give a salary increase or improve the hours within six months. BRCs negotiated with the employers to pay the retention wage to younger workers eligible under the BI criteria for placement in exchange for BI finding enough older workers to meet the employers' needs.

Employers appreciated BRCs' efforts on their behalf, but they were not willing or able to pay for the screening and placement services that would make BI financially independent of DOL/ETA funding. Staff members at the Centers were exploring other ways to finance their operations but the Centers were closed before they were able to complete such arrangements.

Interacting with business clients was one half of the relationship developed in the business intermediary model. BI also established relationships with organizations that prepared youth for entry-level work. Describing these organizations is the topic of the next chapter.

Chapter V

REFERRING ORGANIZATIONS

This chapter of the Final Report on DSYODP describes the ROs that referred youth participants to BI. The chapter is divided into four sections based on the combination of data collected from the centralized BI database and qualitative descriptions from data collected during the site visits to the four cities and/or phone interviews with ROs. Sections include the following:

A. The Number of ROs Recruited by BI,
B. Populations Served by ROs,
C. Services Provided to Youth by ROs, and
D. Relationships Between ROs and BI.

A. The Number of Referring Organizations Recruited by BI

With respect to Business Clients, ROs represent the opposite end of the intermediary model by referring youth to the Centers for placement in employment. HRCs demonstrated various strategies in identifying ROs. This included utilizing referrals from other ROs, contacting vocational schools, job readiness organizations, job placement organizations, and other community-based and/or government employment service agencies that serviced youth meeting the demographic requirements of BI.

Once ROs were identified, HRCs established contact with key personnel in the organization, like youth case managers or career development specialists, to determine if BI could work with the RO. Once confirmed, the HRC entered the RO into the database and worked with their contacts to establish a protocol for recruiting youth. Of course, not all youth referred by ROs were eligible for DSYODP or placed in employment. Table V.1 shows the total number of ROs recruited by BI and the total recruited during Phase II.

Table V.1. Number of Referring Organizations Recruited by Site

Cities	Total ROs	Total Phase II	Percent Recruited in Phase II
Chicago	67	15	22.4%
Washington, D.C.	47	11	23.4%
Los Angeles	48	48	100%
New York	81	20	24.7%
Total	**243**	**87**	**35.8%**

Similar to businesses, the majority of each Center's ROs were recruited during Phase I of DSYODP with the exception of Los Angeles, which began in Phase II. Of the total 243 referring organizations, New York had the largest share followed by Chicago, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C.. There were a total of 87 referring organizations recruited during Phase II. For

Phase II, Los Angeles had the largest share of recruitments followed by New York, Chicago and then Washington, D.C..

B. Populations Served

Information on ROs was collected by the Centers on a Referring Organizations form. Table V.2 shows characteristics of the populations served by the four BI Centers based on data collected from this form.

Table V.2. Populations Served by Referring Organizations

	Youth Offenders	WIA Eligible	WtW Eligible	Seniors	Persons with Disabilities	Empowerment Zone
Chicago	55	46	25	19	26	27
Washington, D.C.	39	25	21	14	24	20
Los Angeles	44	25	14	18	28	12
New York	66	49	41	13	31	31
Total	**204**	**145**	**101**	**64**	**109**	**90**

Of the 243 ROs recruited, most worked with youth offenders and/or youth at-risk of court involvement. Over half the organizations served WIA-eligible clients, and almost half provided services to persons with disabilities and Welfare-to-Work eligible clients. Ninety organizations provided services to clients living in Empowerment Zones, and roughly a quarter serviced seniors.

In addition to data from the MIS, data collected from site visit interviews suggests that ROs recruited served a broad range of constituents; from recent high school graduates to those seeking career changes. Table V.3 shows a list of ROs interviewed by evaluators during visits to the sites and by phone.

Table V.3. Referring Organizations and Contact Position by Site

Referring Organizations	Contact Position
Chicago	
College of Office Technology	Career Services Assistant
Illinois School of Health Careers	Director of Career Services
Casa Central	Job Counselor and Case Manager
Uhlic Children's Advantage Network (UCAN)	Career Services Director
Central States SER	Lead Youth Development Specialist
Coyne Institute	Career Development Representative
Los Angeles	
South Los Angeles WorkSource Center	EO Officer and Business Services
Los Angeles Job Corps Center	Senior Career Transition Specialist
Los Angeles County Probation	Employment Resource Coordinator and Deputy Probation Officer
WorkSource Center, Urban League	Assistant Director

WorkSource Center, Urban League	Business Specialist
Community build	Case Manager
PV Jobs	Case Manager
American Security Group	Training Coordinator
New York City	
South Bronx Job Corps Center	Career Development Specialist
Vocational Foundation	Workforce Manager
The City of New York Business Link	Account Manager
Stanley Isaacs Community Center	Youth Employment Job Developer
STRIVE (Support and Training Result in Valuable Employees)	Job Developer
Goodwill/ Brooklyn	Job Developer
FEGS (Federation Employment and Guidance Service)	Job Developer
Washington, D.C.	
LAYC (Latin American Youth Center)	Job Developer
VW Associates	Washington, D.C. Chamber of Commerce
Career Blazers	Supervisor
DOES (Department of Employment Services)	Job Developer

Some ROs served participants as young as 16, while others as old as 53. The College of Office Technology in Chicago estimated that 25% of its students were youth. It extracted a list of students in the BI demographic range to strategize on ways to funnel youth to the Center. Participants typically came from low-income households and were plagued with financial-based needs such as access to a working phone, transportation, etc. The population served also included youth that were wards of the state. Youth who screened positive for drugs were typically not allowed into programs.

At VW Associates in Washington, D.C., the program focused on rehabilitating ex-offenders ages 18 to 53. It provided skills training to prepare the youth participants for employment, but to get into the program youth were required to have either a diploma or GED. STRIVE in NY worked with clients that had difficulty keeping jobs. These included people with a record of tardiness or repeat offences. Their mission was to reduce the barriers to stable employment.

Business Link in New York referred welfare clients transitioning to work. The office serves clients of all ages, but one staff member was the primary contact with BI and referred only youth 18 to 25. The eligible youth in the pool were referred to the RO by their caseworkers as employable. When it received a posting, the staff mailed it to eligible clients on public assistance. FEGS in NY prepares persons on public assistance for employment.

In Washington, D.C., DOES focused on servicing 20 "hot spot" neighborhoods identified by the mayor as having high crime and unemployment rates. Many of the residents of these areas had no employment income, no retirement, and no social security to look forward to.

In New York, Vocation Foundation helped youth between 16 and 24 years by providing job training. It drew youth from all five boroughs of the city, focusing on youth from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Vocation Foundation recruited low-income students primarily through the New York Public Housing Authority. High school guidance counselors also referred students who were unlikely to complete diploma studies by age 18.

C. Services Provided

Because of the nature of the intermediary model implemented by BI, ROs play a crucial role in providing essential services that facilitate the matching of youth to business clients with vacancies. The Centers were not designed to directly provide a range of services, but rather they linked participants to organizations that could provide different types of support throughout the process, from application through placement and retention. The following tables describe the services available from ROs across the four sites. These data represent the capacity of ROs to provide services to participants; data on participants does not indicate the extent to which individuals actually received specific services from these organizations.

1. Job-Related Services

Many ROs were job training institutions of various types, including community colleges, non-accredited career colleges, or state-sponsored job training programs. While some focused specifically on students' completing their high school or GED and receiving certification in a trade, others required high school diplomas or GEDs before students were able to enter their programs. The crucial service as identified by both representatives of the ROs and Center staffs was assessing each youth's readiness for work, and then providing individualized services to help improve the level of work-readiness. Table V.4 shows job-related services provided by ROs.

Table V.4. Job-Related Services Provided by Referring Organizations

	Chicago	Washington, D.C.	Los Angeles	New York	Total	Percent of Total ROs
N	*67*	*47*	*48*	*81*	*243*	
Resume Writing	52	36	35	69	**192**	79.0%
Case Management	47	38	38	68	**191**	78.6%
Interviewing	49	36	32	66	**183**	75.3%
Pre-Employment Service	45	28	24	62	**159**	65.4%
Time Management	31	30	30	45	**136**	56.0%
Skills Risk Assessment	28	27	19	50	**124**	51.0%
Professional Clothing	28	30	23	37	**118**	48.6%
Conflict Management	27	22	16	45	**110**	45.3%
TABE (Test of Adult Basic Skills) Testing	35	17	14	28	**94**	38.7%
Drug Screening	18	17	13	17	**65**	26.7%
Re-Entry Service	14	13	13	23	**63**	25.9%
Criminal History	9	6	10	12	**37**	15.2%
TB Testing	5	9	7	7	**28**	11.5%

As evident in the table, most ROs provided students with skills needed for resume writing, case management, interviewing, and other pre-employment services. Fewer ROs offered services to assist youth with soft skills development or services associated with at-risk behavior or criminal history. This is indicative of the difficulty faced by ROs and BI in placing ex-offenders,

especially convicted felons. A few ROs had the resources and ability to screen participants on-site. In Chicago, New York or Washington, D.C., for example, business partners and BI staff members came on-site to do pre-screening, recruitment and drug tests. The HRC later contacted the clients who passed the screening with the date for a pre-employment interview or test.

2. Skills Training Services

Table V.5 shows the skills training provided by ROs in each of the four cities. Over 60% of ROs offered computer training in one form or another. Over 40% of ROs reported offering GED preparation or vocational training and close to 40% offered employer-specific training. This training may have included accredited training in technical fields and employment preparation in the form of career plans managed on a case-by-case basis. For example, DOES in Washington, D.C. provided job training through on-the-job, subsidized employment activities as part of the mayor's program to improve labor market success for residents in 20 neighborhoods in the city.

Table V.5. Skills Training Services Provided by Referring Organizations

	Chicago	Washington, D.C.	Los Angeles	New York	Total	Percent of Total ROs
N	*67*	*47*	*48*	*81*	**243**	
Computer Training	35	31	27	56	**149**	61.3%
GED	22	23	16	50	**111**	45.7%
Vocational Training	24	27	23	36	**110**	45.3%
Employer-Specific Training	24	26	12	33	**95**	39.1%
Literacy Training	10	22	12	23	**67**	27.6%
ESL	14	12	12	29	**67**	27.6%
Subsidized Training	12	15	11	24	**62**	25.5%
Finance Literacy	15	16	9	20	**60**	24.7%

Fewer ROs offered services like literacy training, English as a Second Language (ESL) training, subsidized training or financial literacy. These services could also be characterized as supportive services (discussed in Table VI.9) that foster the development of life skills important for job attainment, civic participation, and functionality.

3. Additional Services

Table V.6 shows the additional training services offered across the four cities. Based on experience with three rounds of the Youth Offender Demonstration Project, McNeil ETR learned that these services can be particularly important for disadvantaged youth. In effect, they can be as important as those services listed previously as "job-related" because they increase job-readiness and a youth's chances of success once employed.

Table V.6. Additional Services Provided by Referring Organizations

	Chicago	Washington, D.C.	Los Angeles	New York	Total	Percent of Total ROs
N	*67*	*47*	*48*	*81*	*243*	
Self Image, Self Esteem	33	31	31	48	**143**	58.8%
Communicating	33	30	25	49	**137**	56.4%
Clothing Assistance	30	33	25	38	**126**	51.9%
Teamwork	28	23	18	35	**104**	42.8%
Anger Management	19	26	18	27	**90**	37.0%
Education Tools	20	22	15	27	**84**	34.6%
Legal Assistance	6	12	13	12	**43**	17.7%

BI relied on ROs to provide some degree of soft skills training to participants they referred. Whenever necessary, BRCs gave workshops on attitude and proper workplace etiquette and attire.

Some ROs were community service organizations offering a wide range of social services and programs to the Hispanic community. For example LAYC offered 10-week training sessions, or modules, in which participants were evaluated based on their attendance and motivation. Another RO, the South Bronx Job Corps Center in New York, had an anger management class if the youth needed it. Students were also given a clothing allotment every 60 days, which they used to shop for work clothes.

4. Targeted Services

Targeted Services are prescribed career tracks that RO participants embark upon. Their hope, although not always the case, was to attain employment in their given track following the completion of their program. Table V.7 shows the targeted services across the 4 cities.

Table V.7. Targeted Training Provided by Referring Organizations

	Chicago	Washington, D.C.	Los Angeles	New York	Total	Percent of Total ROs
N	*67*	*47*	*48*	*81*	*243*	
Computer/Data Entry	22	29	13	33	**97**	39.9%
Clerical/Administrative	20	24	15	32	**91**	37.4%
HealthCare	21	16	11	20	**68**	28.0%
Customer Service/Telemarketing	12	14	12	25	**63**	25.9%
Janitorial/Maintenance	11	16	9	22	**58**	23.9%
Technology	9	18	7	15	**49**	20.2%
Food Service	6	14	5	21	**46**	18.9%
Hospitality	13	14	4	12	**43**	17.7%
Retail Sales	7	10	6	14	**37**	15.2%
Bank Teller	5	9	4	15	**33**	13.6%

The top targeted services offered by ROs included: computer/data entry, clerical administrative, healthcare, customer service/telemarketing, and janitorial/maintenance. These account for over half of the specified targeted services.

ROs across the 4 sites offered career tracks that captured the targeted services and in some respects went beyond the scope of the services. The College of Office Technology in Chicago trained students of all ages for careers in computer operations, computer network technology, administrative medical assistance and phlebotomy. VW Associates in Washington, D.C. offered cable installation training. While in New York, the South Bronx Job Corps Center offered culinary training, OSHA-Construction/Facility Maintenance, security, A+ Computer Certification, business technology, and accounting training.

The Illinois School of Health Careers, a Chicago RO, offered fully accredited college training programs such as Medical Assisting, Dental Assisting, and Massage Therapy. Coyne American Institute (Chicago) trained electrical technicians, construction and maintenance and heating, air conditioning and refrigeration. It also trained youth for careers in medical administrative assistance, medical billing and coding specialists. In the course of their studies, students in health career studies spent time on site at a doctor's or hospital office as part of the curriculum.

As is shown in Chapter VII, there is a clear relationship between the types of targeted training offered by ROs recruited at each site and the types of industries in which youth were placed.

5. Job Placement Services

Although BI was instrumental in the job placement of participants, ROs also participated in the process. Table V.8 displays job placement services offered by ROs across the 4 cities. Almost three quarters of ROs across the four sites provided assistance to youth in preparing an employment development plan, and significant numbers of organizations offered the remaining services in each city.

Table V.8. Job Placement Services Provided by Referring Organizations

	Chicago	Washington, D.C.	Los Angeles	New York	Total	Percent of Total ROs
N	*67*	*47*	*48*	*81*	*243*	
Employment Development Plan	49	35	31	64	**179**	73.7%
Private Sector Employment	26	30	21	41	**118**	48.6%
Unpaid work experience	27	20	11	26	**84**	34.6%
Job Club/ Peer-to-peer Support	29	13	14	21	**77**	31.7%
Job Shadowing	17	18	7	19	**61**	25.1%

Based on the interviews, evaluators found that ROs that aided their participants in the job placement and retention process believed they saw higher numbers of success, i.e. placement and retention. The director of the Illinois School of Health Careers in Chicago was responsible for tracking students from training through their transition to work. He often asked the HRC and

BRC to participate in the training. He also made weekly contact with BI staff members about the students in the program.

In NY, the South Bronx Job Corps Center and BI provided retention services for six months after placement. The RO staff called every month while the BI RS called weekly. The RO believed that the combined retention services indicated to the students that others cared about them. The Stanley Isaacs Community Center (NY) required a quarterly follow-up with placed youth for two years. Youth were expected to come to the Center with a pay stub, and one staff member was tasked with trying to locate the youth and encourage their compliance.

Based on the evaluators' experience with the Youth Offender Demonstration Project (YODP), the first four types of job placement services in Table V.8 can all be very important for younger job seekers. An unpaid work experience may actually be a better starting point than private sector employment because individuals can test out their job skills in a less intimidating environment. Grantees in YODP also found that job clubs or some related form of peer-to-peer support could provide significant encouragement to other youth as individuals share stories of both frustration and success in seeking employment. In some cases, youth seem to be more receptive to the lessons learned by peers who have been going through the same process, rather than hearing advice solely from case managers or other adult professionals.

6. Support Services

Support services refer to programs offered through ROs to assist participants in areas of life outside of work but relative to retention. These areas include: childcare, transportation, housing, health services, financial planning education, mentoring, youth services, and counseling. Some ROs addressed the needs of youth that could serve as barriers to employment and retention, namely, childcare and matching offenses with particular employers so they could prioritize their referrals. Table V.9 displays the support services provided by ROs at each site.

Table V.9. Supportive Services Provided by Referring Organizations

	Chicago	Washington, D.C.	Los Angeles	New York	Total	Percent of Total ROs
N	*67*	*47*	*48*	*81*	***243***	
Childcare Services						
Financial Assistance	8	5	7	5	**25**	10.3%
Referrals	38	25	21	52	**136**	56.0%
Transportation						
Passes/Financial Assistance	40	17	27	33	**117**	48.1%
Referrals	19	18	14	32	**83**	34.2%
Housing						
Emergency Assistance	10	9	11	11	**41**	16.9%
Referrals	36	24	26	49	**135**	55.6%
Health Services						
Mental Health Counsel	16	7	10	15	**48**	19.8%

Table V.9. Supportive Services Provided by Referring Organizations
(continued)

	Chicago	Washington, D.C.	Los Angeles	New York	Total	Percent of Total ROs
Physical Health Services	9	4	8	6	**27**	11.1%
Referrals	34	20	22	42	**118**	48.6%
Financial Planning Education	17	12	11	22	**62**	25.5%
Mentoring	20	21	20	29	**90**	37.0%
Youth Services	27	22	14	37	**100**	41.2%
Additional Services Provided*	3	0	3	3	**9**	3.7%

*Additional services include general career counseling, pre- and post-employment counseling and transitional shelter in Chicago; case management, food/showers and transitional housing in Los Angeles; and case handling, clerical/computer training and support groups in New York.

Most of the ROs recruited by the Centers referred youth to other organizations for childcare, housing, and health services rather than providing these services. Many ROs did provide transportation assistance to youth in the form of transit subsidies or financial assistance. The Stanley Isaacs Community Center gave participants Metro transit fare for several days to attend job interviews, but they did not receive childcare. Central States SER provided bus passes and had supportive services dollars to assist disadvantaged youth with clothing. For services they did not provide, like mental health care, youth were referred to other local institutions.

Youth services were also popular among the recruited ROs. In Washington, D.C., LAYC had the resources to offer a foster care system (all male ages 16-21), Transitional Living Program (male), AmeriCorps, evening reporting alternative incarceration, charter school, and homeless youth facilities. In Chicago, Central States SER offered two afterschool programs through 21st Century Community Learning Center and Supplemental Educational Services (SES) grants to local high schools.

The Stanley Isaacs Community Center provided services ranging from childcare to elder care, after school programs, GED classes and SAT preparation classes. New York's STRIVE had support services such as clothing, housing, counseling, and childcare. STRIVE sent staff to go with clients to court appearances. It referred clients for GED classes, but did not provide funding for education and training.

D. Relationships between ROs and BI

BI and the ROs interacted, ultimately, to serve the needs of employers by preparing youth in their quest for employment. Overall, most ROs interviewed were pleased with BI and enjoyed working with them. Good placements generally reflected well on the RO, and may have counted towards their own measures and goals. BI made it clear to the ROs that its goal was to place participants in career-oriented jobs and not part-time or seasonal work. ROs stated that their relationship with BI worked well and that BI found outstanding positions for the youth they referred.

ROs appreciated the BI practice of giving feedback after youth screenings and job interviews. In New York, the South Bronx Job Corps Center commented on the fact that BI did pre-screening and offered feedback about the youths' experiences. Its staff reported that BI helped the students find jobs because it reinforced the same standards of dress and attendance as the Job Corps career development staff.

BI worked with a variety of ROs, each offering a range of services to youth. The vast array of services offered by ROs could potentially have led to well-prepared BI candidates. This was not always the case. BI staff in all the Centers mentioned their desire to have received better qualified referrals from ROs. Unfortunately many candidates were not job ready. BI staff recalled the difficulty they had instilling enthusiasm and pride in the candidates. The lack of confidence, work readiness and professionalism in so many candidates indicates the inability of certain ROs to instill these characteristics. The former Executive Manager of BI stated that what these organizations teach as job readiness is not what BI does; BI teaches the work culture and the necessary soft skills.

If candidates were not well prepared coming from the ROs, they were much more difficult to place in employment. Many candidates came to BI expecting a job. Although some of them had received minimal training in certain fields at training institutions, they often were not prepared with respect to having accurate resumes, appropriate dress, professional attitude, and other "soft skills" needed to survive on the job. Oftentimes, participants did not show up to BI on time nor did they report to the employer for interviews.

BI staff admitted that they would like to have had the opportunity to refer candidates back to the ROs if they were significantly unprepared for work. Conversely, a few ROs believed that they should have been given feedback on their participants that BRCs could not place.

Some ROs admitted that instilling professionalism was a challenge. BI staff also indicated that some ROs did not do a good job in painting realistic pictures to its participants about life and work. Youth complained about work and were not satisfied with wages. BI and ROs agreed that it was necessary to emphasize the importance of attitude to participants and to build genuine relationships with them.

ROs in all cities noted the difficulty involved in placing youth offenders. ROs benefited from their relationship with BI because of its ability to place candidates that were offenders. Some of the strategies that developed from their partnership with BI involved prescreening workshops, job-matching with employers, and one-on-one preparation. Since September 11, 2001, BRCs in Washington, D.C. noted that participants with criminal records have had more difficulty passing security clearances because employers check security and credit. However, if a participant's records were sealed that could work in his/her favor.

Some ROs have made arrangements directly with employers that would not normally hire offenders. One way into job opportunity is through subcontracting services and labor. Yet this requires youths to own transportation. VW Associates in Washington, D.C. was able to work out agreements with subcontractors who were willing to hire offenders who were able to pass a drug

test. They accepted certain types of offenders; that is, no violent offenders were selected because some subcontractors go into homes.

In addition to ex-offender status, for a number of youth participants, transportation was a major obstacle. This appeared most evident in Washington, D.C. Many youth had to turn down jobs because they weren't able to consistently arrive on time or had to return home during late hours. BI was aware of these issues. Perhaps greater collaboration with the ROs could have rectified some of these issues. The HRC in Washington, D.C. also stated that the city was experiencing a mental health crisis. This was evident, he said, in the youth. One RO noted that the need for mental health and pre-employment services is paramount to job placement for the urban, 18 to 25-year old age group. Participants often coped with issues of domestic violence and single motherhood.

BI realized that most participants seeking job training from ROs did not know the difference between non-accredited programs and accredited institutions. Although both offered skill training services, non-accredited schools attempted to give students the impression that their education was all they needed to work in a given field. Although these institutions had counselors that worked with students on job etiquette and honing resumes (basic "career services), they were not able to get participants placed with the same consistency as BI. Thus participants' needs went unmet and many did not acquire higher paying jobs for which they were qualified for. BRCs had to redirect these candidates into fields that harmonized their existing skills with the needs of employers.

A number of ROs are not able to offer the support services their participants need. One RO admitted that it could not help students with childcare needs. The best it could do was to refer them someplace where they could get appropriate service. ROs that served youth with more serious problems found that if they cannot offer the services, they refer youth to appropriate programs to deal with addiction, homelessness, or transition from incarceration. Finding ROs that can provide drug screening was challenging in some of the BI cities. Both BI and ROs agreed that it was important to catch the youth before they failed the drug test and eventually returned to the criminal justice system.

HRCs were the primary recruiters for ROs at each of the Centers. In some cases, Center Managers also recruited and interacted with ROs. In New York, STRIVE was recruited jointly by the Center Manager and a BRC. In Los Angeles for example, the Center Manager talked directly to the senior manager of any RO that regularly referred youth to them who were not work-ready. The RO believed it was her responsibility to tell ROs to improve the job-related skills of the youth before attempting to place them with employers.

BI also came with its own set of issues with respect to maintaining working relations with ROs. For example, ROs expressed concern about working with more than one HRC as a result of staff turnover in the Washington, D.C. Center. ROs also expressed some frustration with the process of trying to gain employment for their participants. The staff of the Chicago RO, The College of Office Technology, recalled having sent to BI over 40 people, mostly business and clerical skilled students, but none was placed.

ROs that supported clients by providing childcare, giving extra preparation, working on computer skills, exposing them to administrative functions, and teaching telephone etiquette were considered the most effective by BI staffs. These ROs made it easier for BI staffs to do their job. For the most part, ROs were pleased to have the relationship they had with BI. Cultivating these relations was as much an art form for the HRC as it was a science. At the center of these relations were the youth participants, whose characteristics are discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Chapter VI

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS AND SERVICES

In this section, the characteristics of participants in DSYODP that were placed in employment at retention wages (i.e. placements) as well as the services these participants requested are discussed. The differences between placements and those youth employed below these levels are examined along with data collected from youth during interviews either in person during site visits or by phone. MIS data for these participants cover the period from July 2005 through December 31, 2006 and include the four DOL/ETA-authorized study sites of Phase II: Chicago, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and New York. These data represent the project during the period in which each of the Centers was "functioning at adequate staffing levels"[1] and placing youth for Phase II.

A. Characteristics

Across all four sites, 1,279 participants were enrolled. Out of these, 950 were determined eligible for employment and of those eligible, 413 were placed in employment at retention wages.[2] New York had the largest number of total and eligible participants with 436 total and 398 participants eligible for placement. Los Angeles was the next largest with 325 total participants and 273 eligible. Washington, D.C. had the fewest number of participants overall, with 248 total, and 127 eligible participants.
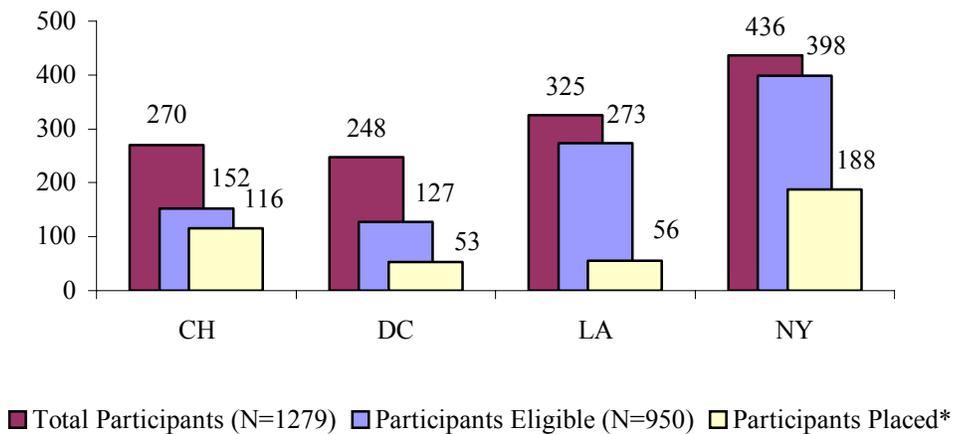
Figure VI.1 Total Participants, Total Eligible Participants and Total Participants Placed*

*Sources: MIS data from July 2005 through December 31, 2006. Counts for Total Participants are from the MIS Participant table/form. Counts for Total Eligible Participants are from the MIS Eligibility table/form. Counts of Total Participants Placed are from the MIS Employment Information table/form.

Note: Counts do not include the participants in Baltimore, only the four DOL/ETA authorized sites. There are 440 placement records but there were 21 participants placed more than once.

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[1] There were 20 recorded placements in January 2007. Most were in New York and Los Angeles.
[2] There are 440 placement records but 21participants were placed in employment more than once.

The proportion of eligible participants who were placed in employment varied across the four sites. Both Los Angeles and New York had the lowest proportion of participants placed relative to the total number who were eligible. Roughly 47% or 188 of the 398 eligible youth were placed in New York. Over 20%, or 56, of the 273 eligible youth in Los Angeles were placed. Chicago maintained the fewest number of eligible participants and the highest percentage of placements, with 116 persons out of 152 participants placed, or 76%. Washington, D.C. placed 53 of its 127 eligible youth (42%) in employment at retention wages.

There are explanations for these differences. In the case of Los Angeles, the site was brand new to this phase and, moreover, had a significant six-month lag in start-up time. This may explain its low placement rate since it may not have had the available jobs or relationships with businesses to place more participants. Chicago, on the other hand, is the oldest incumbent site with experience, well-established relations and strategies for placing youth. In general, Chicago is very selective with businesses, youth and referring organizations. It had a strong preference for working with organizations that focus on specific training that matches the local job market. Moreover, the evaluators learned from the site visits that the Chicago Center staff members were extremely stringent in their selection of participants. They only enrolled participants whom they were reasonably confident they could place. Chicago also "recycled" participants by sending them on multiple job interviews. This increased the individual's chances of securing employment and reduced the need for a large number of enrollees in the program.

Table VI.1 shows the demographic characteristics for placed participants across the four sites. Most participants were at-risk youth roughly 22 years of age, single and without children. Of the 395 participants at-risk, 388 were considered eligible due to poverty. The two largest ethnic groups served were African-Americans and Hispanics. Hispanics outnumbered African-Americans only in Chicago.

There were slightly more females than male participants overall (51.9% female vs. 48.1% male), with greater variation among the sites. Los Angeles and New York both had larger proportions of males than females (in Los Angeles, 57.1% male and in New York, 61.2% male), while Chicago and Washington, D.C. had a preponderance of female participants placed in employment (in Chicago, 73.3% female and in Washington, D.C. 61.5% female).

Eighty-two of the 413 youth placed in employment were employed at the time of referral to the project. The largest proportions of youth employed at referral were in Chicago and Washington, D.C.. Few youth reported receiving job-seeking and treatment services at the time of enrollment. Of those who did receive these services, transportation was the most needed and largely in Los Angeles and New York.

Most of the placed participants were high school graduates. Most of the remaining participants had pursued or were in pursuit of high school equivalents or college education. Interestingly, most of the vocational graduates were in Chicago while New York participants composed the bulk of those who received or were preparing to obtain GEDs.

Table VI.1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants Placed in Employment*

	Chicago	D.C.	Los Angeles	New York	Total
Total Placements	116	53	56	188	**413**
Age at Employment Start Date					
Average	22.1	21.4	21.2	21.7	**21.7**
Standard Deviation (years)	*2*	*1.9*	*2.1*	*1.9*	*2*
Gender					
Female	85	32	24	73	**214**
	73.3%	61.5%	42.9%	38.8%	**51.9%**
Male	31	20	32	115	**198**
	26.7%	38.5%	57.1%	61.2%	**48.1%**
Classification					
At- Risk of Court Involvement	114	50	49	182	**395**
Youth Offender	2	3	7	6	**18**
Ethnicity					
African-American	40	43	37	105	**225**
Asian-American / Pacific Islander	3	0	1	1	**5**
Caucasian	1	0	1	6	**8**
Hispanic / Latino/a	67	9	14	72	**162**
Multiracial	0	0	1	2	**3**
Native American	1	0	2	0	**3**
Other	4	0	0	2	**6**
Education					
High School Graduate	25	35	31	76	**167**
GED Completed	6	1	7	30	**44**
In College	26	6	11	24	**67**
Vocational Graduate	35	2	1	3	**41**
GED Preparation	3	4	2	32	**41**
Out-of-School/ No Degree	13	2	3	12	**30**
College Graduate	7	2	0	7	**16**
In High School	1	0	1	4	**6**
Marital Status					
Married	13	2	1	6	**22**
Single	103	50	55	182	**390**
Number of Placed Participants w/ Children					
Number of Children:					
0	102	46	42	164	**354**
1	12	5	13	19	**49**
2	2	1	1	5	**9**
Number of Placed Participants Employed at Time of Referral					
	42	19	8	13	**82**

*Data represent MIS data from July 2005 through December 31, 2006. One participant in D.C. missing demographic information.

B. Interviews with Youth Participants

The evaluators interviewed youth during the second and third site visits or by phone in the event that face-to-face interviews could not be scheduled during the visits. Responses to questions from the interviews with youth provide additional insights on their recruitment and placement experiences. Table VI.2 provides a glimpse of the types of businesses and positions held by youth placed by BI who were interviewed as part of the evaluation. In some cases, youth were interviewed during the evaluator's visit with their employer.

Table VI.2. Businesses and Positions of Youth Interviewed (if Employed)

Business	Participant Position
Chicago	
Little Sisters of the Poor	CNA
Little Sisters of the Poor	CNA
"W" Hotel Chicago Center	Hostess
Woodbridge Nursing Pavilion	CNA
Lakeview Nursing Home	Resigned as a CNA
Samland Institute	Office Assistant
Woodbridge Nursing Pavilion	Laid off as a Receptionist
Los Angeles	
RotoRooter	Plumber
Business Interface	Receptionist
Universal Protection Services	Security Guard
Neway Packaging	Customer Service
Universal Protection Services	Security Guard
Securitas	Security Guard
New York City	
King TeleServices	Information Services Position
Fresh Direct	Delivery
St. Moritz Security Services	Resigned as Security Guard
King Teleservices	Information Services Position
Washington, D.C.	
Filene's Basement	Salesperson
Access Litigation	Executive Assistant
Access Litigation	IT Department
Avis Budget Group	Rental Sales Associate

Youth were largely recruited into DSYODP directly through the ROs. Youth also learned about BI from flyers posted on bulletin boards at the ROs, inadvertent contact with other placed youth, or through friends in the DSYODP program.

Youth reflected positive sentiments about the quality of preparation they received for employment. In general, the youth interviewed were pleased with having participated in a prescreening process, whether this was sponsored by an RO or BI. Youth in Los Angeles noted that Job Corps helped them shape their initial resume and cover letter, but BI gave them a clearer perspective on the interview process. Several youth in each of the sites noted that the BRC's mock interview sessions helped to reduce anxiety and clarify expectations. One youth, previously employed at Lakeview Nursing Home in Chicago, noted that the job she got through

BI was her first job. A young Spanish-speaking female, she described herself as very shy and nervous, so she considered the mock interviews and resume training with the HRC in Chicago to be critical to her achieving employment. In Washington, D.C. and New York, youths commented on the benefits of prescreening provided by BI such that they were prepared for their job interviews when they arrived, they knew what kind of work they were expected to perform.

In other cases, BRCs went beyond their job description to provide transportation and clothing to youth. Youth also received services like childcare from ROs and other organizations like Action for Children. These were particularly noted among the youth in Chicago who were, in many cases, young mothers with few financial resources.

The youth interviewed maintained strong sentiments about the jobs they obtained while enrolled with BI. Youth in New York commented that the initial shifts were often difficult, starting early in the morning and having to work weekends. Work at Fresh Direct was labor intensive, often requiring youth to walk several flights of stairs with packages but tips were lucrative.

Youth's choices regarding employment seemed to be reflective of their relationship with key contacts in their respective RO and/or BI staff. This had a direct impact on job retention. The trust between youth participants and BI staffs was an ongoing theme in the comments by the youth interviewed. In the absence of an RS, youth often maintained relations with BRCs and HRCs during the initial phases of employment. This relationship factored into youth's decisions and level of commitment to employment. For example, in Los Angeles, a youth participant preferred a position in customer service but none were available with the employer at the time of application. The BRC asked the youth to consider an alternative position until one was made available in their area of interest. Because the BRC was supportive and identified a good employer match, the youth agreed to try the position.

New York hired an RS who contacted youth once a week to check on their progress. Youth commented that this helped them maintain their goals through difficult initial periods of employment. In some cases, as with the youth in New York who resigned from St. Moritz, youth sometimes made hasty decisions to quit their job without consulting with the RS or someone at BI. This was a source of frustration for employers and staff at BI, especially in New York where the RS prided herself on her ability to mediate the factors affecting retention. Throughout Phase II, there were few RSs to monitor youth's progress, overall, across each of the sites.

Center staffs encouraged youth to think about and spell out their career goals. Youth often noted their goals of continuing schooling and were encouraged by BI staff members to continue in their efforts to obtain promotions or new positions. This gentle push by BI staffs for youth to advance their education was of particular importance for participants working in trades and skilled positions like those in health care in Chicago and those in law enforcement in Los Angeles. Obtaining degrees and certifications were often the method by which people obtained advancement in these types of positions.

In the next chapter, outcomes with respect to employment are discussed in more detail.

Chapter VII

EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

This chapter focuses on employment outcomes for participants placed at each of the four Centers. Specifically, this chapter explores data from the MIS on placement activity at each of the Centers, data on wages and hours, and how employment was spread across participant groups, businesses and ROs.

A. Characteristics of Placements

Similar to Phase I, the sites in Phase II of the DSYODP commenced operations at different points during 2005. Beginning in the 3rd quarter of 2005, placement activity increased across the four sites as they ramped up staffing and operations. Los Angeles went through a complete rehiring of staff in early 2006.

Table VII.1 shows the number of placements (youth placed in employment at retention wages) by quarter and year for each of the sites. While most sites witnessed declines in placements in the 3rd quarter of 2006, New York managed to achieve over half of all its placements in that quarter. This can be explained by its relationship with two large employers: Fresh Direct and King Teleservices. These employers expanded during the holiday season to accommodate the increase in business. Placement activity slowed toward the end of 2006 for Los Angeles and New York. Washington, D.C. had plans to continue its operations and remained fully staffed for the longest period of time.

Table VII.1. Number of Placements by Quarter and Year by Site
(based on Employment Start Date)

Site	Quarter	2005	2006	Total
Chicago, IL	1		20	
	2		28	
	3	9	15	
	4	19	25	
	Total	**28**	**88**	**116**
Washington, D.C.	1		13	
	2		10	
	3	1	7	
	4	5	17	
	Total	**6**	**47**	**53**
Los Angeles, CA	1		2	
	2		25	
	3	4	13	
	4	2	10	
	Total	**6**	**50**	**56**

**Table VII.1. Number of Placements by Quarter and Year by Site
(based on Employment Start Date)** (continued)

Site	Quarter	2005	2006	Total
New York, NY	1		25	
	2		35	
	3	6	95	
	4	9	18	
	Total	**15**	**173**	**188**
Total		**55**	**358**	**413**

Table VII.2 shows the distribution of eligible and placed youth at-risk of court involvement and youth offenders across the four sites. Similar to Phase I, most of the participants in Phase II were youth at-risk of court involvement; however, total placements for both at-risk and youth offender participants were lower during Phase II. The total number of youth placed in employment in Phase I was 616, 105 of which were youth offenders. It is important to note that Phase I lasted approximately 24 months while Phase II data covered an 18 month period.

Taking into account the difference in length of periods examined for each phase of DSYODP, note that placement rates declined in Phase II by roughly 20% below those in Phase I. Also, each of the four sites in Phase II recruited very low numbers of offenders relative to at-risk youth who were eligible for employment.

Table VII.2. Placements and Placement Rates by Status

	Chicago		D.C.		Los Angeles		New York		Total	
	Offender	At-Risk	Offender	At-Risk	Offender	At-Risk	Offender	At-Risk	Offender	At-Risk
Eligible Participants	7	145	16	111	35	238	9	389	**67**	**883**
Number Placed in Employment at Retention Wages	2	114	3	50	7	49	6	182	**18**	**395**
Placement Rate	.29	.79	.19	.45	.20	.21	.67	.47	**.27**	**.45**

Los Angeles had an exceptional number of youth offenders in their pool of eligible youth but only 20% were placed in employment at retention wages. Evaluators learned from the site visits that the Los Angeles Center developed a relationship with the parole board in late 2006 to refer youth offenders for job placement services. Youth offenders often face additional constraints to employment, namely a support network of case management services and preparation to ensure that they are job-ready. BRCs would have been able to gain more placements by focusing on non-offenders, particularly since the largest number of job openings identified by BRCs in Los Angeles was in the security industry where it is difficult to place youth offenders. Overall, because the numbers of offenders placed in employment are so few relative to at-risk youth, it is difficult to make inferences about the relationship between status (at-risk or youth offender) and employment outcomes.

B. Industries, Businesses, Referring Organizations and Placements

It is useful to examine employment outcomes from the perspective of demand-side characteristics of industries and businesses in which youth were placed in employment. As discussed in Chapter IV, each Center recruited specific businesses within certain industries based on their ability to match their needs with the qualifications of youth referred to them. Targeted businesses typically represented growing sectors of the local economy, mostly mid-sized, service-oriented and in need of both skilled and unskilled labor to fill entry-level positions. Table VII.3 lists the industries in which youth were employed and/or placed.

Table VII.3. Industry by Number of Employed, Placed and Terminated Youth

Industry	Employed	Percent of Employed	Placements	Percent of Placements
Information	125	24.5%	89	21.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	89	17.4%	67	16.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	87	17.0%	80	19.4%
Other Services (except Public Admin)	83	16.2%	69	16.7%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	35	6.8%	35	8.5%
Retail Trade	34	6.7%	28	6.8%
Transportation and Warehousing	28	5.5%	19	4.6%
Construction	8	1.6%	7	1.7%
Manufacturing	7	1.4%	7	1.7%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	5	1.0%	5	1.2%
Finance and Insurance	4	0.8%	1	0.2%
Public Administration	4	0.8%	4	1.0%
Wholesale Trade	2	0.4%	2	0.5%
Total	**511**	100.0%	**413**	100.0%

Most youth were employed and placed in information, accommodation and food services, health care, and other services industries overall; however, the ranking differs slightly with respect to the proportion of placements within these industries. The table does not report all the youth that were placed; many youth employed in these top industries were placed with lower than retention wages or with fewer than full-time hours. This outcome harks back to our earlier discussion about the negotiations that took place between BI staff and employers to secure employment for youth while building rapport with employers. BRCs in New York, for example, reportedly made concessions with large employers, like King Teleservices, to secure full-time positions for youth at salaries below retention wages if youth were willing to accept them. Because these employers often made frequent requests for large numbers of candidates, the BRCs accommodated the employers to build rapport with the understanding that retention wage positions would be offered to youth from BI in the future.

Given the close relationships established between the Centers and employers, the distribution of placements across industries is best understood at the site level. Table VII.4 shows the most popular industries for placements by site. The results suggest a much clearer correlation between the specific industries targeted by each Center and the results in terms of number of placements.

Table VII.4. Most Popular Industries among Placements by Site

	Chicago	Washington, D.C.	Los Angeles	New York	Total
N	*116*	*53*	*56*	*188*	*413*
Information	12	1	0	76	**89**
Health Care and Social Assistance	69	6	5	0	**80**
Other Services (except Public Admin)	0	6	33	30	**69**
Accommodation and Food Services	8	5	0	54	**67**
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	13	8	0	14	**35**
Retail Trade	2	21	5	0	**28**

For each site, the number of participants placed in a given industry is positively correlated with the number of businesses recruited in that industry. The exception is New York, where two employers in the information industry accounted for the bulk of their placements. This suggests that in most cases, each business client employed only a few placements. Table VII.5 illustrates this phenomenon across each of the sites.

Table VII.5. Number of Placements by Businesses

Number of Placements	Chicago		Washington, D.C.		Los Angeles		New York		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	13	44.8%	8	44.4%	15	60.0%	11	55.0%	47	51.1%
2 to 4	9	31.0%	6	33.3%	6	24.0%	2	10.0%	23	25.0%
5 to 9	4	13.8%	4	22.2%	4	16.0%	2	10.0%	14	15.2%
10 to 19	2	6.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	15.0%	5	5.4%
20 or more	1	3.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	10.0%	3	3.3%
Total Businesses	**29**	100.0%	**18**	100.0%	**25**	100.0%	**20**	100.0%	**92**	100.0%

Most placements were also employed in mid-sized firms with 50 to 400 employees and annual revenues between $500,000 and $5 million (data not shown). Washington, D.C. was the only exception in that 79% of its 53 placements were employed in retail chains and/or franchises with less than 50 employees.

Although the industry outcomes were slightly different for Phase I of DSYODP, (the construction industry accounted for the highest proportion: 13.6% of all 616 placements in Phase I), all other characteristics of businesses and industries were the same in terms of the distribution of placements.

The distribution and characteristics of ROs that referred youth who were placed in employment is also enlightening. There were 77 ROs out of 243 who referred youth resulting in placements. Table VII.6 shows the services provided by these ROs. Barring a few exceptions, most ROs associated with placements offered the same services. The most popular services offered were services to youth offenders, resume preparation, interviewing and case management. The

distribution of services offered differs within most sites. In Chicago, for example, computer training, pre-employment and employment specific training were prominent. This makes sense given that they worked with colleges and other organizations specifically geared towards training youth for healthcare professions. Case management was popular among ROs in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles and New York. New York also worked with the largest group of ROs.

Table VII.6. Services Provided by ROs who Referred Placements

	Chicago		Washington, D.C.		Los Angeles		New York		Total	
	N	*%*	*N*	*%*	*N*	*%*	*N*	*%*	*N*	*%*
Total	17		10		14		36		77	
Service Youth Offenders	14	82%	10	100%	14	100%	30	83%	**68**	**88%**
Resume Preparation	14	82%	10	100%	11	79%	33	92%	**68**	**88%**
Interviewing	12	71%	10	100%	9	64%	32	89%	**63**	**82%**
Case Management	7	41%	10	100%	12	86%	33	92%	**62**	**81%**
Pre-Employment	11	65%	9	90%	7	50%	28	78%	**55**	**71%**
Computer Training	12	71%	8	80%	8	57%	26	72%	**54**	**70%**
Communication	6	35%	8	80%	7	50%	23	64%	**44**	**57%**
Professional Clothing	6	35%	9	90%	7	50%	20	56%	**42**	**55%**
GED	7	41%	7	70%	5	36%	22	61%	**41**	**53%**
Employment Specific Training	10	59%	7	70%	3	21%	17	47%	**37**	**48%**
ESL	8	47%	3	30%	4	29%	18	50%	**33**	**43%**
Drug Screening	1	6%	6	60%	3	21%	7	19%	**17**	**22%**

Just as few business clients hired more than a few of BI's referrals, most ROs only referred a small number of youth that resulted in placements. Table VII.7 shows the distribution of placements among ROs. Chicago, Washington, D.C. and New York had a few ROs responsible for referring the majority of their placed youth. That the incumbent Centers would have this outcome is not surprising. HRCs at each of the Centers spent a great deal of time establishing a pipeline for youth referrals with the most cost effective ROs.

Table VII.7. Distribution of Placements among ROs

Number of Placements	Chicago		Washington, D.C.		Los Angeles		New York		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	**No.**	**%**
1	5	29.4%	1	10.0%	5	35.7%	14	38.9%	**25**	**32.5%**
2 to 4	7	41.2%	6	60.0%	6	42.9%	10	27.8%	**29**	**37.7%**
5 to 9	2	11.8%	1	10.0%	3	21.4%	6	16.7%	**12**	**15.6%**
10 to 19	3	17.6%	2	20.0%	0	0.0%	6	16.7%	**11**	**14.3%**
20 or more	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	**0**	**0.0%**
Total ROs	**17**	**100%**	**10**	**100%**	**14**	**100%**	**36**	**100%**	**77**	**100%**

C. Hourly Wages and Hours per Week

Table VII.8 shows the average hours and hourly wages for youth offenders and youth at-risk of court involvement placed in employment at retention wages. There was no significant difference in the average number of hours worked per week between status groups. Whether youth were at-risk or ex-offenders, all placements tended to work full-time as required by the project. Youth did, however, differ with respect to wages. At-risk youth tended to earn slightly higher wages on average than youth offenders. This was also the case in Phase I. Overall, the placed youth earned an average of $9.52 an hour, which is notably less than the average wages documented in Phase I of the project ($9.65 for youth offenders and $10.27 for at-risk youth).

Table VII.8. Average Hours per Week and Average Hourly Wages
by Status of Placed Participants

	Chicago		Washington, D.C.		Los Angeles		New York		Total	
	Offender	At-Risk	Offender	At-Risk	Offender	At-Risk	Offender	At-Risk	Offender	At-Risk
Number Placed in Employment	2	114	3	50	7	49	6	182	**18**	**395**
Average Hours per Week	40	38.6	40	40	40	39.9	38.3	34.5	**39.4**	**37**
Average Hourly Wages	$8.31	$9.62	$9.00	$9.25	$9.26	$9.36	$9.33	$9.61	**$9.13**	**$9.53**

It is worth reiterating that wages are based on those recorded at time of employment with the exception of a small number of participants who saw recorded changes in their wages within the first six months of employment. In this case, the most recent record of employment for these youth was used for the purposes of the analyses.

It is also worth reiterating that some of the outcomes reflected in these data are driven by demand-side requirements of the labor market. In other words, staff at each of the Centers negotiated the needs of employers with the supply of available job-ready candidates. Staff at the Centers noted that some youth were willing to take a job regardless of whether or not it met retention wage standards.

Table VII.9 provides information on the distribution of wages among participants based on several demographic characteristics. On average, males earned less than females, married participants earned higher wages than singles, although there were few married youth placed in employment, and Hispanics earned higher average wages than African-American and other ethnic groups. The table also shows that participants with higher levels of education earned higher average wages than participants with less formal education.

Within sites there are particular differences in contrast to the general outcomes. Males in Chicago earned significantly higher wages on average relative to females. The opposite is true for males and females in Washington, D.C. and New York. With respect to average wages for married and single placements, Chicago shows the highest average wages went to single participants. Chicago accounts for 13 of the 22 married participants and has roughly a 3:1 ratio of females to male participants placed in employment.

Table VII.9. Average Wages for Placed Participants by Gender, Marital Status, and Ethnicity*

Characteristic	Total Number of Placed Participants	Chicago	Washington, D.C.	Los Angeles	New York	Total
Male	198	$10.72	$9.05	$9.38	$9.09	$9.39
Female	214	$9.18	$9.38	$9.31	$10.40	$9.64
Married	22	$8.99	$9.50	$12.81	$10.92	$9.74
Single	390	$9.67	$9.24	$9.29	$9.55	$9.51
African American	225	$9.20	$9.20	$9.14	$9.19	$9.18
Asian/ Pacific Islander	5	$8.86		$12.81	$10.00	$9.88
Caucasian	8	$7.57		$8.75	$9.67	$9.29
Hispanic / Latino-a	162	$9.96	$9.48	$9.60	$10.27	$10.04
Multiracial	3			$9.00	$8.00	$8.33
Native American	3	$7.57		$10.25		$9.36
Other	6	$9.40			$8.25	$8.94
High School Graduate	167	$8.94	$9.01	$9.37	$9.68	$9.37
In College	67	$9.46	$9.87	$9.84	$10.31	$9.86
GED Completed	44	$8.56	$9.00	$8.84	$9.67	$9.37
Vocational Graduate	41	$8.57	$10.75	$9.00	$10.55	$8.83
GED Preparation	41	$8.52	$8.88	$9.60	$8.64	$8.70
Out-of-School/ No Degree	30	$13.88	$10.50	$8.70	$8.61	$10.84
College Graduate	16	$11.92	$9.75		$11.98	$11.67
In High School	6	$8.50		$8.75	$9.00	$8.88

*One participant is missing demographic information.

African-American and Hispanic youth composed the bulk of all placed participants. Within each site, Hispanics earned higher average wages than their African-American counterparts. It is no surprise that college graduates earned the highest average wages overall. In Chicago and Washington, D.C., however, participants who were out of school with no degree earned the highest wages. Also, participants in D.C. and New York with vocational certificates earned high wages. This phenomenon may be explained in terms of industries in which youth at these particular sites found employment.

D. Placements at Retention versus Non-retention Wage Levels

At the core of BI's mission under DSYODP is placing youth in positions that pay retention wages. As shown in Table VII.10, wage standards were established for each site based on the cost of living in the respective cities. (The hourly rates were calculated by dividing the annual income by 2,080 hours/year.) In general, the retention wage placement standards do not differ substantially across the four sites.

Table VII.10. Retention Wage Placement Standards (updated 6/06)

City	Number Of Dependents	Annual Income Level	*Retention Wage
Chicago			
	0	$15,745	$7.57/hr
	1	$18,824	$9.05/hr
	2	$21,902	$10.53/hr
	3	$24,980	$12.01/hr
	4	$28,059	$13.49/hr
	5	$31,137	$14.97/hr
Washington, D.C.			
	0	$15,267	$7.34/hr
	1	$18,345	$8.82/hr
	2	$21,424	$10.30/hr
	3	$24,502	$11.78/hr
	4	$27,580	$13.26/hr
	5	$30,659	$14.74/hr
Los Angeles			
	0	$16,036	$7.71/hr
	1	$19,116	$9.19/hr
	2	$22,196	$10.67/hr
	3	$25,276	$12.15/hr
	4	$28,356	$13.63/hr
	5	$31,436	$15.11/hr
New York			
	0	$16,307	$7.84/hr
	1	$19,385	$9.32/hr
	2	$22,464	$10.80/hr
	3	$25,542	$12.28/hr
	4	$28,620	$13.76/hr
	5	$31,699	$15.24/hr.

*Divide the annual income by 2,080 hours/year to obtain retention wages/hour.
Annual Income Levels are rounded down.

A total of 511 youth achieved employment through the four Centers (regardless of whether or not they qualified as placements.) The most children any employed youth had was three. The retention wage level increases considerably as the number of dependents increases. This can have an impact on whether any particular individual gaining employment will be considered "a placement" at a retention wage level. The vast majority of participants do not have dependents, and for those who do, in most cases there is one child. Thus, the majority of participants were classified as placements if they gained employment at the lowest wage category, since they typically did not have children.

Table VII.11 shows the distribution of youth employed as placements and non-placements. The gray areas indicate wage categories that were too low for employed participants to have qualified

as placements. In order for participants to be labeled as placements in the MIS, they would have passed several approval processes at the Center, including meeting eligibility requirements, verification of employment, verification of wages in relation to the number of dependents, and verification by the QCA of completed paperwork.

Washington, D.C. had four youth employed below retention wages (non-placements) and 32 youth employed in New York were non-placements. Three youth in Chicago seemed to qualify as placements but were not labeled as such. Los Angeles had five non-placements in addition to 20 youth that may have qualified as placements with respect to their wage earnings but were not labeled as placements. This leaves a total of 44 youth who might have qualified as placements according to their wage category and number of children but were not labeled as such for reasons unknown.

Table VII.11. Number of Employed Youth (Placements and Non-Placements)
by Retention Wage Category, by Number of Children

Sites	No. of Children	Retention Wage Category							
Chicago		less than 7.57	7.57 - 9.04	9.05 - 10.52	10.53 - 12.00	12.01 - 13.48	13.49 - 14.96	14.97 and up	
	0	2	72	17	11	0	0	5	
	1	0	0	5	7	1	0	1	
	2	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	
	Total	2	73	22	20	1	0	6	124
Washington, D.C.		less than 7.34	7.34-8.81	8.82 - 10.29	10.30- 11.77	11.78- 13.25	13.26- 14.73	14.74 and up	
	0	1	25	16	4	1	0	1	
	1	0	3	0	3	1	0	0	
	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	
	Total	1	28	16	8	2	0	1	56
Los Angeles		less than 7.71	7.71-9.18	9.19- 10.66	10.67- 12.14	12.15- 13.62	13.63- 15.10	15.11 and up	
	0	1	33	24	1	2	1	0	
	1	0	3	9	4	0	0	0	
	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	
	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	
	Total	1	37	33	5	3	1	0	80
New York		less than 7.84	7.84 -9.31	9.32 - 10.79	10.80 - 12.27	12.28- 13.75	13.76- 15.23	15.24 and up	
	0	25	86	76	28	0	0	1	
	1	0	1	14	9	0	0	1	
	2	0	0	5	3	0	0	1	
	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	
	Total	25	87	96	40	0	0	3	251

Note: Three children was the maximum number of children among all youth employed by BI.

Table VII.12 shows the number of participants who were labeled as placements in the MIS database. The gray areas indicate wage categories that were too low for employed participants to have qualified as placements.

Table VII.12. Number of Placements in Each Retention Wage Category
by Number of Children

Sites	No. of Children	Retention Wage Category							
Chicago		less than 7.57	7.57 - 9.04	9.05 - 10.52	10.53 - 12.00	12.01 - 13.48	13.49 - 14.96	14.97 and up	
	0	0	69	17	11	0	0	5	
	1	0	0	3	7	1	0	1	
	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	
	Total	0	69	20	20	1	0	6	116
Washington, D.C.		less than 7.34	7.34-8.81	8.82 - 10.29	10.30- 11.77	11.78- 13.25	13.26- 14.73	14.74 and up	
	0	0	25	16	4	1	0	1	
	1	0	1	0	3	1	0	0	
	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	
	Total	0	26	16	8	2	0	1	53
Los Angeles		less than 7.71	7.71-9.18	9.19-10.66	10.67- 12.14	12.15- 13.62	13.63- 15.10	15.11 and up	
	0	0	27	13	0	2	0	0	
	1	0	1	9	3	0	0	0	
	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	
	Total	0	28	22	3	3	0	0	56
NY		less than 7.84	7.84 -9.31	9.32 - 10.79	10.80 - 12.27	12.28- 13.75	13.76- 15.23	15.24 and up	
	0	1	80	56	26	0	0	1	
	1	0	0	10	8	0	0	1	
	2	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	
	Total	1	80	68	36	0	0	3	188

Note: Two children was the maximum number of children among placements.

Overall, most placements were labeled appropriately. Only five placements were employed at wage levels that should not have qualified them as such in the data. Note that no placements had more than two children. Also note that youth with fewer children tended to fall into the lower wage categories.

Table VII.13 shows the average wages for 98 employed youth that were not considered placements. As expected, the average wages for these youth were lower than those for placements.

Table VII.13. Number of Participants Employed but Not at Retention Wage Levels

	Number	Percent	Average Wage	Std Dev	Min	Max
Chicago	8	8.2%	$8.63	$1.15	$7.00	$10.00
Washington, D.C.	3	3.1%	$7.50	$1.09	$6.25	$8.25
Los Angeles	24	24.5%	$9.45	$1.56	$7.25	$15.00
New York	63	64.3%	$8.99	$1.40	$6.75	$12.00
Total	**98**	**100.0%**	**$9.03**	**$1.44**	**$6.25**	**$15.00**

E. Retention and Termination among Placements

Retention was achieved when youth remained with the same employer for at least 6 months. The goal of the DSYODP project was a 90% retention rate for placements. Termination from employment was defined as voluntary, involuntary or layoffs from employment. In the event that youth were terminated, employers were asked to report the reason for their termination.

Data on retention and termination are based on the ability of Centers to track youth over time. For Phase II of the project, none of the Centers was able to maintain full staffing levels according to the model. Due to the absence of a RS, three of the four Centers reported that participants were only tracked intermittently and for reasons other than to capture retention, such as when BRCs were anticipating a youth's promotion to retention wage. New York is the exception in that it hired and maintained the same RS throughout the entire course of Phase II. Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles utilized other staff members to perform RS duties in addition to their other job responsibilities. The result of this staffing shortage is that retention and termination data on placements are inconsistent across the four sites.

New York and Los Angeles also reported wage increases for more than 20 participants. In the majority of these cases, the youth began employment at wages below retention wage levels and later became re-categorized as placements once they received the raise in pay. Chicago and Los Angeles also recorded a few changes in wages in cases where youth were reportedly terminated from employment at a wage different from their wage at the start of employment.

Table VII.14 shows the number of placements, reported terminations of placements and number of weeks employed before termination. The following totals are subject to interpretation with caution due to staffing shortages in Centers. Also, termination counts only include those youth terminated up through December 31, 2006. Overall, it's likely that there were more terminations than reported across the sites.

Table VII.14. Number of Placements, Terminated Placements, and Weeks Employed Before Termination*

	Placements	Terminations Reported	Termination Rate	Avg. Number of Weeks Employed Before Termination	Std Dev	Min	Max
Chicago	116	2	1.7%	1.32	0.57	0.92	1.72
Washington, D.C.	53	22	41.5%	8.89	7.33	0.12	22.4
Los Angeles	56	15	26.8%	7.78	5.99	0	18.4
New York	188	43	22.9%	7.67	6.7	0.12	22.4
Totals	**413**	**82**	**19.9%**	**7.32**	**6.39**	**0**	**22.4**

*For placements terminated voluntarily, involuntarily or laid off within 6 months of employment start date.

Placed youth who were recorded as terminated from employment within six months stayed employed for an average of 7.32 weeks. This is a slightly shorter period than the average of 9.35 weeks reported during Phase I of the project and may reflect the impact of RSs being present during Phase I. These averages are not very telling, however, since there was considerable variation among youth within each site with respect to how long they remained employed before termination.

In terms of the types of termination for those reported by the Centers, there were roughly equal proportions of voluntary and involuntary terminations within and across each of the four sites (data not shown). Unlike Phase I, where layoffs were the primary reason for termination, there were no reported layoffs among placed youth in Phase II. The top five reasons for termination of the 82 placements reported were lateness or attendance problems (18.3%), poor performance (18.3%), disapproval of job or pay (14.6%), other job opportunities (9.8%), and personal, home-related or school conflicts with the job (9.8%). These reasons do not differ markedly from the reasons for turnover given by recruited businesses before their involvement with BI (see Table IV.9).

DSYODP Phase II did not last long enough to determine if youth retained employment beyond the six-month period. Many youth would not have been placed long enough to gather some information on their persistence and wages. Phase I youth, however, were placed a sufficient amount of time before our data gathering to provide some information on their job retention and wages. The next chapter describes the process and outcomes of analyzing the UI wage data for Phase I youth in the two states for which UI wage data became available.

Chapter VIII

FURTHER ANALYSIS - UI WAGE COMPARISON STUDY

In this chapter, the argument is tested that working with an intermediary, like BI, affects wages and length of employment for youth offenders and youth at-risk of court involvement. This is done by utilizing and linking MIS and UI wage data for youth placed in employment and youth who were eligible but not placed in employment by BI during the first phase of DSYODP.

Descriptive analyses were used to compare the characteristics and wages of the youth prior to and during their involvement with the Centers. The assumptions and constraints involved in modeling such a comparison with the data available are discussed and use OLS regression to look at the effects of program involvement on employment outcomes, controlling for demographic differences in the youth.

A. Hypotheses

Based on the goals of this evaluation McNeil ETR worked with DOL/ETA in developing a series of hypotheses to frame the evaluation (see *DSYODP-II Evaluation Design Plan*, Section III, pgs. 12-16). Among the primary research questions presented in the Evaluation Design Plan for DSYODP-II was: "Does the use of BI's services reduce unemployment spells and otherwise improve employment outcomes for youth ex-offenders and at-risk youth?" Specifically, the intermediary model's impact on outcomes for employment, earnings, and retention of youth participants is evaluated. This can be phrased in terms of the following hypotheses:

> Hypothesis #1: Youth placed by the Centers have higher wages than similar youth who gained employment through other means.

The descriptive analysis of employment outcomes presented in Chapter VIII suggested that the Centers were successful in identifying employers with jobs that paid retention wages. Youth enrolled in the project had access to the services of BI staff and the referring organizations that sent them. While youth with similar characteristics to placements may gain access to employment, it is expected that the retention wage standard of the intermediary model will yield significant differences in terms of wages for youth placed by BI.

> Hypothesis #2: Youth with higher average wages are associated with greater persistence in employment (job tenure).

There are several assumptions underlying the concept of a "retention wage" as defined by BI. Basic to the idea is that higher wages ensure that youth stay longer at that place of employment. In other words, wages should be high enough such that jobs encourage rates of retention among the youth that are comparable to the norm for those particular jobs. In the Final Report for DSYODP-I, the relationship between wage rates and length of employment for youth prior to termination was discussed. Data from the MIS for DSYODP-I suggested a positive relationship

for youth placed by the Centers. Data also suggested that rates of termination and reasons for termination among placed youth in unskilled and skilled jobs were similar to the rates reported by employers in general. Given the lack of a basis for how firms determined their retention rates, evaluators could only speculate on the significance of this similarity for youth in the project. The combination of MIS data and UI wage records for youth participants in DSYODP-I allows for testing aspects of the assumption that higher wages, particularly wages among placed youth, affect job tenure and persistence in employment. In the next section, the data, methods and measures used to test this relationship are described.

B. Data, Methods & Measures

Chapter II of this report described the process by which the four BI Centers collected participant, business and referring organization data in the MIS and how the evaluators went about obtaining both the MIS data and UI wage records (or administrative data) for this analysis. Here, some of the qualities of MIS and UI wage records with respect to the following comparison study are discussed.

Data

Since the early 1980s, state agencies have worked with university researchers through programs like the Administrative Data Research and Evaluation (ADARE) program. In these partnerships, researchers utilize UI wage records to analyze labor market trends and manage the performance of public workforce development initiatives through program evaluations and tests of program effectiveness. UI wage data are still largely underutilized by the broader research community, particularly for conducting multi-state studies where data have to be requested by following protocols unique to each state of interest for the study (King and Schexnader, 1998). Researchers have noted the benefits of linking UI wage records data with other data sources to explore issues such as changes in wages and job tenure over time, industry expansion and contraction, and mobility of labor (see Hammida, 2004; Stevens and Simonetta, 2004). In this comparison study of DSYODP youth, evaluators were able to link UI wage records to participants in the MIS data using individual social security numbers for participants in the project. This allowed for the exploration of relationships between individual characteristics of youth and employment outcomes.

Of the four sites in this study solicited for UI wage records, only Florida and Maryland provided DOL/ETA with the approval for McNeil ETR to gain access to their data for the purposes of evaluating DSYODP. Maryland and Florida provided McNeil records matched to youth enrolled in Phase I. Data from Florida were composed of employee-level data containing the employee/participant's last name, social security number, employer, employer ID number, quarterly wages, and year/quarter in which each record of wage data was collected. Maryland provided data on youth placed by the Washington, D.C. business resource center. These data contained the social security number, employer's UI identification number, the employee/participant's quarterly wages, and the year/quarter in which each record of wage data was collected. Table VIII.1 shows the quarters of UI wage data matched to youth enrolled and placed during Phase I from the MIS.

Table VIII.1. Quarters of UI Wage Data Requested and Number of Enrolled and Placed Youth from Phase I by Quarter and UI Wage State

Year	2002	2003				2004				2005				2006	
Qtr	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	Tot
Phase I Quarters requested*															
	Pre	Pre	Prg	Prg	Prg	Prg	Prg	Prg	Prg	Prg	Prg	Post	Post	Post	**14**
Number of Youth Enrolled with UI wage records from Maryland and Florida															
			49	105	48	60	38	27	4	4	5				**340**
Number of Placements in Phase I															
Total		*2*	*45*	*114*	*58*	*101*	*104*	*74*	*49*	*59*	*10*				*616*
Washington D.C.				19	15	25	33	19	5	3	2				121
Miami, FL		2	34	47	28	49	16	6							182
Number of Washington, D.C. placements with UI records from Maryland															
				13	11	16	20	18	4	3	2				87
Number of Miami, FL placements with UI records from Florida															
			2	33	44	28	46	16	6						175

*Abbreviations are defined as follows: Pre: the period prior to the beginning of that Phase; Prg: the period of program operation of that Phase; Post: the period after the Phase (grant) has been completed

Note the three distinct periods in the data with a possibility of two quarters for each participant prior to entry in DSYODP and a minimum of three after exiting the program. The two quarters prior to any individual's enrollment would be their "pre" period for the sake of analysis. The first "program" quarter for Phase I would be the second quarter of 2003. The distinction between "program" and "post" quarters is a function of the length of operation for the project during Phase I, not of the quarters that any individual participant may have been recording UI wages. For example, in Phase I, participant A could have begun employment in the 2nd quarter of 2003 and have 12 quarters of program and post data through the 1st quarter of 2006, whereas participant B could have begun employment in the last quarter of Phase I operation (2nd quarter of 2005) and only have a total of 4 quarters of program and post data combined. The maximum amount of quarters any youth can have in the data is 14, ranging from the fourth quarter of 2002 through the first quarter of 2006. The maximum amount of quarters any placement could have in the data is thirteen, from first quarter 2003 through first quarter 2006.

Placement activity for Washington, D.C. lagged slightly behind that of Miami, Florida during Phase I. The lag is also reflected in the UI wage records from Maryland and Florida. Note that not all youth placed in employment by the Washington, D.C. and Miami Centers were included in the UI wage records obtained from Maryland and Florida. The difference is, of course, more drastic for Washington, D.C. given the likelihood of youth being placed in other nearby metropolitan areas. More of the strengths and weaknesses of UI wage data records with respect to this study are discussed below.

Strengths and Weaknesses of UI Wage Data in this Study

Like any data set, UI wage data has unique characteristics along with strengths and weaknesses (see King and Schexnader (1998) and Stevens and Simonetta (2004)). Stevens and Simonetta (2004) summarize the following characteristics of UI wage records:

- All UI wage record files are continuous since beginning year/quarter.
- All UI wage record files are routinely updated quarterly within four months of the end of the most recent reference quarter.
- All UI wage record files are maintained by employee social security number.
- Each quarterly wage record includes a dollar amount and the reporting employer's state UI tax account number.
- UI wage record information is confidential. The identity of employees and employers cannot be disclosed to the public.

Source: *The Administrative Data Research and Evaluation Project (ADARE), Background and Opportunities to Partner.* Stevens, David W. and Jonathan Simonetta. 2004.

Enough data were provided to control for youth holding multiple jobs in a given quarter. Changes in employers for youth were indicated as duplicate records for individuals containing repeated year/quarters with different wages in the UI wage records. Repeated quarters of data could also mean that employers changed ownership and received a different employment number in the UI wage records. According to King and Schexnader (1998), both are feasible scenarios for consideration in the use of administrative data.

For this study, Florida provided the names of employers such that they could be matched for consistency with employer identification numbers. Florida data did not show any changes in ownership throughout the data collection period. Maryland did not provide additional information on employers to match with employer numbers but it is assumed that any changes in employer numbers resulting from changes in ownership are likely to be few.

UI wage data do not include specific information on industries in which the youth were employed although Florida did provide information about employers that could be useful for more detailed analyses. Because of the lack of industry data, industry differences in employment outcomes for youth participants could not be controlled for.

SESAs do not typically maintain data on the number of weeks worked within a quarter or the number of hours worked per week; thus, an aggregate amount for earnings in a quarter masks other information such as whether the individual worked full-time and for the full quarter. In addition, some participants may have accepted initial employment with employers who pay unreported wages, employment outside the state in which the Center operated (e.g., Virginia for participants from the Washington, D.C. Center) or they may have moved to another state during or after the period of the demonstration (whether in the group of participants placed through DSYODP or in the comparison group), and their earnings may not be fully counted.

While other administrative data sets may contain data on DSYODP participants in Phase I, UI wage records provided us with accurate and unbiased data that was cost-effective for the

purposes of this evaluation. A primary advantage of UI wage records provided was that actual wages earned by participants were given that covered periods of employment before, during, and after each youth's participation in DSYODP-I. Given that BI staffs in Phase I monitored employment outcomes for a period of six months after an individual's employment start date, UI wage data covered the initial six-month follow-up period for participants.

Methods

As discussed in the Evaluation Design Plan for DSYODP-II, there were a number of factors to take into account in determining which methods were feasible for conducting a comparative analysis of outcomes for DSYODP participants. After considering several options, a quasi-experimental study of outcomes using a comparison between placed and non-placed participants from Phase I of DSYODP was proposed. The initial study group was to encompass 616 participants from DSYODP Phase I who were placed in employment at retention wages and 269 participants referred to each of the four Centers who were determined eligible for DSYODP but were not placed in employment through the efforts of the Centers. Because McNeil ETR only received UI wage data from Florida and Maryland, the study was limited to participants from the Washington, D.C. and Miami, Florida Centers. As Table VIII.1 above shows, this yielded 340 youth enrolled with UI wage records for inclusion in the study.

It is recognized that with any partially-experimental comparison study, questions can be raised about the degree to which the control group is truly comparable to the group receiving the "treatment" offered through the program being evaluated. In many respects, the proposed comparison group seems to offer a particularly appealing means to addressing those questions since it contains the same type of participants as those who actually received the treatment; if it is assumed the principal treatment was their eligibility and enrollment in DSYODP-I.

As described earlier in Chapter II, Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) multiple regression was used to model the effects of DSYODP involvement on youth outcomes. Preparation for the analysis entailed compiling comma-delimited (csv) files in SAS and merging data sets through a series of sequential iterations. Demographic and geographic characteristics of each youth were maintained throughout each data run for descriptive comparisons and use in the regression models.

The assumptions underlying the regression models are as follows:
- the pre-program characteristics of all eligible participants are similar (minimal selection bias),
- wages for all youth were similar prior to enrollment in the program (average wages are similar for both groups) and approximate average wages in the population of youth at-risk and youth offenders (reduces the undesirable tendency of regression toward the population mean),
- youth who were employed but not considered placements did not have outcomes as successful as youth who were placed at retention wages (the portion of participants not included in this analysis), and
- *any* youth with characteristics similar to participants in DSYODP will have outcomes similar to DSYODP participants if enrolled in an intermediary program like DSYODP.

Measures

The employment periods of interest were calculated based on youths' Employment Start Dates and Eligibility (Enrollment) Start Dates in the MIS data. These dates were converted into year/quarters and matched to the UI quarters for the purposes of combining UI wages with participants in the MIS. Wages within each quarter were summed noting the frequency of employers in any given quarter for each youth. These data at the year/quarter level were then summed to the level of individual participants taking into account the number of quarters of UI data for each youth, the number of pre- and post-enrollment quarters for each youth, and the number of pre- and post-placement quarters for each youth placed by BI.

Many youth reportedly placed by the partnership did not have UI wage records that corresponded with the quarter in which they were placed. These youth were employed for such a brief period of time that employers may not have reported the amount of wages.

Dependent Variables

Log (ln) of Average Weekly UI Wages After Employment and After Enrollment: Quarterly aggregations are more suited to the reporting schedules used by employers or for macro-analyses of broad labor market trends. For the sake of this study, UI wages were calculated as the natural log of weekly averages with the idea that earnings data for individual employees is conceptually more meaningful as smaller increments of time. The income variable was logged to generate units that are more normally distributed thus providing a better fit of the model to the data.

UI wage data pose one basic limitation on our ability to analyze individual wages: the duration of time under analysis is short relative to the quarterly aggregation periods provided in UI wage records. If looking at outcomes over a longer period of time, quarterly data might be less of an issue. Given that DSYODP is expected to have an impact on youth's wages, the "bulkiness" of UI records is accounted for by counting quarters containing youth's enrollment and employment start dates as part of the period prior to participation in DSYODP. This allows us to keep the data from these quarters for analysis, rather than dropping them from the study. It also provides more credibility to any significant findings since the higher wages assumed to be associated with enrollment and employment start dates are stacked against our hypotheses.

Proportion of Enrollment Quarters with UI wage Data Records: Calculated as the number of quarters beginning with the quarter of enrollment (containing the participant's Eligibility/Enrollment Start Date) divided by the total number of reported UI wage quarters for each youth from enrollment forward, this variable attempts to capture youth's persistence in employment. The fewer the number of quarters from the date the youth were enrolled, the greater the chances that the ratio will approximate 1.

There were Eligibility/Enrollment Start Dates in the MIS database that were dated after the youth began employment according to the Employment Start Date. This was an unanticipated outcome resulting from BI's incentive program, which rewarded points to each Center for improvements in its placement rates, or the proportion of youth employed out of the total number enrolled at the Center. This phenomenon made for an interesting conundrum in the calculation of time periods.

Fortunately, it did not affect the analyses to a great extent other than close proximities in the calculation of average wages from time of youths' enrollment and employment going forward.

Another measure of job tenure was created using a ratio of the total number of employers over the total number of enrollment quarters with UI wage records. The goal was to account for changes in employers in the definition of tenure. No significant relationships resulted from the use of this measure and it was omitted from the analyses.

Independent Variables

The independent variables used in the OLS regression models include both continuous and categorical variables. Continuous variables include the log number of employers in each youth's UI wage records and the log of average weekly wages for modeling wage effects on job tenure.

Categorical variables include the following with their respective coding:
- Gender (male=0, female=1),
- Race/ethnicity (African-American=0, Non-African-American=1),
- Education level (high school completion=0, GED completion=1, out-of-school=2,GED preparation=3, in college=4, vocational certification=5, college graduate=6, and in high school=**7),**
- Marital status (single=0, married=1),
- Offender classification (at-risk=0, offender=1),
- Presence of children (youth without children=0, with children=1),
- State (Maryland=0, Florida=1) for modeling effects on all placed youth, and
- Placement category (placements=0, non-placed youth=1).

Each of the categorical variables was transformed into dummy variables using the coding scheme above whereby the largest groups (i.e. males, African-Americans, high school graduates, single participants, at-risk youth, and youth placements) represented the reference category (equal to zero) against which its alternatives (equal to one or more) were compared.

Table VIII.2 summarizes the characteristics of youth at Washington, D.C. and Miami with UI wage records in Maryland and Florida according to the variables used in the models.

Participants who were placed and those who were eligible but not employed by BI (non-placements) were similarly distributed in terms of age (not shown), gender, ethnicity, educational attainment, marital status, offender classification, and number of children. Youth were balanced in terms of gender across the two sites, and largely African-American in both cities. Miami did have a substantial proportion of Hispanic youth participants placed in employment.

The majority of youth in either city were also high school graduates with notable numbers of youth either preparing for or having completed their GED. Youth at both sites also contained a fair amount of college or vocational training, particularly among placed youth in Maryland.

Table VIII.2. Characteristics of Youth Enrolled at Washington, D.C. and Miami Centers: Placements and Non-Placed Youth with Maryland and Florida UI Wage Records

	Washington, D.C. Center Youth in Maryland UI Records (N=157)		Miami Center Youth in Florida UI Records (N=183)	
	Placed at Retention Wages	Eligible but not Employed by DSYODP	Placed at Retention Wages	Eligible but not Employed by DSYODP
N	*87*	*70*	*175*	*8*
Gender				
Female	36 (41.4%)	33 (47.1%)	93 (53.1%)	4
Male	51 (58.6%)	37 (52.9%)	82 (46.9%)	4
Ethnicity				
African-American	83 (95.4%)	69 (98.6%)	137 (78.3%)	7
Asian-Amer / Pacific Islander	0	0	1	0
Caucasian	1	0	4	0
Hispanic / Latino/a	3	1	33 (18.9%)	1
Education of Participants Placed				
High School Graduate	38 (43.7%)	30 (42.9%)	110 (62.9%)	3
GED Completion	9	8	22	1
In College	8	2	13	2
Out-of-School/ No Degree	6	12	14	1
GED Preparation	10	11	11	0
Vocational Graduate	10	3	3	0
College Graduate	4	2	2	0
In High School	2	2	0	1
Marital Status				
Married	5	1	7	0
Single	82 (94.3%)	69 (98.6%)	168 (96%)	8
Classification				
Youth Offender	16 (18.4%)	26 (37.1%)	38 (21.7%)	1
At-Risk	71 (81.6%)	44 (62.9%)	137 (78.3%)	7
Reason for eligibility if "At-Risk"				
Poverty	66 (77.0%)	41 (58.6%)	136 (77.7%)	7
Other	9	9	4	1

Table VIII.2. Characteristics of Youth Enrolled at Washington, D.C. and Miami Centers: Placements and Non-Placed Youth with Maryland and Florida UI Wage Records (cont'd)

	Washington, D.C. Center Youth in Maryland UI Records		Miami Center Youth in Florida UI Records	
	Placed at Retention Wages	Eligible but not Employed by DSYODP	Placed at Retention Wages	Eligible but not Employed by DSYODP
N	*87*	*70*	*175*	*8*
Number of Children:				
0	58 (66.7%)	32 (45.7%)	158 (90.3%)	8
1	24	23	16	0
2	5	10	1	0
3	0	4	0	0
4	0	1	0	0
Number of Participants Employed at Time of Referral				
	0	0	0	1
Number of Employers for each youth in UI wage data[a]				
Average (Std Deviation)	5.56 (5.41)	4.27 (3.46)	11.45 (5.58)	12.63 (4.24)
Median	3	3	12	13.5
Min/Max	1 - 26	1 - 13	1 - 34	6 - 18
Overall Weekly UI Wages[b] ($)				
Average (Std Deviation)	181.89 (162.88)	121.81 (114.42)	233.33 (148.77)	277.60 (142.50)
Median	140	88.35	222.99	227.98
Min/Max	7.83 – 790.13	1.50 – 503.04	9.58 – 869.88	143.04 - 549.17
by Number of Children:				
0	182.38 (164.62)	97.10 (80.27)	224.63 (138.25)	277.60 (142.50)
1	169.55 (149.46)	159.36 (118.95)	307.31 (218.21)	--
2	235.44 (226.40)	87.60 (134.11)	424.94 (na)	--
3	--	168.97 (224.75)	--	--
4	--	201.97 (na)	--	--

a. The number of employers is determined by the number of employer ID numbers reported in UI wage records for each youth.
b. Average weekly wages were calculated from quarterly UI wage data and only based on the number of quarters for which each youth had UI data. Thus, quarters with no wage data are not included in these calculations.

Youth in the comparison were mostly single and at-risk of court involvement although eligible youth in Maryland who were not placed had a larger proportion of youth offenders relative to at-

risk youth. Poverty was the predominant reason for eligibility among the youth and most of the placed youth had fewer children than non-placed youth in the sample.

Only one of the youth in the comparison sample was employed at the time of referral to BI. Youth in Florida generally had more employers throughout their UI wage records relative to youth in Maryland irrespective of whether or not they were placements. Most interesting are the differences in UI wages for both groups, particularly those participants in Maryland. Placed youth in Maryland seemed to have higher median wages on average relative to non-placed youth. Data also suggest that youth with children earned higher average wages as their number of children increased regardless of whether they were placed or not by BI.

In sum, these data provide a good picture of the similarities between comparison groups and the individual factors that are likely to play a part in differences in outcomes within and between sites. The small number of non-placed participants from the Miami Center suggests that youth in Maryland make for a better comparison group for a case study of placement vs. non-placement outcomes.

Employment and Wages

Regional differences in wage levels might be expected given the differences in cost of living between regions. The discussion above also pointed to differences in the length of employment for youth between sites during the time period of data collected. Figure VIII.1 shows the distribution of UI quarters provided for youth participants in Washington, D.C. and Miami, Florida.

Youth placed in Florida had more quarters of employment data during the 14 periods under observation. Placements made in Maryland had fewer quarters of UI wage records. The same is true for youth who were not employed by the D.C. Center but who obtained employment by other means at some point during the period. These quarters do not equate to continuous employment, because youth changed jobs often within quarters and UI wage records were not always consecutive from one quarter to the next.
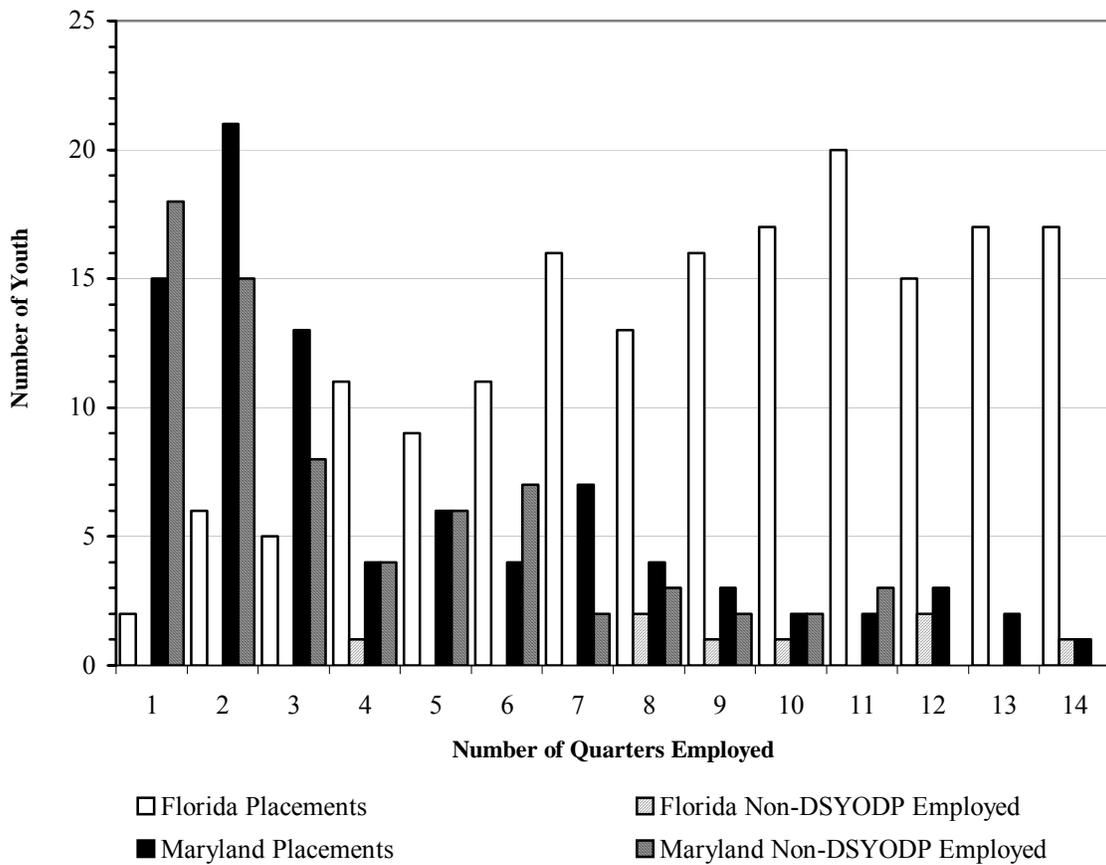
**Figure VIII.1. Number of Youth by Number of Quarters Employed
Based on UI Wage Records**

Table VIII.3 provides a comparison of the average number of UI wage quarters for DSYODP-I youth obtained from the UI wage records. Not only did youth in Florida have more employers, but also more quarters of employment relative to youth in Maryland records. This suggests that youth placed in Florida were more likely to have been employed longer periods of time. The data are not as suggestive with respect to differences in the number of quarters between placements and non-placements. Youth placed in Maryland had more wage-earning quarters on average than their eligible counterparts but the median numbers of quarters are the same for these two groups.

There were strong correlations for youth in the UI records between offender status and average weekly wages (-0.3), between the number of employers and average weekly wages for youth (0.52), and between placement status and the number of employers per quarter (-0.32). (A Pearson correlation matrix for Maryland and Florida youth in the sample is presented in Appendix D). This suggests that frequent changes in employment correspond with differences in wages between placed and non-placed youth and that non-placed youth may have been less mobile.

Table VIII.3. Quarters of UI Wage Data by State and Placement Status

	Washington, D.C. Center Youth in Maryland UI Records		Miami Center Youth in Florida UI Records	
	Placed at Retention Wages	Eligible but not Employed by DSYODP	Placed at Retention Wages	Eligible but not Employed by DSYODP
N	*87*	*70*	*175*	*8*
Number of Quarters in UI Records				
Average	4.51	3.84	8.99	9.63
Median	3	3	9	9.5
Std Deviation	3.51	2.94	3.5	3.11
Minimum - Maximum	1 - 14	1 - 11	1 - 14	4 - 14

One of the underlying assumptions in the study was that youth referred to BI were entry-level job candidates. If this were the case, very few of the youth enrolled in DSYODP to have consistent records of earnings prior to their involvement with the project. Table VIII.4 represents a comparison of UI wage record quarters and quarters associated with the employment start date for placed youth from Washington, D.C. and Florida.

Table VIII.4. Comparison of UI Wage Quarters Relative to Employment Start Date for Placed Youth

Number of Youth	Washington, D.C. Center Youth in Maryland UI Records	Miami Center Youth in Florida UI Records
Placed in Employment by DSYODP	*87*	*175*
with Two Consecutive Quarters of UI Wage Data Prior to Employment Start Date	23 (26.4%)	75 (42.9%)
with Two Consecutive Quarters of UI Wage Data After Employment Start Date	60 (69%)	171 (97.7%)
with Employment Start Date contained in First Quarter of UI Wage Data Provided	17 (19.5%)	34 (19.4%)
where Employment Start Date is not contained in any UI wage quarter	49 (56.3%)	44 (25.1%)

A relatively small number of youth have consecutive quarters of UI wage data prior to placement by DSYODP. Most youth in the sample were not employed at all or employed intermittently prior to employment through DSYODP. A larger proportion of youth placements did have consecutive quarters of UI wage records following placement by BI. This does not entail that they stayed with the same employer, but that they were more actively employed after their involvement with DSYODP.

For about 19% of youth placed at either site, their first quarter of UI wage records corresponded with the quarter containing their employment start date. About 56% of youth in Washington, D.C. and 25% of youth in Florida lacked a quarter for UI wage data that corresponds to the quarter in which they were employed. This suggests several things: (1) that they did not have

enough documented hours of employment in that quarter to warrant a UI wage record, and (2) that youth in Florida could have stayed employed longer after their placement.

Considering that none of the *placed* youth in this UI wage analysis was reported as being employed at the time of enrollment in DSYODP, their average wages for the two consecutive quarters prior to involvement with DSYODP are expected to be less than wages in the quarters after placement. In some cases, youth only had UI wage records for one quarter prior to or after their employment start date. It is expected that quarters containing the employment start date have higher average wages than those that do not, all other factors being equal. But this may not be the case if youth did not stay employed very long after placement. Table VIII.5 is a comparison of average wages for placed youth for the two consecutive quarters prior to and after their placement. As expected, the average wages for youth with two consecutive quarters of UI wage data are higher after placement versus before placement.

Table VIII.5. Comparison of Placement Wages for Two Consecutive Quarters Prior to Placement and After Placement (Retention Period)

	Two Consecutive Quarters before Placement*	Two Consecutive Quarters after Placement**	
Washington, D.C. (Maryland UI data)	Same Youth		Total
Number of Placed Youth	23	18/23	60
Average Weekly Wages (Std Deviation)	153.73 (130.69)	213.11 (173.48)	223.05 (193.96)
Median	88.42	144.19	154.83
Min/Max	9.17 – 466.71	6.17 – 558.33	3.33 – 790.13
Miami (Florida UI data)			
Number of Placed Youth	75	74/75	171
Average Weekly Wages (Std Deviation)	177.63 (138.18)	242.63 (170.93)	221.11 (169.85)
Median	131.88	225.60	196.38
Min/Max	7.00 – 632.96	8.04 – 688.83	4.67 – 763.33

*Average wages prior to employment are calculated by summing UI wages for the two quarters up to and/or including the employment start date for youth employed by DSYODP.
** Average wages after employment in DSYODP are calculated from the quarter containing each youth's Employment Start Date forward.

OLS Regression Models

Up to this point, the characteristics of youth participants in the comparison sample, the similarities and differences in their employment outcomes with respect to the number of employers, average wages, and wage differences for placed versus non-placed youth have been discussed. All data seem to indicate that the intermediary approach, particularly the placement of youth and its emphasis on retention level wages for those youth, has some impact on outcomes for youth offenders and youth at-risk of court involvement. What follows is a series of three models to test the significance of this assertion:

Model #1 tests the effects of individual factors and geographic differences between sites on average wages among placements. The model includes data for placed youth in both Maryland and Florida records.

- **Model #1:** Log (ln) of Average Weekly UI Wages after Employment Start Date = *f* (youth demographic characteristics, state, and logged number of employers)

The period of time from youths' enrollment in DSYODP onward provides a good basis for setting up a comparison of outcomes for both placed and non-placed youth because both groups are participants in the "treatment." Table VIII.6 provides a comparison of average wages from enrollment date forward for placed youth against average wages for eligible youth who were not employed by DSYODP. Data are limited to youth with Maryland UI wage records.

Table VIII.6. Average UI Wages for Maryland from Enrollment Quarter Forward between Placements and Eligible Non-Placed Youth in DSYODP - Washington, D.C. Center

	Placed Youth	**Enrolled but Not Placed by DSYODP**
Number of Placed Youth	73	61
Average Weekly UI Wages* (Std Deviation)	210.54 (182.20)	123.48 (116.39)
Median	153.07	87.67
Min/Max	3.33 – 790.13	1.50 – 485.67

*Differences in means for placed and non-placed youth are significant at $p<0.05$ using a two-tailed Satterthwaite T-test of unequal variances. T value= -3.35.

Average weekly UI wages for the two groups from enrollment onward are significantly different based on a T-test of independent means. Knowing this, a model of the effect of placement status can be constructed, net of individual factors and movement between employers. Model #2 tests the hypothesis that placed youth have higher wages than similar youth who gained employment through other means, controlling for individual characteristics. Data are based on a comparison of placed and non-placed youth in Maryland UI records only.

- **Model #2:** Log (ln) of Average Weekly UI Wages after Enrollment = *f* (youth demographic characteristics, logged number of employers, and placement status)

Based on the preliminary findings, it is expected that placed youth differ from non-placed youth with respect to persistence in employment. This difference in job tenure may be associated with the differences in wages between the two groups. Model #3 tests the hypothesis that youth with higher average wages are associated with greater persistence in employment (job tenure), net of individual characteristics and placement status.

- **Model #3:** Proportion of Enrollment Quarters Employed = *f* (youth demographic characteristics, placement status, and logged average weekly UI wages)

C. Results

Table VIII.7 shows the regression coefficients and T-values for each of the three models described above.

**Table VIII.7. OLS Regression Coefficients and T- Values
for Measures of Average Wages and Job Tenure**

	Model #1	Model #2	Model #3
	Log (ln) Average UI Weekly Earnings After Employment Start Date (For <u>All</u> Placed Youth)	**Log (ln) Average UI Weekly Earnings After Enrollment in DSYODP (For Maryland Youth)**	**Proportion of Enrollment Quarters Employed (For Maryland Youth)[a]**
Female	0.083 (0.73)	0.080 (0.33)	0.044 (0.70)
Non-African-American	0.243 (1.61)	0.478 (0.81)	-0.266* (-1.79)
Non High School Graduates	-0.048 (-1.53)	-0.086 (-1.65)	-0.015 (-1.11)
Married	0.09 (0.32)	-0.451 (-0.77)	0.26* (1.72)
Offender	-0.14 (-1.00)	0.117 (0.43)	-0.158** (-2.27)
Youth w/ Children	0.181 (1.13)	0.208 (0.88)	-0.061 (-1.01)
Florida	-0.090 (-0.60)	-- --	-- --
Log (ln) Number of Employers	0.533*** (6.88)	0.481*** (3.88)	-- --
Youth Not Placed in Employment by DSYODP	-- --	-0.66*** (-2.87)	-0.058 (-0.95)
Log (ln) Average UI Weekly Wages After Enrollment	-- --	-- --	0.059*** (2.71)
Adjusted R-squared	0.2059	0.1516	0.1302
Intercept	4.11*** (22.31)	4.22*** (13.84)	0.306** (2.48)
Number of Participants	246	134	134

a. Calculated as the number of quarters beginning with enrollment divided by the total number of reported UI wage quarters for each youth.

-- = not applicable.

*Significantly different from zero at the .10 level, two-tailed test.
**Significantly different from zero at the .05 level, two-tailed test.
***Significantly different from zero at the .01 level, two-tailed test.

Model #1 shows the regression coefficients for average weekly wages for placed youth in both Maryland and Florida. With respect to variations in income among placed youth after their employment start date, there were no significant differences between demographic groups.

Holding demographic characteristics and geography constant, a 1% increase in the number of employers led to a 53% increase in average weekly income for placed youth. This effect indirectly captures how average wages increase with employment. The average wages for youth after their employment start date were highly correlated (.52) with their total number of employers. Youth frequently changed employers such that movement from one employer to the next could have resulted in significant increases in their wages. All other things being equal, the longer youth stayed employed, the greater their average wages were likely to be relative to youth with longer lapses between employment.

Maryland UI wage data were best suited for comparing differences in average weekly wages between placed and non-placed youth after enrollment. Both groups were of comparable size and demographic characteristics whereas Florida only contained eight youth who were eligible but not placed through participation in DSYODP. Model #2 shows coefficients and T-values for average wages from Maryland UI wage records after youth were enrolled in DSYODP-I. Holding other factors constant, a 1% increase in the number of employers led to a 48% increase in average weekly income for youth participants. Also, average weekly earnings for non-placed youth were about 48% (anti-log of -0.66) less than youth placed by BI, holding all other factors constant.

Model #3 shows coefficients and T-values for the proportion of quarters after enrollment during which youth were employed. These comparisons are also based on UI wage records from Maryland. Coefficients for differences between groups by race, marital status and offender classification were significant. For non-African-American youth, the proportion of enrollment quarters in which youth had UI wage records would be 0.266 points less than African-Americans, net of other factors. Given that there were only 5 out of the 157 youth with Maryland UI wage records who were not African-Americans, little emphasis should be placed on this outcome.

There were also very few married youth, six in total. They faired 0.26 times better with respect to job tenure relative to their single counterparts. Not enough youth in the data were married to warrant serious consideration of this outcome even though five of the six were also placed in employment.

Youth offenders faired 0.158 times worse than at-risk youth in the proportion of enrollment quarters in which youth had UI wage records. This finding is substantive and has implications with respect to the focus and application of future interventions like the intermediary model.

Wages had a significant impact on persistence in employment. Every $100 increase in average weekly wages for participants led to an increase of 5.9 times for the proportion of enrollment quarters in which youth had UI wage records, holding other factors constant. This suggests that youth with higher average wages stayed employed more than youth with lower wages.

Although, on average, placed youth in Maryland had more quarters of UI wage data during their enrollment in DSYODP, the difference in tenure relative to non-placed youth was not great enough to be significant. Adding wages to the employment tenure models had a general effect of increasing the differences associated with youth's demographic characteristics and lessening the

differences in outcomes between placements and non-placed youth. (Preliminary nested models not shown.) This suggests that, by itself, placing youth in employment is not enough to strengthen tenure. Placing youth should be accompanied with higher wages to ensure that youth persist in employment.

D. Discussion and Summary

In the analyses presented in this chapter, the general argument is tested that youth involvement in intermediary programs like BI impacts the employment outcomes for youth offenders and youth at-risk of court involvement measured in terms of wages and persistence in employment. The analyses are framed in the form of two hypotheses: (1) that youth placed by the Centers have higher wages than similar youth who gained employment through other means, and (2) that youth with higher average wages are associated with greater persistence in employment.

Data utilized for this study came from linked MIS participant data for Washington, D.C. and Miami and UI wage records for participants in DSYODP-I from SESAs in both Maryland and Florida. These data spanned 14 quarters from the fourth quarter of 2002 through the first quarter of 2006. UI wage records group wages by quarters. To compensate for this, the expected outcomes were stacked in favor of the null hypothesis. This allowed all the individual records to be retained while presenting conservative estimates for effects on employment outcomes.

Given the limited data provided by each of the states, this study may be best viewed as a case study for the specific project sites for which data was received. Future studies like this involving multi-state UI wage data collection may want to consider incorporating partnerships with state-level agencies in the design of the evaluation plan to maximize access to administrative records within each of the states of interest.

Combining MIS data and UI wage quarters underscored the difficulty Centers must have faced in encouraging youth to stay with an employer for 6 months. UI wage records for the participants did not contain consecutive quarters of data for the most part. Quarters in which youth were placed by BI were frequently absent from UI wage records for youth. Because of the substantial proportion of placed youth (25 to 50%) in the sample without corresponding UI records, one could speculate as to how much and in what ways DSYODP actually impacted future wages youth were receiving in later quarters of employment. In other words, it could be that the unmeasured services and resources, the "casework" and employment readiness workshops provided by the intermediary over time, were just as impacting on participant outcomes as an initial job placement at retention wages.

With regard to the results from the regression analyses, several items from the findings are worth consideration. Data suggest that the basic assumption was correct in that youth participants represented patterns of behavior characteristic of entry-level employees, *regardless* of their offender or at-risk status. These youth were highly mobile when it came to employers and higher levels of mobility were associated with higher wages on average.

Similar results from data collected during the YODP-III evaluation suggested that youth were able to increase wages over time by staying with an employer or by changing employers. In YODP-III, the St. Paul project operated an Employment Bonus program that rewarded youth a financial bonus of $1,000 for staying with an employer for at least 6 months. Youth were aware of employers' policies for increasing wages based on their performance, timing of raises, and tenure in the job position. Some youth stayed at their employer beyond the 6 months needed in order to get the $1,000 bonus in DOL/ETA funds. Similarly during DSYODP-I, it's possible that youth were judging whether they would gain wage increases at the same employer or could increase their wages by using the experience gained at their current employer at a new place of employment.

The strongest effects on wages were associated with youths' mobility in terms of the number of employers. This outcome runs counter to the importance placed on retention by BI and conceals the possibility of better wage outcomes for individuals who stay with the same employer longer rather than staying employed via multiple employers.

This analysis also shows that placed youth faired better than non-placements with respect to wages. But the differences were not significant with respect to persistence in employment once average weekly wages were factored in. Adding an interaction term that combines average weekly wages and placement status to the model might provide a clearer picture of the net effects for wages and placement status.

Youth offenders also faired worse than at-risk youth in this analysis with respect to persistence in employment. Perhaps it is no coincidence that Centers in Phase II of DSYODP saw a dramatic decline in the number of youth offenders enrolled. Given the presence of an incentive system that rewarded Centers for better retention rates with employers, Center staffs may have adapted their placement strategy in order to maximize the rewards associated with placing youth who, generally, have more favorable employment outcomes.

Chapter IX

CONCLUSION

This evaluation encompasses a wide range of information with respect to Phase II of DSYODP. In its chapters, key literature and findings pertaining to employment of youth offenders and at-risk youth and the use of intermediaries for placing candidates in jobs were discussed. The evaluation approach used to guide the information gathered for the evaluation for both phases of DSYODP was outlined along with methods used to analyze the data collected and focused the analysis to answer the primary research questions of interest to DOL/ETA and BI. Using field work and MIS data queries, information was described on the characteristics of the Centers, the staffing patterns, and utilization of the MIS. The characteristics of businesses and referring organizations recruited by the Centers to coordinate the placing of participants in employment were described and the characteristics of participants, and the services they received. Both MIS data and UI wage records were utilized to explore the employment outcomes for businesses and youth participants and deduce significant findings.

There were two primary sets of research questions of interest to DOL/ETA for the evaluation of DSYODP Phase II The first set of questions was:

- How does the business intermediary approach identify and recruit employers and broker job placements for youth ex-offenders and youth at-risk of court or gang involvement? How *well* does BI identify and recruit employers who are willing to hire this target population? Does the use of the intermediary satisfy employers' needs? What criteria does BI utilize to hire BRC staff? What is the turnover rate of such staff? What are the performance requirements of such staff? Do they receive placement bonuses? If so, what are the results?

Staff at the Centers used a variety of inductive approaches to identify and recruit employers. They considered companies that looked for entry-level workers, were hiring and willing to pay the local retention wage. Centers used a combination of trade media, such as Crain's publication. They researched local trends within industries to determine areas of growth. They attended and marketed their services at career fairs to make new contacts and made use of existing contacts with local businesses to generate leads.

All indicators suggest that staffs' methods were successful in generating leads for brokering job placements. Center staff worked together on a daily basis to plan their approach for securing job positions. Once they established rapport with employers through personal contact, Center staffs uncovered more than enough leads to job vacancies. Because they were personally vested in the mission of BI, they overcame the lack of corporate stability and structural limitations (i.e. lack of office equipment, staff turnover, lack of RSs, etc.) on their ability to perform tasks. With respect to the model, the more relevant and difficult challenges to staff performance often came in the form of their ability to identify an adequate supply of job-ready candidates to meet the demand of their recruited businesses. Several employers reported needing large numbers of employees on a regular basis and Center staffs struggled to meet these demands.

Employers expressed a willingness to adopt the ideas underlying the intermediary approach. BRCs were effective at selling their services in a professional manner, which made a strong impression on many employers and convinced hesitant employers to give youth a chance to succeed. Employers, like many of the RO contacts, expressed a sense of gratification in their ability to play a role in servicing the community while satisfying their need to fill vacancies with prescreened job candidates that matched the requirements of the position. Prescreening was one of the main selling points noted by employers in addition to the free hands-on service provided by BI. Small business clients were particularly happy for the free service because they had no money for their hiring processes.

BRC also provided employers with a willingness to negotiate hours, shifts and wages with employers so that both partie's goals were met. Once youth were placed, BRCs followed up with the employer to assess if the employer felt their needs were being met. This combination of "hands on" services put BI in a position that rivaled temporary placement agencies and other staffing services.

The priority for BRCs was to focus on developing business relationships. Each Center's BRCs were charged with generating 5 placements per month with a 90% retention rate. In order to be effective, BRCs had to have specific skills including good listening habits, an assertive and self-motivated approach to their position, flexible schedules to accommodate the needs of employers, access to transportation, professional attire and etiquette, timeliness and consideration of the time constraints faced by their business clients.

BI utilized a point system by which Centers were rewarded or penalized relative to meeting their recruitment and placement goals. Center staff also created their own goals for recruitment and placement. Despite the corporate incentives offered for meeting recruitment goals for businesses, many of the businesses utilized during Phase II were holdovers from the first Phase. Center staff members simply found it more cost effective to focus their energies on identifying job ready youth for placement rather than spending as much time on expanding their portfolio of employers. Placement bonuses were rewarded on occasion. The most notable occasion was the third quarter of 2006 when the New York Center placed 95 participants and received a large cash reward from BI headquarters as a result. Otherwise, Center staff members rarely indicated interest in receiving the monetary incentives. Given the environment characterized by regular staff overhauls, many staff expressed more concern over punitive consequences for not performing well enough to meet the approval of executive staff members.

The turnover among BRCs in Phase II was rare. Vacancies tended to result from executive interventions in which entire Centers were re-staffed. This was the case in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. to some extent. Staff overhauls at these two Centers slowed the momentum of recruitment activity and BRCs lost rapport with employers as a result of abrupt changes in personnel.

The second set of primary research questions posed by DOL/ETA for the evaluation was:

- How does BI connect youth ex-offenders and at-risk youth to the services of the demonstration project and to One-Stop Career Center services and other services

available in the community? How *well* does the intermediary connect youth ex-offenders and at-risk youth to services? Does the use of BI's services reduce unemployment spells and otherwise improve employment outcomes for youth ex-offenders and at-risk youth? Does BI help youth avoid criminal activity and retain employment?

Referring organizations represented the organizational link between BI and job candidates. By establishing rapport with contacts in agencies and organizations that trained and catered to ex-offenders and at-risk youth populations, BI was able to connect these youth to the services offered by the demonstration project. HRCs had this as their primary responsibility. They attended career fairs, researched programs at community colleges, government agencies, NGOs and the like to identify pools of potential job-ready youth fitting the description of the model.

HRCs employed cost-effective strategies similar to that of BRCs in that they focused on developing rapport with a consistent and reliable source of ROs to supply them with youth for prescreening and placement. This often proved difficult for HRCs. Despite the range of services offered by ROs that BI worked with, ROs often had their own agendas and priorities. Some offered training programs that lacked any emphasis on resume preparation, communication skills and other soft skills which ensured that once youth were hired they could stay employed. Staff at ROs frequently sent unprepared or favored students to BI to see them obtain employment regardless of their job-readiness.

Referring organizations that referred youth who were placed by BI were pleased at the kind of jobs BI found for their referrals and the level of the wages they received. However, few traditional referring organizations, that is, youth development agencies and public employment services, provided reality-based preparation of entry level workers in this demonstration. There were several ROs in the MIS that made numerous referrals but had no or few placements. This was another source of frustration expressed by both the HRCs and contacts within the RO. HRCs were often the catalyst to help ROs understand the needs and perspective of employers. Providing additional services to the ROs and youth (i.e. resume workshops, coaching, etc.) was often necessary in order for HRCs to overcome the apparent disconnect between ROs and businesses. This has implications for future efforts to improve labor market outcomes for these youth since there was a real need for improving work readiness models among existing agencies, including One Stop Centers.

Youth were connected with many services through ROs who provided a wide range of services across each of the four cities. These included job-related services, skills training services, job placement services, and some personal development services. For those supportive services the ROs did not directly provide, they referred youth to other agencies. This included services like childcare, housing and health-related services.

Overall, ROs were pleased with the efforts of BI to place youth in employment. Good placements generally reflected well on the RO, and may have counted towards their own goals. ROs also appreciated the feedback provided by BI staff, particularly HRCs, about youth's experiences with employment.

Evidence from the employment outcomes and UI wage analyses suggest that BI was effective in improving employment outcomes for youth ex-offenders and at-risk youth. Youth expressed appreciation for the opportunities provided by the program. Most of the youth participants in Phase II were at-risk youth rather than offenders and few offenders received placements. In New York, for example, few offenders were sent by referral organizations. Whether it is the demand-side model or just the limitations of this particular demonstration is not clear with respect to why the proportions of youth offenders in the demonstration declined during this phase. Perhaps future programs should bias the incentive structure in favor of increasing participation among this population rather than rates of placements overall.

It is difficult to assert that BI's efforts worked to curtail illicit behavior among youth. There were no measures for this outcome built into the evaluation. The basic assumption, however, is that job placement was the primary alternative to other preoccupations for youth but there is no indication that youth would have engaged in illicit activities had they not been involved in the project.

With respect to retaining employment, youth in Phase II of DSYODP did not have the benefit of consistent follow-ups by a RS at each of the sites. Only New York and Washington, D.C. maintained this position while other Centers satisficed or simply did not attempt to perform the tasks associated with this position. Retention outcomes might have improved to some degree with the consistent presence of a full-time RS in all sites. Termination and retention data were weak for this Phase as a result of their absence.

Below are some additional observations from this evaluation:

- Phase II had a short time period under which each of the Centers was fully operational. This made it difficult to evaluate the model. Evaluators had to constantly assess the outcomes with respect to influences on the part of the management structure versus outcomes inherent to the intermediary model.

- The project had to start over in Phase II and had extensive turnover. Because the intermediary model depends heavily on relationship building, these fluctuations diluted what BI could have possibly accomplished.

- For demonstration grants, sustaining the activities of an initiative beyond the period of the grant presents one of the major challenges that grantees face. BI's management did not adequately prepare to deal with the issue of sustainability. This factored into staff turnover and employment outcomes towards the end of the project as executive staff had difficulty filling vacant positions. There were sustainability options that were not pursued, but the question remains whether it was a sustainable model as a free-standing intermediary or as a component of a work readiness effort.

- BI did prove that there are jobs for low- and medium-skilled workers at retention wages. Every site demonstrated the error of thinking that only minimum wage jobs were available for this population. Youth outcomes with respect to retention were not dissimilar to trends among entry-level workers in similar jobs. Many industries with high

demand for entry-level workers expect high turnover so six months retention is a savings for them.

- Even with retention level wages, many workers did not get benefits, and that is a limitation for workers with families. This may have factored into the differences in placement rates for eligible youth with children.

- Youth development issues, punctuality, solving transportation and childcare problems, completing high school, and acquiring soft skills continue to affect the labor force experience of these young workers—even with better paying jobs.

- Employment Bonus programs of YODP, especially at St. Paul, found that youth offenders and at-risk youth took longer to become work-ready than program administrators expected. This is consistent with findings from DSYODP, both phases, where BI staff found that most youth referred by ROs were not work-ready. This means more staff time – whether at an RO or an intermediary like BI – needs to be allocated for individual and group activities that strengthen work readiness.

- A major challenge for St. Paul was finding employers willing to take offenders. Given that BI did not place many offenders, not much information is available on the hurdles faced at the four BI sites. St. Paul and a couple of the BI sites were able to identify businesses who would give offenders and at-risk youth a chance; and the promise of careful screening before placement and retention support after placement encouraged employers in St. Paul and BI sites to try more of these youth.

Recommendations

The lessons of the DSYODP need not be a detriment to trying it with other ways of organizing the effort. The model could be integrated into One-Stop Career Centers or other configurations, franchises, etc. Does the model for DSYOSP require a central headquarters, or could city Centers be independent units? An in-between model might offer specific roles for a central office that would recognize its potential efficiencies: (1) develop a standard set of forms and staff job descriptions, which was very time-consuming for each site to develop in YODP; (2) develop a standard database design that could be operated in Access (again, very time-consuming for YODP grantees to each create their own); (3) facilitate information sharing whereby a central office facilitates the dissemination of successful practices among the sites. Each site, as a largely independent unit, would develop its own plan for recruiting businesses and ROs, set its own goals, hire and train its own staff, and be accountable to a local board of directors. There may be an additional role for a central office to provide technical assistance to Centers for sustaining operations (e.g., grant writing and fundraising) and possibly sharing grant funds obtained by a national office.

A possible "next step" would be to marry the strengths of YODP/EB and DSYODP – Employment Bonus provided highly-effective retention support, DSYODP identified businesses with lots of openings that paid a decent wage, and both programs recognized the importance of getting youth to reach a minimum standard of work readiness <u>before</u> sending youth on any

interviews. This last factor is important in two respects: youth who are not well-prepared are more likely to get discouraged about job seeking and to be unsuccessful if hired for a job, and employers will not look favorably on future referrals if the youth are not well-matched to the job and work-ready.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Review of Prior Research

In this section of the appendices, selected areas of prior research are presented to inform our understanding of the context of the DSYODP. The principal areas are:

A. Employment of Youth Offenders and Youth At-Risk of Court Involvement
B. Demand-side Approaches and the Use of Intermediaries
C. Evaluation of Workforce Intermediaries

A. Employment of Youth Offenders and Youth At-Risk of Court Involvement

1. Programs as Prevention

While most of the discussion of employment and youth offenders concerns what happens after the period of confinement, a broader perspective would take into account efforts to prevent youth from engaging in activities that result in involvement with the criminal justice system. Since this is a very expansive issue, this segment reviews the major evaluations and studies of programs that have attempted to address the relationship between crime and employment among adults and youths.

Based on their review of previous evaluations, **Bushway and Reuter (1999)** assessed the merits of various employment programs. They looked at both supply-side programs oriented toward the youth themselves and demand-side programs targeted to employers. In terms of supply-side programs for job training and education for at-risk youth, the authors identified three types of programs: (1) provision of summer work or other forms of subsidized employment, (2) short-term training with job placement for out-of-school youth, and (3) long-term, intensive residential programs providing vocational and life skills training, general education and job placement (e.g., Job Corps). In reviewing studies of these types of programs, they found that short-term programs did not provide enough time to measure and/or overcome a failed academic career that finds individuals so far behind they cannot catch up quickly, and that employment by itself is not enough to stop crime.

Bushway and Reuter found that the most effective programs were Job Corps and other intensive long-term programs that deal with all aspects of treating at-risk youths. The authors concluded that the real, long-term answer for the vast majority of at-risk youth lies not with the after-the-fact job training but rather with an effort to make schooling more meaningful in order to avoid drop-outs. As an example, they cited the Quantum Opportunities Program, which was a demonstration project that offered extensive academic assistance, adult mentoring, career and college guidance, a small stipend and money set aside for a college fund. They also noted that the most important part of this program was the adult mentoring; apparently the mentors provided the necessary focus and motivation for students to change their behavior and perform better in school.

On the demand-side, Bushway and Reuter looked at three types of programs: bonding and wage supplements, enterprise zones, and Community Development Block Grants. They found that

enterprise zones seem to have some positive effects in creating jobs for the target population and are most promising when designed with a crime prevention objective in mind.

2. Barriers to Employment

The challenges of youth ex-offenders and at-risk youth in seeking employment opportunities are certainly well-documented, and consequently in this segment a brief overview of some of the key findings is presented.

- **Furstenberg, et al. (2004)** reported that it takes much longer to attain the kind of employment that pays enough for young people to support themselves because the labor market demand for skills is more rigorous than in previous years, and it requires more years of schooling and part-time jobs to be prepared for the available full-time positions that pay benefits. In the weak economy, **Public/Private Ventures (2002)** added that an economic downturn means that youth are competing for scarce jobs with adults with good employment records.

- **Lerman (November 2000)** reported that a substantial proportion of adolescent Americans lack the basic skills that all employers require and that the United States has a weak system connecting education and careers. These factors are exacerbated for vulnerable youth, those who come from neighborhoods with high unemployment and social dysfunction. In a separate paper, **Lerman (April 2000)** reported that disadvantaged youth are not only disproportionately less successful in school, but they were also less likely to gain employment, even during the unprecedented economic boom of the 1980s and 1990s. He listed among the factors limiting access to jobs: high illiteracy rates among 16-25 year old American youth (25% compared to 5% in Germany and 10% in Canada) and the higher incidence of economically disadvantaged and minority youth with criminal records.

- **Bernstein and Houston (2000)** gathered research to show that released prisoners have a lower prospect for secure employment and decent wages throughout their lifetimes. Upon return to the community, former prisoners face a number of significant barriers to securing employment, particularly employment outside of the low-wage sector.

Several other studies reinforce findings on the extent of the challenges facing this population:

- Employers are more reluctant to hire former prisoners than any other group of disadvantaged workers. **(Holzer et al. 2002)**;

- Job applicants with a criminal record are substantially less likely to be hired. According to a recent audit, the likelihood of getting hired was 40 percent lower for the applicant with a criminal record. **(Pager 2002);**

- Individuals with felony convictions are statutorily barred from many jobs. The list of employment bans has increased over the past decade. **(Mukamal 2001)**;

- The availability of criminal records online, and changing public policies regarding access to those records, make it easier for employers to conduct criminal background checks on potential employees. **(Holzer et al. 2002);**

- The kinds of jobs for which employers have historically been more willing to hire individuals who were formerly incarcerated—blue collar and manufacturing jobs— are diminishing in the national economy. **(Holzer et al. 2002)**.

3. Overcoming Barriers

Despite what seems to be a discouraging litany of barriers to employment for these youth, the experiences of the Youth Offender Demonstration Projects and DSYODP projects indicate that a significant number of youth, especially those beyond school-age and thus available for full-time employment, have been successful in gaining and retaining employment with the assistance of demonstration projects throughout the country. Two sources that reinforce what evaluation of the demonstrations has found are highlighted below.

- Research conducted by **Harer (1994)** focused less on evaluating the success of programs and more on evaluating the success of former offenders. This research reported that offenders who had worked or been in school were less likely to re-offend. Those who had jobs before leaving incarceration were also less likely to re-offend.

- The third round of the Youth Offender Demonstration Projects provided substantial evidence that youth offenders and youth at-risk of court involvement could obtain employment as participants in programs that provided case management and comprehensive support services **(Jenks, MacGillivray, and Needels, 2006)**. For example, ninety percent of those youth who were active or had completed their individual service plans achieved a placement in employment. Further, youth offenders were as likely to obtain employment as non-offenders, but their wages were significantly less. Two projects that received special grants for employment bonus incentives and retention support reported very high persistence rates, with those youth placed in full-time employment persisting for the six months required for receipt of the full $1000 bonus, resulting in retention rates averaging over 90 percent for the two programs combined.

- "Serving High-Risk Youth: Lessons from Research and Programming" **(Public/Private Ventures 2002)** echoed prior youth employment literature that found that "nothing works." The author's concern was, however, that few programs had been rigorously evaluated. The paper focused on ten that had been subject to rigorous evaluation, and still concluded that few had produced enduring impacts for their clients. Yet site-by-site assessments led to a less discouraging conclusion because some projects did have lasting impacts—even when other pilots or demonstration projects were not considered successful. The authors observed the difficulty in implementing such complex projects and reviewed a list of practices that they believe make a difference:

- A desire by participants to change their lives,
- Prompting from a trusted adult,
- An opportunity to earn income,
- Supportive staff-youth relationships,
- A sense of belonging, and
- Getting needs identified by the youth met.

B. Demand-side Approaches and the Use of Intermediaries

1. Demand-side Approaches

Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao, in her opening remarks at the 2003 Workforce Innovations Conference, co-sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor and the National Association of Workforce Boards, called for a "demand-driven workforce investment system" that responds rapidly to changing economic conditions and helps workers gain greater self-sufficiency (Chao 2003). She said that workforce development programs need to "better fit the hiring needs of employers so trainees can have a better chance of securing jobs."

Hamilton (2002) used data from the National Evaluation of Welfare-to-Work Strategies (NEWWS). This data-based study examined the long-term effects on welfare recipients and their children in eleven mandatory welfare-to-work programs. Their conclusions about what worked best in successfully leaving public assistance for employment are interesting.

They first identified three strategies used by the programs:

- Short-term job search assistance that emphasized getting a job quickly (known as Labor Force Attachment, or LFA programs);
- Longer-term skill-building activities (mostly finishing basic education) that should be completed before entering the labor market (known as Human Capital Development, or HCD programs); and
- A mix of the two.

Overall, they found that all programs, regardless of which strategy was used, increased earnings for participants and decreased welfare receipt. However, the short-term programs or LFA's were far more successful than the longer-term strategies that focused on education and training first. In other words, between the two, it was far more beneficial to focus on securing employment as soon as possible. Nevertheless, the most successful programs in this study combined both strategies and far out-performed the other programs. Why did this work?

It worked because its focus was on employment first and foremost. But underlying that emphasis were the notions that short-term education and training and on-going education and training were important components to securing and retaining jobs. Moreover, these mixed programs also emphasized holding out for a "good" job—not just the first job that was offered. This increased earnings and retention as well.

Bartik (2001), in his analysis of the potential role of demand-side policies in increasing the employment and earnings of the poor, argued that U.S. antipoverty policy would be more effective if it made greater use of labor demand policies. Using empirical evidence, he asserted that labor supply policies alone have significant limitations resulting in only modest effects in helping low-income Americans gain employment. Labor demand policies are needed because even when overall U.S. unemployment is low, jobs are in short supply for the most disadvantaged. He outlined a labor demand program with two main components: (1) wage subsidies to employers, particularly small businesses and nonprofits, who increase their overall employment; and (2) a focus on those who are outside the labor force or otherwise unlikely to be employed because of education, race, and/or residence in high-unemployment cities.

In an examination of the determinants of employer demand for welfare recipients, **Holzer and Stoll (2000)** found a labor market for welfare recipients quite strong, but one that could be significantly weakened during an economic downturn. They cited a broad range of factors, including skill needs and type of industry, which affect the potential demand for welfare recipients among employers. Other characteristics that affect the relative supply of welfare recipients to employers—such as spatial location and employer use of local agencies or welfare-to-work programs—influence the extent to which such demand is realized in actual hiring. The authors suggested that interventions by local agencies aimed at improving the accessibility of employers to welfare recipients could broaden and thereby improve their employment prospects.

Current workforce development programs have largely been shaped by the "work-first" approach that emphasizes rapid job placement. Yet research on employers suggests a need to reassess the work-first model (**Roberts and Padden 1998**). Businesses are unwilling to assume the burden of preparing the unprepared or unmotivated for work, expecting government to invest in basic human resource development. Creating a more effective welfare-to-work system requires developing relationships with the business sector, and doing so in ways that fundamentally restructure the public policy process to better understand the perceptions, capabilities and limitations of business involvement. Potential advantages of making business more central to the process can accrue to all partners—recipients, public agencies, business and training partners—involved in workforce development.

Fleischer (2001) discussed the importance of focusing on sectoral employment strategies. Targeting a specific industrial sector that is important within a certain geographical area has definite advantages, especially if the industrial sector has a difficult time recruiting workers due to difficult training objectives. Fleisher recommends the following to make a sectoral employment strategy more effective:

- Design a training curriculum that targets a certain sector that has employment needs in the area.

- Hire the training graduates targeted to this sector. Ideally, an employer should promise to hire participants before they enroll in training, thus giving an added incentive for employer and participants to make training a success.

- Establish a mentor program. This helps new hires and training graduates adjust to the realities of employment in this industrial sector.

- Create employee documents, orientations and shop-floor training. By becoming this involved with work sites, program staff can learn what the employer really needs and wants—beyond just what they say they want. Often employers will make a list of basic requirements, but forget underlying skills or tangential skills—for instance, the need for someone who has basic math skills or is highly literate.

Moreover, Fleischer notes the pivotal importance of soft skills—skills such as interpersonal communication, ability to take direction, customer service, etc. These skills are more important than technical skills when it comes to success in the workplace. Because so many of these disadvantaged workers have had so little exposure to workplaces or the relevant workplace cultures, they need training on the importance of timeliness, dress codes and social manners among other skills. A lack of soft skills is one of the most important reasons that employment does not continue. On the other hand, Fleischer notes that employers must also broaden their expectations and have the communication skills to work with those that come from different backgrounds.

Demand-driven workforce development acknowledges that employer demand for certain types of workers (those that increase productivity or profitability) significantly drives the labor market. As **Freeman and Taylor (2002)** maintained in their report on demand-led retention, workers who succeed are those who can meet employers' demands, and those lacking the necessary skills or attributes are in danger of losing out. The authors identified four key characteristics of demand-driven workforce development:

- *Dual-customer focus*. 1) Underemployed job seekers and 2) the employers that will hire them. Both needs have to be met.

- *New partnerships and working relationships between employment and training providers and local employers.* These relationships incorporate employer input into program design, curriculum development and program operation.

- *Stimulation of collective action by employers*. Demand-driven systems should be responsible to, and influenced by, clusters of firms with similar workforce needs.

- *Coordination of the workforce development system with economic priorities*. Developing a skilled workforce supply can help a region attract businesses.

By the nature of their mission, structure and location, many social service program providers are removed from the business world. They are generally unfamiliar with business or industry policies and practices, and they lack concrete information about the companies or occupations of interest to their clients **(Freeman and Taylor 2002).** For these organizations, demand-driven workforce development is a serious challenge. The authors recommended several strategies for engaging employers:

- Offer concrete benefits to the employer.
- Supervisors are essential—don't ignore them. Many providers reach out to upper management and are greeted with enthusiasm, only to be met with hostility by direct-line supervisors. Directly addressing supervisor concerns is essential.
- Involve employers in program design and implementation.

- Recruit employers from among existing contacts.
- Recruit from civic organizations (such as Chamber of Commerce or Rotary Club).

2. Welfare-to-Work Approach

The $3 billion Welfare-to-Work grants program established by Congress as part of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 provided funds to over 700 state and local grantees. Approximately $2 billion was awarded in formula grants to the states. In addition, the Department of Labor awarded $712 million in three rounds of competitive grant funding.

DOL/ETA used similar criteria to evaluate applicants in all three rounds of funding. Its solicitation for Welfare-to-Work Round three indicated that the following criteria would be used: (1) the relative need for assistance in the area proposed to be served; (2) the extent to which the project proposed innovative strategies for moving welfare recipients into lasting work; (3) the quality of the proposed outcomes of the project; (4) the degree to which the project was coordinated with other services; and (5) the demonstrated capacity of the grant applicant. Applicants that agreed to participate in a random assignment evaluation and applicants that proposed to serve Empowerment Zones or Enterprise Communities were given special consideration.

Title VII of the Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY2000 amended the Welfare-to-Work program expanding the population eligible for services under the Welfare-to-Work program. Under these amendments, the Welfare-to-Work program would continue to serve long-term welfare recipients, but up to 30% of funds could be spent on individuals in other groups, which included: (1) welfare recipients with significant barriers to self-sufficiency as defined by their local Workforce Investment Board (WIB); (2) youths between 18 and 24 years of age who were in foster care before their 18th birthday; and (3) custodial parents with incomes below the poverty line who were not recipients of assistance under their state Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program.

The Department of Health and Human Services contracted for an evaluation of the Welfare-to-Work Program with the goal, as defined in the grant solicitation, to "expand the base of knowledge about programs aimed at moving the least job-ready welfare recipients into unsubsidized employment." The process and implementation analysis component of the national evaluation was based on information collected through two rounds of site visits in 1999 and 2001 to 11 study sites, and MIS data maintained by the programs in participants and services. Highlights included:

- Three general program models for delivering services to the hard-to-employ were implemented in the study sites: (1) Enhanced Direct Employment Models, (2) Developmental/Transitional Employment Models, and (3) Intensive Post-Employment Skills Development Models.

- Grantees focused on the most disadvantaged, as specified in Congressionally established provisions, but most programs faced difficulties enrolling eligible individuals.

- Welfare-to-Work programs went beyond job readiness and self-directed job search assistance in the sense that they provided intensive individualized case management, coaching or support; and many programs also included more intensive developmental components and activities.

- Programs generally provided some type of post-employment services, primarily to help individuals retain their jobs.

- Grantees reported that about half of their program participants entered regular unsubsidized employment.

- Welfare-to-Work participants followed four different "pathways to employment": (1) The Basic Employment Preparation or Work First Model, (2) The Transitional Employment Pathway, (3) The Educational or Training Pathway, and (4) The Mixed Activities Model.

3. Intermediaries

For purposes of the evaluation of the DSYODP, intermediaries, like BI, are entities that link individuals with jobs. The scope of the activities entailed in that "link" varies greatly across intermediaries, and can include: job search, work experience, education, training, subsidized employment, placement, retention support, and advancement support. Intermediaries can be non-profit or for-profit organizations, educational institutions, or public or quasi-public organizations.

Pavetti, et al. (2001) offer a two-pronged definition of an intermediary. An organization functions as an intermediary when a) it provides services that help link welfare recipients with jobs and b) it has a formal relationship with the welfare office or other administrative entity that has the responsibility of moving welfare recipients to the job market. Intermediaries can also be categorized as either primary intermediaries that bear the primary burden of connecting employers and welfare offices and secondary intermediaries. These secondary intermediaries are often specialized organizations that may focus on specific types of training or work with specific industries. Many types of organizations can function as intermediaries: for-profit, non-profit, educational or public organizations can all fulfill the intermediary function. Interestingly enough, however, for-profit organizations, such as staffing agencies, comprise the smallest percentage of intermediaries, but serve the largest number of welfare recipients.

Given the limitations of an approach that focuses primarily on the supply-side of persons seeking jobs, increasingly, both employers and advocates for low-income job seekers are looking to a range of intermediary organizations to make the connections. Such organizations can be community-based organizations, employer-led organizations and associations, labor unions, community colleges, the public sector, or temporary help and staffing firms. Whatever their institutional form, they perform a number of general functions (**Jobs for the Future 1998**), including:

- Organizing and representing employers in workforce development planning and policy;
- Serving as brokers between employers and local players in workforce development, including educational institutions and social service agencies; and

- Delivering services directly to employers and their workforce (rather than acting as a broker that connects and refers employers to community-based providers).

In a subsequent study for Jobs for the Future, **Taylor and Rubin (2005)** examined data on the nine-year Jobs Initiative (JI) to investigate two areas: (1) the types of employers that will do business with workforce intermediaries and employ low-income workers and what factors determine this, and (2) employer attitudes towards workforce intermediaries themselves. The data come from over 65 employers across the U.S. and range from small to large employers. Fundamental findings covered six topic areas:

- *Screening*: The JI intermediaries benefited their participants by screening employers and they benefited employers by screening job applicants. Employers valued intermediaries for a distinctive role: reducing the risk of hiring JI participants. Because JI participants were viewed as risky, employers felt that intermediaries reduced the risk to an acceptable level.

- *Training I*: Employers worried that low-income individuals represented significant business risks and they believed soft skills training was a solution. Data of JI participants bore this out: participation in soft skills training was the main predictor for short-term labor market retention of JI participants.

- *Training II*: Technical skills were essential for longer-term retention and advancement. Employer data supported the perception that technical skills training was essential for low-income people, but it also suggested that the impact of training did not become evident until about six months into the job. In other words, soft skills counted most for surviving the first few months of the new job, but technical skills were essential for long-term retention and advancement.

- *Support*: A large number of JI employers implemented practices to support their entry-level workers. Supportive practices ranged from ad-hoc offerings (e.g. transportation subsidies) to comprehensive career ladders that included in-house training. The immediate intent was to stabilize and even upgrade the skills of internal workforces whose reliability, experience or skills fell short.

- *Motivation*: Two factors, acting in combination, shaped employers' development of supportive practices: a desire to benefit the larger community by hiring people who needed help and recognition that the "bottom line" constrained the extent of the support the firm could provide.

- *Improvement*: Employers valued the advice of trusted intermediaries on how they could strengthen or expand their supportive practices. The JI intermediaries recommended changes to support practices that would both benefit firms and help workers stay on the job and advance. Intermediaries often supplied technical assistance on how to implement those changes.

Pavetti et. al. (2001) note that for an administrative entity, there are important questions to consider when choosing an intermediary. Focusing on these issues should provide for a more effective and efficacious relationship. The questions are:

- How much responsibility should be transferred to the intermediary? For instance, should case management as well as job placement responsibilities be transferred?
- Is this responsibility transferred to one or multiple intermediaries?
- How are the intermediaries reimbursed and how much are they reimbursed? Is cost-reimbursement or pay-for-performance a better choice?

The exact process of how intermediaries interact with welfare participants, employers and administrative entities also has significant variations and ranges from simple to complex. The models examine how many referrals occur in the movement from welfare-to-work. Four major models are detailed:

1. Welfare office case management model:

   welfare office → other service provider or intermediary

In this model, the welfare office keeps the case management aspect of the process, but outsources job search and placement.

2. Intermediary case management model:

   welfare office → intermediary → intermediary or other service provider

This has the welfare office outsourcing case management as well as all job searching and placement.

3. Workforce development system case management model:

   welfare office → workforce development system → intermediary

The third model focuses on the use of a workforce development system, which then employs an intermediary.

4. Workforce development system progressive model:

   welfare office → workforce development system → intermediary 1 (assessment) → intermediary 2 (case management, job search) → intermediary 3 (placement).

This model focuses on using specialized intermediaries for assessments, case management and job searching and placement. Clearly, the most involved of the models may also offer, however, the most targeted services by the most qualified providers.

At its best, workforce intermediaries take a dual customer approach, addressing the needs of employers and low-income and less-skilled workers and job seekers. In short, workforce

intermediaries act as a "center of gravity" in developing relationships, enforcing accountability, and leveraging resources.

C. Evaluation of workforce intermediaries

Mueller and Schwartz (2002), using a case-study approach, looked at the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Jobs Initiative demonstration project to help low-income residents find jobs that pay family-supporting wages. The project began in 1995 and was to run for eight years. The general goal of the initiative was to be a catalyst for systems change, primarily by bringing together employers, elected officials, community-based organizations, low-income residents and other stakeholders in the design and creation of new job-related strategies. Although the initiative resulted in only modest changes grounded in fragile relationships, the authors emphasized that the reforms reflect an increased understanding of the complex barriers to work, acknowledge that employers should be engaged stakeholders, addressed post-placement supports for workers and employers to enable workers to persist and advance, and were pushing systems toward new policy goals.

The experience of existing intermediaries suggests several key implementation challenges and opportunities (**Jobs for the Future, 1998**):

- Targeting priority employers or sectors in a community;

- Sorting out long-standing and complex interrelationships among organizations, institutions, and individuals in a community, and conducting effective outreach;

- Deciding on short- and long-term goals and activities that yield maximum benefits to employers, job seekers, and the community;

- Matching organizational and/or community capacity to proposed workforce development activities;

- Developing viable funding strategies over the long-term, from general membership fees, to fee-for-service activities, to public sector and foundation grants; and

- Developing and agreeing on common benchmarks to ensure that intermediary initiatives undertaken will lead toward desired results (i.e., job placement rates, credentials awarded, postsecondary completion rates, and long-term retention in an employment track).

Lynch (2000) identified two major challenges in her study of the role of labor market intermediaries in the training of low-wage and low-skill workers. First is the capacity of emerging intermediaries to achieve a stable source of funding. Many programs examined in her study were sponsored by venture capital money or private foundation support, with the hope that once the programs were up and running, alternative sources of funding would be identified. A second issue is employer involvement. While it is critical to ensure employer involvement, there is also tension about how much of a role employers should play in governing intermediaries.

The study by **Javar and Wander (2004)** noted important differences between intermediaries depending on their function and size. They clearly identified larger intermediary organizations, whether for-profit or non-profit, as the most effective intermediaries. This is due simply to their larger pool of resources and full-time staff and their ability to offer more specialization. Additionally, non-profit organizations are more commonly chosen as the intermediary organizations for adult and youth services and have a strong presence in the Once-Stop Career Centers.

But what may be most interesting is the competition to be named intermediaries for youth service. Contrary to the overall trends (large organizations, mostly non-profit), youth services are almost exclusively dominated by smaller community-based organizations. For-profit entities almost never compete for youth services—there tends to be either too much competition or not enough profit within this arena.

A study conducted by the Partnership for Employer-Employee Responsive System **(PEERS, 2003)** on the benefits to employers and workers of workforce intermediaries provides several valuable findings. First, the study offered a list of types of intermediary functions, which supplies a useful classification system:

- o Obtain new workers,
- o Plan and/or provide training,
- o Measure and/or redesign jobs,
- o Obtain labor market information,
- o Identify or obtain public funding,
- o Identify, compare and/or broker among vendors, and
- o Assist with child care and transportation.

The PEERS study also reported four major findings:

- All workforce intermediaries were not created equal. Simply using an intermediary, regardless of the purpose for which the intermediary was used, did not have a significant effect on either productivity or wages. Different kinds of intermediary functions had different effects on wages and productivity.

- Using a workforce intermediary to measure and/or redesign jobs led to higher productivity and higher wages, benefiting both employers and employees.

- Using a workforce intermediary to plan and/or provide training reduced labor turnover and that led to higher productivity and higher wages.

- Using a workforce intermediary *only* to obtain new workers led to lower wages, to the detriment of workers and, possibly, to employers.

The fundamental finding in the PEERS study offers an interesting perspective on the use of intermediaries:

When employers use workforce intermediaries to improve or link jobs or to locate or provide skills training and employment supports, **both workers and employers benefit**. However, when employers use workforce intermediaries **only** for placement and/or job matching, workers' wage prospects can be hindered and whether or not any benefit accrues to employers is unclear (emphasis in original). (p. 4)

In summary, the substantial body of research on youth employment, youth involvement in the justice system, and the roles of employers and intermediaries provide evaluators with a strong base of understanding the goals of the DSYODP. Any evaluation of such programs must address their complexity by looking closely at the stakeholders involved and the various components of the model.

APPENDIX B

Study Questions

APPENDIX B – STUDY QUESTIONS

A. Development of a Network of Employers	
1.	What types of approaches have BI's Centers used to identify and recruit employers and broker job placements for youth ex-offenders and youth at-risk of court or gang involvement?
2.	Which approaches at each Center have been *most effective* identifying and recruiting employers who are willing to hire this target population?
3.	To what extent are employers willing to pay a "retention wage" to DSYODP participants? What challenges do Center staff encounter in identifying employers with positions that pay a retention wage and what strategies have been effective in gaining a retention wage for as many participants as feasible?
4.	To what extent has each Center worked with employers to involve them in development and on-going operation of BI's business intermediary model as implemented in each city?
5.	Over the period of the demonstration, to what extent has each Center been able to expand the pool of employers who have hired this target population?
6.	What is the full range of employers that has been contacted by each Center? What types of industries are represented among those contacted?
7.	What types of industries are represented among those employers that have vacancies listed with the Center compared to those that actually hire referred youth?
8.	To what extent are high-growth industries represented?
9.	What is the number of placements, by employer and by industry? What is the number and percent of repeat placements where after hiring from BI an employer returns to fill more vacancies?
B. Employer Outcomes	
1.	To what extent are employers' needs for workers being met by the Center in each city? What types of businesses are not having their needs met? What is the number and percent of each Business Clients' vacancies that are being filled by referrals from the Center ("fill rate")? Has the Center been able to make adjustments over time to meet those businesses' needs for workers? Have Business Clients indicated that they expect to have vacancies in the future that might require new skill sets different from the skill sets for current vacancies, and if so, what types of new skill sets?
2.	How satisfied are employers with the services provided by the Centers? What services are of the most value? For what reasons do employers choose to work with the Center in contrast to other private or public recruitment (placement or staffing) organizations? What changes would employers recommend?
3.	What types of services were requested or of interest to Business Clients that would be provided by the Center or ROs (e.g., training, education, support services)?
4.	What specific skills and requirements do Business Clients have for the vacancies that they may be willing to fill through referrals from a Center?
5.	Are employers satisfied with the quality of the youth being referred to them by BI?
6.	What has been the experience of the employers with the persistence of BI participants? *Why* was there turnover of BI participants after placement?
C. Project Organization and Staffing [Business Resource Centers]	
1.	Does the basic staffing design (RS, HRC, BRCs, and Program Assistant) appear to be appropriate for each of the four Centers? Does each Center have the needed numbers of staff in each type of position? What criteria are used by BI in the recruitment and selection of staff?
2.	Has BI established performance requirements and expectations for each staff position/person? How does each Center evaluate staff performance against the requirements? Do staff receive placement bonuses? Is there evidence that placement bonuses affect performance results? What is the rate of turnover, by Center and position, over the period of the demonstration? What are the reasons that staff may not persist in employment?
3.	Does each Center have a fully operational management information system? Have enhancements been made to the MIS to reflect any changes in data elements for Phase II? Have staff been trained appropriately?
4.	How does each Center and BI use MIS data to assess progress toward goals and program effectiveness? For example: number of placements; placements by types of employers who hire DSYODP-II participants; wage rates by industry and SOC; wage progression and other advancements of participants.
5.	To what extent has each Center and BI been able to develop and implement planned components

	for sustainability, such as linkages to Once-Stop Career Centers, fee-for-service arrangements, and leveraging of resources within the community?
D. Service Delivery to Youth	
1.	How does each of BI's Centers assess the needs of each youth offender and at-risk youth for services?
2.	To what extent have youth offenders and at-risk youth *actually received* the services – whether through the Center for work preparedness or through other sources – that were identified as needed by each youth?
3.	What resources and networks has BI tapped into to help develop baseline employability ("soft") skills for all youth? Overall, what strategies seem to be most effective in getting participants to be job-ready?
4.	To what extent do participants need pre-employment services beyond the basic services encompassed by the DOL/ETA funding for DSYODP? Do participants need such services as assessment, substance abuse treatment, mental health care, routine health care, housing, GED preparation, etc.?
5.	To what extent has each Center been able to gain access to services for its participants from other sources, such as Once-Stop Career Centers, education systems, community and faith-based organizations, public agencies, and other local resources?
6.	What strategies used by Center staff appear to positively affect persistence (i.e., retention) of participants in employment?
E. Participant Outcomes	
1.	What are the basic characteristics (age, gender, offender status, ethnicity, etc.) of the youth referred to each Center?
2.	Of the youth referred to each Center, what proportion of youth are placed? Do the characteristics of youth who are placed differ from those who are not placed?
3.	What proportion of participants is placed at or above the retention wage as established for each Center's city? What benefits do participants receive?
4.	What are the wage progressions of participants over the period of the evaluation? What number and percent of participants are not initially placed at retention wage levels but subsequently reach such levels?
5.	What is the duration of employment for participants? How many participants who are placed lose employment during the period of the evaluation, and for what reasons?
6.	To what extent do participants achieve advancements beyond wage increases? For example: job promotion, more desirable title, more desirable shift/hours, improved benefits or conditions.
7.	To what extent do participants achieve certifications and licensures during employment?
8.	To what extent do participants achieve education outcomes (e.g., high school completion)?
9.	To what extent do participants avoid involvement with the criminal justice system? Do rates of involvement differ for ex-offenders compared to youth at-risk of court involvement?
10.	At the time of referral, what types of skills are most frequently present? Which types of skills are most frequently missing?
F. Referring Organizations	
1.	What types of ROs has each Center recruited? What populations do the ROs serve? What types of services (e.g., job-related, skills training, supportive) do the ROs provide? Which ROs have the most referrals?

APPENDIX C

Site Visit Protocols

Preliminary Site Visit Field Guide

Follow-up Site Visit Protocols (Second Visits)
Business Resource Center Manager
Business Resource Consultant
Human Resource Consultant
Retention Specialist
Executive Manager at Business Interface
Businesses
Referring Organizations
Youth Participants
Quality and Compliance Auditor/ Manager

Headquarters Site Visit Protocols

Third Visit Protocols
Center Staff Focus Group Questions

Field Guide – Preliminary Site Visit
Demand-Side Youth Offender Demonstration Project – Phase II

Evaluator Name: _____ Date of Visit: _____

DSYODP-II Site: _____

Street Address: _____

Principal Contact Person: _____ Position: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Individuals Interviewed	Organization	Position in Project

1. Description of operational status for Phase II

a) Describe the implementation (Los Angeles) or resumption (New York, Chicago, and Washington, D.C.) of activities and relationships [Include a timeline to the date of preliminary visit]. What are the overall goals and priorities for the Center? Have goals or priorities changed since initial implementation/resumption of activities at this site?

Staffing

Position	Name	Date Hired	Training Background/ Workforce Experience
Business Resource Manager			
Business Resource Consultant 1			
Business Resource Consultant 2			
Business Resource Consultant 3			
Human Resource Consultant			
Retention Specialist			
Quality & Compliance Auditor			

b) For each *position*, what are the goals and priorities?

Position	Goals	Priorities
Business Resource Manager		
Business Resource Consultant		
Human Resource Consultant		
Retention Specialist		
Quality & Compliance		

c) What are the duties and roles of each staff person? [Bring job descriptions back to headquarters.]

Position	Name	Roles and Duties
Business Resource Manager		
Business Resource Consultant 1		
Business Resource Consultant 2		
Business Resource		

Consultant 3		
Human Resource Consultant		
Retention Specialist		
Quality & Compliance Auditor		

d) What is the general process used at the Center for entering data in the **MIS**?
What types of reports are generated from the MIS?

[*To the evaluator*: as feasible, observe use of MIS by staff; obtain samples of completed input documents and reports]

2. Interactions with business clients, referring organizations, and youth

a) Depending on whether site is new (Los Angeles) or continuing (New York, Chicago, and Washington, D.C., what strategies are being used for **recruiting businesses and referring organizations** as clients? What has been the degree of success to date?

	Strategies	**Successes**
Recruiting Businesses		
Recruiting Referring Organizations		

b) With which ROs and Service Delivery Partners does your Center have an established working arrangement (MOU)?

Referring Organizations	Service Delivery Partners

c) What has been the experience to date with **recruiting and placing youth** in employment?

d) What is the nature of the working relationship between the HRC and the BRCs in identifying youth who might fill positions at businesses?

e) What role does each person play in determining the qualifications and skills needed?

	Role in Determining Business Needs
Human Resource Consultant	
Business Resource Consultant	

f) For youth, provide approximate counts of:

Participant category	Count
Total youth referred to the Center since Phase II operations have begun	
Of total youth referred, number who are eligible for DSYODP	
Of those eligible for DSYODP, number placed in retention wage positions	
Of those eligible for DSYODP, number placed in positions but not qualifying as retention wage placements (based on wage level and/or number of dependents)	

3. Preparation for follow-up visits

To the evaluator: Collect hard copy documents as needed to prepare for later site visits or data analyses:

Documents Collected During Visit	√
Job Descriptions	
MIS Data Entry Screens	
Business Contact List	
Referring Organizations Contact List	
Other Partner Organizations Contact List	
Local Employment Conditions Report	
Local maps marked with target areas	

DSYODP II
Follow-up Site Visit Protocols
(Second Visit)

for

Business Resource Manager
Business Resource Consultant
Human Resource Consultant
Retention Specialist
Division Manager at Business Interface
Businesses
Referring Organizations
Youth Participants
Quality and Compliance Auditor/ Manager

Site Visit Protocol
Demand-Side Youth Offender Demonstration Project – Phase II

Field Guide—Business Resource Manager

NOTES: Under "Evaluation Item," the numbers refer to the original Study Questions; only those Study Questions that involve field research (e.g., interviews) are listed, but the numbering system was retained for reference back to the full set of Study Questions.

Abbreviations for Data Sources: BRC – Business Resource Consultant; BRM – Business Resource Manager; RS – Retention Specialist; HRC – Human Resource Consultant

EVALUATION ITEM	PROMPTS AND REMINDERS	DATA SOURCES
A. Development of a network of employers		
1.a. What approaches has your Center used to identify and recruit employers and broker job placements for youth ex-offenders and youth at-risk of court or gang involvement?	• Linkages w/ CBOs, etc. • First contact, subsequent follow-up • What are their selling points? • How did they mine preexisting leads?	BRC **BRM** Businesses
2.a. Which approaches have been the *most effective* for identifying and recruiting employers who are willing to hire this target population?	• How is effective defined? • Why is it effective—what aspect of approach is most important?	BRC **BRM** Businesses
3.a. To what extent are employers able to pay a "retention wage" to DSYODP participants? 3.b. What challenges do your staff encounter in identifying employers with positions that pay a retention wage. What strategies have been effective in gaining a retention wage for as many participants as feasible?	• Is there a career ladder to achieve a retention wage job? • What are the range of pay scales and jobs that provide retention wages? • What resources are used to identify employers who pay enough? • What selling points are used to convince employers? • Is there a difference between employers w/ retention wage vs. other employers?	BRC **BRM** RS Businesses
4.a. To what extent has your Center worked with employers to involve them in development and on-going operation of BI's business intermediary model as implemented in each city?	• Specify model used • Who is involved? • Has regular contact facilitated other solutions? • Regular contact or more sporadic?	**BRM** BRC Businesses

	• How important is this contact? • Does this help institutionalize the program? • Is there a synergy that is created within this contact group?	
B. Employer outcomes		
1.a. To what extent are employers' needs for workers being met by this Center? 1.b. What types of businesses are not having their needs met? 1.c. Has this Center been able to make adjustments over time to meet those businesses' needs for workers? 1.d. Have Business Clients indicated that they expect to have vacancies in the future that might require new skill sets different from the skill sets for current vacancies, and if so, what types of new skill sets?	• If employer needs are not met, why? Is it quality of the workers? • Or is it in/ability to match workers w/ needs? • Do employers who require unskilled labor have different results than those who require skilled labor? • What proportion of the vacancies of each business have been filled through referrals from the Center?	BRC **BRM** Businesses
2.a. How satisfied are employers with the services provided by this Center? 2.b. What services did they want that they *did not* receive? 2.c. What services are of the most value? 2.d. For what reasons do employers choose to work with this Center in contrast to other private or public recruitment (placement or staffing) organizations? 2. e. What changes would employers recommend?		**BRM** BRC HRC? RS Businesses
5.a. Are employers satisfied with the quality of the youth being referred to them by BI? Do Centers have a plan to increase the number of youth offender placements?	• What about the youth quality worked well for employers? • What aspects of the youth were consistently unsatisfactory?	**BRM** BRC HRC Businesses
6.a. What has been the experience of the employers with the persistence of BI participants? 6.b. *Why* was there turnover of BI participants after placement?	• Is lack of persistence a skills issue? If so, is it "hard skills" or "soft skills?" • Support issue?	**BRM** BRC RS Businesses
C. Project Organization and Staffing (Business Resource Centers)		
1.a. Does the basic staffing design (RS, HRC, BRCs, and Program Assistant) appear to be appropriate for this Center? 1.b. Does this Center have the needed numbers of staff in each type of position?	• What would you change about the design? • Are the numbers of staff and the criteria selection appropriate? Is it based on	**BRM** BRC RS

	qualifications, experience, personality?	HRC
1.c. What criteria are used by BI in the recruitment and selection of staff?		
2.a. Has BI established performance requirements and expectations for each staff position/person? 2.b. How does this Center evaluate staff performance against the requirements? 2.c. Do staff receive placement bonuses? 2.d. Is there evidence that placement bonuses affect performance results? 2.e. What is the rate of turnover to date for each position? 2.f. What are the reasons that staff do not persist in employment?	• Is there training to address challenges? What type?	**BRM** Div manager
3.a. Does this Center currently have a fully operational management information system? 3.b. Have enhancements been made to the MIS since you've been with BI ? 3.c. Have staff been trained appropriately?	• Is the MIS user-friendly? • Is information collected accurate? • Is data entry up to date? • What data are missing because of staff vacancies? • Does it provide an accurate picture of the work at BRC? • May depend on: 　• Understanding of MIS 　• Leadership 　• Organization support 　• Budget	**BRM** Div manager BRC RS HRC
4.a. & b. How does this Center use MIS data to assess progress toward goals and program effectiveness? For example: number of placements; placements by types of employers who hire DSYODP-II participants; wage rates by industry and SOC; wage progression and other advancements of participants. 4.c. Does this Center receive reports produced by the evaluators?	• Does staff understand the: 　• Importance of the data? 　• How it is used? • Do they realize what the data can help them achieve? • Success may depend on: 　• Ease of MIS 　• Technical expertise/staff capacity 　• Leadership	BRC **BRM** RS HRC

	• Organization support • Budget • Environmental factors	

5.a. To what extent has this Center been able to develop and implement planned components for sustainability, such as linkages to Once-Stop Career Centers, fee-for-service arrangements, and leveraging of resources within the community?
 	
Could the business intermediary model function without grant money?
 	
How conscious do you think employers are that they are a part of an innovative model?
 	
Do you think they would pay for this service?
 	
What types of training programs have been implemented? At what sites? Who is conducting the trainings and how frequently? Do they use data to develop and revise the trainings?
	• How is sustainability defined?
	• How do the linkages work?
	• Why has sustainability worked or not worked?
	• Is there:
	  • A written plan for sustaining the program?
	  • Task force or other org to keep stakeholders together?
	  • Dissemination of data and descriptive info to date?
	May depend on:
	  • Early planning for sustainability
	  • Visible involvement of stakeholders
	  • Consistent outreach
	  • Data-driven outcomes
		BRM

Site Visit Protocol
Demand-Side Youth Offender Demonstration Project – Phase II

Field Guide—Business Resource Consultant

NOTES: Under "Evaluation Item," the numbers refer to the original Study Questions; only those Study Questions that involve field research (e.g., interviews) are listed, but the numbering system was retained for reference back to the full set of Study Questions.

Abbreviations for Data Sources: BRC – Business Resource Consultant; BRM – Business Resource Manager; RS – Retention Specialist; HRC – Human Resource Consultant

EVALUATION ITEM	PROMPTS AND REMINDERS	DATA SOURCES
A. Development of a network of employers		
1.a. What types of approaches have you used to identify and recruit employers and broker job placements for youth ex-offenders and youth at-risk of court or gang involvement?	• Linkages w/ CBOs, etc. • First contact, subsequent follow-up • What are their selling points? • How did they mine preexisting leads?	**BRC** BRM Businesses
2.a. Which approaches have been *most effective* identifying and recruiting employers who are willing to hire this target population/	• How is effective defined? • Why is it effective—what aspect of approach is most important?	**BRC** BRM Businesses
3.a. To what extent are employers able to pay a "retention wage" to DSYODP participants? 3.b. What challenges do you encounter in identifying employers with positions that pay a retention wage and what strategies have been effective in gaining a retention wage for as many participants as feasible?	• Is there a career ladder to achieve a retention wage job? • What are the range of pay scales and jobs that provide retention wages? • What resources are used to identify employers who pay enough? • What selling points are used to convince employers? • Is there a difference between employers w/ retention wage vs. other employers?	**BRC** BRM RS Businesses
4.a. To what extent have you worked with employers to involve them in development and on-going operation of BI's business intermediary model as implemented in each city?	• Specify model used • Who is involved? • Has regular contact facilitated other solutions? • Regular contact or more sporadic? • How important is this contact? • Does this help institutionalize the program?	BRM **BRC** Businesses

	• Is there a synergy that is created within this contact group?	
B. Employer outcomes		
1.a. To what extent are employers' needs for workers being met by this Center? 1.b. What types of businesses are not having their needs met? 1.c. Has this Center staff been able to make adjustments over time to meet those businesses' needs for workers? 1.d. Have Business Clients indicated that they expect to have vacancies in the future that might require new skill sets different from the skill sets for current vacancies, and if so, what types of new skill sets?	• If employer needs are not met, why? Is it quality of the workers? • Or is it in/ability to match workers w/ needs? • Do employers who require unskilled labor have different results than those who require skilled labor? • What proportion of the vacancies of each business have been filled through referrals from the Center?	**BRC** BRM Businesses
2.a. How satisfied are employers with the services provided by the Centers? 2.b. What services did they want that they *did not* receive? 2.c. What services are of the most value? 2.d. For what reasons do employers chose to work with this Center in contrast to other private or public recruitment (placement or staffing) organizations? 2. e. What changes would employers recommend?		BRM **BRC** HRC? RS Businesses
5.a. Are employers satisfied with the quality of the youth being referred to them by BI?	• What about the youth quality worked well for employers? • What aspects of the youth were consistently unsatisfactory?	BRM **BRC** HRC Businesses
6.a. What has been the experience of the employers with the persistence of BI participants? 6.b. *Why* was there turnover of BI participants after placement?	• Is lack of persistence a skills issue? If so, is it "hard skills" or "soft skills?" • Support issue?	BRM **BRC** RS Businesses
C. Project Organization and Staffing (Business Resource Centers)		
1.a. Does the basic staffing design (RS, HRC, BRCs, and Program Assistant) appear to be appropriate for this Center? 1.b. Does this Center have the needed numbers of staff in each type of position?	• What would you change about the design? • Are the numbers of staff and the criteria selection appropriate? Is it based on qualifications, experience, personality?	BRM **BRC** RS HRC
3.a. Does this Center currently have a fully operational management information system?	• Is the MIS user-friendly?	BRM

3.b. Have enhancements been made to the MIS since you've been with BI?
 	
3.c. Have staff been trained appropriately?
	• Is information collected accurate?
	• Is data entry up to date?
	• What data are missing because of staff vacancies?
	• Does it provide an accurate picture of the work at BRC?
	• May depend on:
	  • Understanding of MIS
	  • Leadership
	  • Organization support
	  • Budget
		Div manager
		BRC
		RS
		HRC

4.a. & b. How does this Center use MIS data to assess progress toward goals and program effectiveness? For example: number of placements; placements by types of employers who hire DSYODP-II participants; wage rates by industry and SOC; wage progression and other advancements of participants.
 	
4.c. Does this Center receive reports produced by the evaluators?
	• Does staff understand the:
	  • Importance of the data?
	  • How it is used?
	• Do they realize what the data can help them achieve?
	• Success may depend on:
	  • Ease of MIS
	  • Technical expertise/staff capacity
	  • Leadership
	  • Organization support
	  • Budget
	  • Environmental factors
		BRC
		BRM
		RS
		HRC

Site Visit Protocol
Demand-Side Youth Offender Demonstration Project – Phase II

Field Guide—Human Resources Consultant

NOTES: Under "Evaluation Item," the numbers refer to the original Study Questions; only those Study Questions that involve field research (e.g., interviews) are listed, but the numbering system was retained for reference back to the full set of Study Questions.

Abbreviations for Data Sources: BRC – Business Resource Consultant; BRM – Business Resource Manager; RS – Retention Specialist; HRC – Human Resource Consultant

EVALUATION ITEM	PROMPTS AND REMINDERS	DATA SOURCES
B. Employer outcomes		
Do you have any direct contact with employers? 2.a. How satisfied are employers with the services provided by this Center? 2.b. What services did they want that they *did not* receive? 2.c. What services are of the most value? 2.d. For what reasons do employers choose to work with this Center in contrast to other private or public recruitment (placement or staffing) organizations? 2.e. What changes would employers recommend?		BRM BRC **HRC?** RS Businesses
5.a. Are employers satisfied with the quality of the youth being referred to them by BI?	• What about the youth quality worked well for employers? • What aspects of the youth were consistently unsatisfactory?	BRM BRC **HRC** Businesses
C. Project Organization and Staffing (Business Resource Centers)		
1.a. Does the basic staffing design (RS, HRC, BRCs, and Program Assistant) appear to be appropriate for this Center? 1.b. Does this Center have the needed numbers of staff in each type of position?	• What would you change about the design? • Are the numbers of staff and the criteria selection appropriate? Is it based on qualifications, experience, personality?	BRM BRC RS **HRC**
3.a. Does this Center have a fully operational management information system?	• Is the MIS user-friendly?	BRM

3.b. Have enhancements been made to the MIS since you've been with BI?
 	
3.c. Have staff been trained appropriately?
	• Is information collected accurate?
	• Is data entry up to date?
	• Does it provide an accurate picture of the work at BRC?
	• May depend on:
	  • Understanding of MIS
	  • Leadership
	  • Organization support
	  • Budget
		Div manager
		BRC
		RS
		HRC

4.a. & b. How does this Center use MIS data to assess progress toward goals and program effectiveness? For example: number of placements; placements by types of employers who hire DSYODP-II participants; wage rates by industry and SOC; wage progression and other advancements of participants.
 	
4.c. Does this Center receive reports produced by the evaluators?
	• Does staff understand the:
	  • Importance of the data?
	  • How it is used?
	• Do they realize what the data can help them achieve?
	• Success may depend on:
	  • Ease of MIS
	  • Technical expertise/staff capacity
	  • Leadership
	  • Organization support
	  • Budget
	  • Environmental factors
		BRC
		BRM
		RS
		HRC

D. Service Delivery to Youth		
1.a. How does this Center assess the needs of each youth offender and at-risk youth for services?	• Mental health? • Medical? • Educational? • Support? • Employment? • What assessments are administered by referring orgs and what are done on-site?	**HRC** RS Referring orgs
4.a. To what extent do participants need pre-employment services beyond the basic services encompassed by the DOL/ETA funding for DSYODP?	• What types of additional services were needed? • And if they received the services, were the services successful in resolving the problem?	**HRC** RS Referring orgs

4.b. Do participants need such services as assessment, substance abuse treatment, mental health care, routine health care, housing, GED preparation, etc.?	• Dimensions to explore:
	  • Funding
	  • Advocacy
	  • Collaboration
	  • Partnerships
		HRC
		RS
		Referring orgs

2.a. To what extent have youth offenders and at-risk youth *actually received* the services – whether through the Center for work preparedness or through other sources – that were identified as needed by each youth?	• What soft skills were the most problematic? • Was job training given? • Do youth show up for recommended services?	**HRC** RS Referring orgs
3.a. What resources and networks has BI tapped into to help develop baseline employability ("soft") skills for all youth? Overall, what strategies seem to be most effective in getting participants to be job-ready?	• Do referring organizations provide this type of skills training, or are other organizations also used? • Do the organizations provide both assessments and training?	**HRC** RS Referring orgs

5.a. To what extent has this Center been able to gain access to services for its participants from other sources, such as Once-Stop Career Centers, education systems, community and faith-based organizations, public agencies, and other local resources?	• Would an intermediary model work for dealing with other organizations involved?
	• May depend on:
	  • Cross-service or cross-organization leadership or support
	  • Consistent messages about project activities, successes (marketing)
	  • Broad-based advocacy
	  • Interlocking board memberships
		HRC
		RS
		Referring orgs

6.a. What strategies used by Center staff appear to increase participant retention in employment?	• Is there a focus on skill level training? • Or do soft skills matter more in retaining employment?	**HRC** RS Referring orgs

Site Visit Protocol
Demand-Side Youth Offender Demonstration Project – Phase II

Field Guide—Retention Specialist

NOTES: Under "Evaluation Item," the numbers refer to the original Study Questions; only those Study Questions that involve field research (e.g., interviews) are listed, but the numbering system was retained for reference back to the full set of Study Questions.

Abbreviations for Data Sources: BRC – Business Resource Consultant; BRM – Business Resource Manager; RS – Retention Specialist; HRC – Human Resource Consultant

EVALUATION ITEM	PROMPTS AND REMINDERS	DATA SOURCES
A. Development of a network of employers		
3.a. To what extent are employers able to pay a "retention wage" to DSYODP participants? 3.b. What challenges does this Center encounter in identifying employers with positions that pay a retention wage and what strategies have been effective in gaining a retention wage for as many participants as feasible?	• Is there a career ladder to achieve a retention wage job? • What are the range of pay scales and jobs that provide retention wages? • What resources are used to identify employers who pay enough? • What selling points are used to convince employers? • Is there a difference between employers w/ retention wage vs. other employers?	BRC BRM **RS** Businesses
B. Employer outcomes		
2.a. How satisfied are employers with the services provided by this Center? 2.b. What retention services did they want that they *did not* receive? 2.c. What retention services are of the most value? 2.d. For what reasons do employers choose to work with this Center in contrast to other private or public recruitment (placement or staffing) organizations? 2.e. What changes would employers recommend?		BRM BRC HRC? **RS** Businesses
5.a. Are employers satisfied with the quality of the youth being referred to them by BI?	• What about the youth quality worked well for employers? • What aspects of the youth were consistently	BRM BRC HRC

	unsatisfactory?	**RS** Businesses
6.a. What has been the experience of the employers with the persistence of BI participants? 6.b. *Why* is there turnover of BI participants after placement? What do RSs (or Center staff) do when youth are vulnerable to losing a job?	• Is lack of persistence a skills issue? If so, is it "hard skills" or "soft skills?" • Support issue?	BRM BRC **RS** Businesses
C. Project Organization and Staffing (Business Resource Centers)		
1.a. Does the basic staffing design (RS, HRC, BRCs, and Program Assistant) appear to be appropriate for this Center? 1.b. Does this Center have the needed numbers of staff in each type of position? 1.c. What criteria are used in the recruitment and selection of staff?	• What would you change about the design? • Are the numbers of staff and the criteria selection appropriate? Is it based on qualifications, experience, personality?	BRM BRC **RS** HRC

3.a. Does this Center have a fully operational management information system?
 	
3.b. Have enhancements been made to the MIS since you've been with BI?
 	
3.c. Have staff been trained appropriately?
	• Is the MIS user-friendly?
	• Is information collected accurate?
	• Is data entry up to date?
	• Does it provide an accurate picture of the work at BRC?
	• May depend on:
	  • Understanding of MIS
	  • Leadership
	  • Organization support
	  • Budget
		BRM
		Div manager
		BRC
		RS
		HRC

4.a. & b. How does this Center use MIS data to assess progress toward goals and program effectiveness? For example: number of placements; placements by types of employers who hire DSYODP-II participants; wage rates by industry and SOC; wage progression and other advancements of participants.
 	
4.c. Does this Center receive reports produced by the evaluators?
	• Does staff understand the:
	  • Importance of the data?
	  • How it is used?
	• Do they realize what the data can help them achieve?
	• Success may depend on:
	  • Ease of MIS
	  • Technical expertise/staff capacity
	  • Leadership
	  • Organization support
	  • Budget
		BRC
		BRM
		RS
		HRC

	• Environmental factors	
D. Service Delivery to Youth		
1.a. How does this Center assess the needs of each youth offender and at-risk youth for services?	• Mental health? • Medical? • Educational? • Support? • Employment? • What assessments are administered by referring orgs and what are done on-site?	HRC **RS** Referring orgs
4.a. To what extent do participants need pre-employment services beyond the basic services encompassed by the DOL/ETA funding for DSYODP?	• What types of additional services were needed? • And if they received the services, were the services successful in resolving the need?	HRC **RS** Referring orgs

4.b. Do participants need such services as assessment, substance abuse treatment, mental health care, routine health care, housing, GED preparation, etc.?	• Dimensions to explore:
	  • Funding
	  • Advocacy
	  • Collaboration
	  • Partnerships
		HRC
		RS
		Referring orgs

2.a. To what extent have youth offenders and at-risk youth *actually received* the services – whether through the Center for work preparedness or through other sources – that were identified as needed by each youth?	• What soft skills were the most problematic? • Was job training given? • Do youth show up for recommended services?	HRC **RS** Referring orgs
3.a. What resources and networks has this Center tapped into to help develop baseline employability ("soft") skills for all youth? Overall, what strategies seem to be most effective in getting participants to be job-ready?	• Do referring organizations provide this type of skills training, or are other organizations also used? • Do the organizations provide both assessments and training?	HRC **RS** Referring orgs

5.a. To what extent has this Center been able to gain access to services for its participants from other sources, such as Once-Stop Career Centers, education systems, community and faith-based organizations, public agencies, and other local resources?	• Would an intermediary model work for dealing with other organizations involved?
	• May depend on:
	  • Cross-service or cross-organization leadership or support
	  • Consistent messages about project activities, successes (marketing)
	  • Broad-based advocacy
	  • Interlocking board memberships
		HRC
		RS
		Referring orgs

| 6.a. What strategies are used by Center staff appear to positively affect persistence (i.e., retention) of participants in employment? | • Is there a focus on skill level training?
• Or do soft skills matter more in retaining employment? | HRC
RS
Referring orgs |

Site Visit Protocol
Demand-Side Youth Offender Demonstration Project – Phase II

Field Guide—Division Manager at Business Interface

NOTES: Under "Evaluation Item," the numbers refer to the original Study Questions; only those Study Questions that involve field research (e.g., interviews) are listed, but the numbering system was retained for reference back to the full set of Study Questions.

Abbreviations for Data Sources: BRC – Business Resource Consultant; BRM – Business Resource Manager; RS – Retention Specialist; HRC – Human Resource Consultant

EVALUATION ITEM	PROMPTS AND REMINDERS	DATA SOURCES
C. Project Organization and Staffing (Business Resource Centers)		
2.b. How does each Center evaluate staff performance against the requirements? 2.c. Do staff receive placement bonuses? 2.d. Is there evidence that placement bonuses affect performance results? 2.f. What are the reasons that staff may not persist in employment?	• Is there training to address challenges? What type?	BRM Div manager

3.a. Does each Center have a fully operational management information system?
 	
3.b. Have enhancements been made to the MIS to reflect any changes in data elements for Phase II?
 	
3.c. Have staff been trained appropriately?
 	
Is there MIS data that is incomplete as a result of technical/infrastructure problems or staff turnover?
 	
Are the Centers receiving and using reports from the evaluators?
 	
Do Centers have a plan to increase the number of youth offender participants?
	• Is the MIS user-friendly?
	• Is information collected accurate?
	• Is data entry up to date?
	• Does it provide an accurate picture of the work at BRC?
	• May depend on:
	  • Understanding of MIS
	  • Leadership
	  • Organization support
	  • Budget
		BRM
		Div manager
		BRC
		RS
		HRC

Could the business intermediary model function without grant money? How conscious do you think employers are that they are a part of an innovative model?		

Do you think they would pay for this service? What types of training programs have been implemented? At what sites? Who is conducting the trainings and how frequently? Do they use data to develop and revise the trainings?		

Site Visit Protocol
Demand-Side Youth Offender Demonstration Project – Phase II

Field Guide--Businesses

NOTES: Under "Evaluation Item," the numbers refer to the original Study Questions; only those Study Questions that involve field research (e.g., interviews) are listed, but the numbering system was retained for reference back to the full set of Study Questions.

Abbreviations for Data Sources: BRC – Business Resource Consultant; BRM – Business Resource Manager; RS – Retention Specialist; HRC – Human Resource Consultant

EVALUATION ITEM	PROMPTS AND REMINDERS	DATA SOURCES
A. Development of a network of employers		
Can you tell us a little bit about the kind of work you do here?	• Get a sense of the work involved, then ease them into questions on intermediary model	**Businesses**
1.a. How did the Center come to identify and recruit you as an employer for placing youth ex-offenders and youth at-risk of court or gang involvement?	• Linkages w/ CBOs, etc. • First contact, subsequent follow-up • What are their selling points? • How did they mine preexisting leads?	BRC BRM **Businesses**
2.a. What was *effective* about their approach?	• How is effective defined? • Why is it effective—what aspect of approach is most important?	BRC BRM **Businesses**
3.a. To what extent was your establishment able to pay a "retention wage" to DSYODP participants?	• Is there a career ladder to achieve a retention wage job? • What are the range of pay scales and jobs that provide retention wages? • What resources are used to identify employers who pay enough? • What selling points are used to convince employers? • Is there a difference between employers w/ retention wage vs. other employers?	BRC BRM RS **Businesses**
4.a. To what extent has the Center worked with your establishment in developing and sustaining operations of BI's business intermediary model?	• Specify model used • Who is involved? • Has regular contact facilitated other solutions? • Regular contact or more sporadic? • How important is this contact?	BRM BRC **Businesses**

	• Does this help institutionalize the program? • Is there a synergy that is created within this contact group?	
B. Employer outcomes		
1.a. To what extent are your needs for workers being met by the Center? 1.b. What needs are not being met? 1.c. Has the Center been able to make adjustments over time to meet those needs for workers? 1.d. Do you expect to have vacancies in the future that might require new skill sets different from the skill sets for current vacancies, and if so, what types of new skill sets?	• If employer needs are not met, why? Is it quality of the workers? • Or is it in/ability to match workers w/ needs? • Do employers who require unskilled labor have different results than those who require skilled labor? • What proportion of the vacancies of each business have been filled through referrals from the Center?	BRC BRM **Businesses**
2.a. How satisfied are you with the services provided by the Center? 2.b. What services do you want that you do *not* receive? 2.c. What services are of the most value? 2.d. For what reasons do you chose to work with the Center in contrast to other private or public recruitment (placement or staffing) organizations? 2. e. What changes would you recommend?		BRM BRC HRC? RS **Businesses**
5.a. Are you satisfied with the quality of the youth being referred to you by BI?	• What about the youth quality worked well for employers? • What aspects of the youth were consistently unsatisfactory?	BRM BRC HRC **Businesses**
6.a. What has been your experience with the persistence of BI participants? 6.b. Is there turnover of BI participants after placement? If so, why?	• Is lack of persistence a skills issue? If so, is it "hard skills" or "soft skills?" • Support issue?	BRM BRC RS **Businesses**

Site Visit Protocol
Demand-Side Youth Offender Demonstration Project – Phase II

Field Guide—Referring Organizations

NOTES: Under "Evaluation Item," the numbers refer to the original Study Questions; only those Study Questions that involve field research (e.g., interviews) are listed, but the numbering system was retained for reference back to the full set of Study Questions.

Abbreviations for Data Sources: BRC – Business Resource Consultant; BRM – Business Resource Manager; RS – Retention Specialist; HRC – Human Resource Consultant

EVALUATION ITEM	PROMPTS AND REMINDERS	DATA SOURCES
D. Service Delivery to Youth		
Can you tell us a little bit about the kind of work you do here? What services do you offer the youth? Do you have goals specific to workforce development? How did you come to refer youth to BI's Center?	• Get a sense of their work, then ease them into questions on intermediary model	**Referring orgs**
1.a. How does the Center assess the needs of each youth offender and at-risk youth for services?	• Mental health? • Medical? • Educational? • Support? • Employment? • What assessments are administered by referring orgs and what are done on-site?	HRC RS **Referring orgs**
What types of services do youth participants referred to BI generally need? 4.a. To what extent do participants need pre-employment services?	• What types of additional services were needed? • And if they received the services, were the services successful in resolving the need?	HRC RS **Referring orgs**

4.b. Do participants need such services as assessment, substance abuse treatment, mental health care, routine health care, housing, GED preparation, etc.?	• Dimensions to explore:
	  • Funding
	  • Advocacy
	  • Collaboration
		HRC
		RS
		Referring orgs

	• Partnerships	
2.a. To what extent do youth offenders and at-risk youth *actually receive* the services for work preparedness, whether through your organization or the Center?	• What soft skills were the most problematic? • Was job training given?	HRC RS **Referring orgs**
3.a. Overall, what strategies seem to be most effective in getting participants to be job-ready? Do you provide "soft skills" training and assessments of job-readiness?	• Do referring organizations provide this type of skills training, or are other organizations also used? • Do the organizations provide both assessments and training?	HRC RS **Referring orgs**
5.a. Does the Center gain access to services for its participants from other sources, such as Once-Stop Career Centers, education systems, community and faith-based organizations, public agencies, and other local resources?	• Would an intermediary model work for dealing with other organizations involved?	HRC RS **Referring orgs**
6.a. What strategies have you identified that appear to increase youth retention in employment? Are these strategies employed by BI staff members?	• Is there a focus on skill level training? • Or do soft skills matter more in retaining employment?	HRC RS **Referring orgs**

Site Visit Protocol
Demand-Side Youth Offender Demonstration Project – Phase II

Field Guide—Youth Participants

EVALUATION ITEM	PROMPTS AND REMINDERS	DATA SOURCES
D. Service Delivery to Youth		
How were you referred to BI's Center?	• Get a sense of their work, then ease them into questions on intermediary model	**Youth Participants** HRC RS Referring orgs
What types of services have you received through the Referring Organization? What skills have you acquired through the Referring Organization or by participating in the program with BI?		**Youth Participants** HRC RS Referring orgs
How often do you visit BI or connect with BI staff? Have you worked with other referral sources, such as Once-Stop Career Centers, education systems, community and faith-based organizations, public agencies, and other local resources? Do you have specific goals regarding your employment? Has working with BI helped you achieve your goals?		**Youth Participants** HRC RS Referring orgs
B. Employer outcomes		
Are you currently employed as a result of working with BI? <u>If employed:</u> How would you describe your current employment? Can you tell us a little bit about the kind of work you do? Have you received additional services since being placed in employment by the Center? Has working with BI helped you achieve your goals for employment?		**Youth Participants** HRC RS Referring orgs

Site Visit Protocol
Demand-Side Youth Offender Demonstration Project – Phase II

Field Guide—Quality and Compliance Auditor / Manager

EVALUATION ITEM	PROMPTS AND REMINDERS	DATA SOURCES
C. Project Organization and Staffing (Business Resource Centers)		
2.b. How does this Center evaluate staff performance against the requirements?		BRM Div manager **QCA**

3.a. Does each Center have a fully operational management information system?
 	
3.b. Have enhancements been made to the MIS to reflect any changes in data elements since you've been with BI?
 	
3.c. Have staff been trained appropriately? What types of training programs have been implemented? At what sites? Who is conducting the trainings? How frequent? Do they use data to develop and revise the trainings?
 	
Is there MIS data that is incomplete as a result of technical/ infrastructure problems or staff turnover?
 	
Are the Centers receiving and using reports from the evaluators?
	• Is there training to address challenges? What type?
	• Is the MIS user-friendly?
	• Is information collected accurate?
	• Is data entry up to date?
	• Does it provide an accurate picture of the work at BRC?
	• May depend on:
	  • Understanding of MIS
	  • Leadership
	  • Organization support
	  • Budget
		BRM
		Div manager
		BRC
		RS
		HRC
		QCA

DSYODP-II
Headquarters Site Visit Protocols

Interview with Mr. Rodney Carroll and Executive Staffs

We'd like to start out with a few background questions about your experiences and the beginnings of the project…

How did the Welfare-to-Work Partnership begin? How did the focus move to youth and youth offenders, more particularly?

What is your long-term vision for Business Interface, Inc.?

Can you tell us a little bit about the work you do and the organizational activities maintained in the central office?

What are the ways the central office connects and coordinates the work of the four Centers?

Are there regularly scheduled meetings or conference calls? If so, how often are these? Who participates in these calls?

For the next few questions, we would like to get a sense of your assessment of the project's progress and the tools BI uses to assess progress…

2.b. How does each Center evaluate staff performance against the requirements?

How is the quarterly performance score calculated for the four Centers? How do you interpret the numbers?

How do you assess the quality of the work beyond the numbers?

How well do you think the basic staffing model (3 BRCs, 1 HRC, 1 RS, 1 Auditor) works for accomplishing your goals?

What types of training programs have been implemented? At which sites?

Who conducts (or has conducted) the trainings and how frequently? Do they use data to develop and revise the trainings?

How are the Centers making use of information from the evaluators' reports?

3.b. What enhancements were made to the MIS? How do these enhancements reflect ongoing changes in BI's needs?

3.c. What types of training have staff received on using the new MIS?

3.a. How operational is the enhanced management information system?
Is there MIS data that is incomplete as a result of technical/ infrastructure problems or staff turnover?

2.d. Is there evidence that placement bonuses affect performance results at the Centers?

2.f. In your opinion, what factors account for the high turnover in both central office staff and staff at the Centers?

Do you have expectations about the uniformity of BRC strategies to select employers?

Do you have expectations about the uniformity of BRC strategies to choose industries and occupations to target?

What are the differences in working with youth offenders vs. youth at-risk?

What is your definition of success for a youth? For an employer?

How conscious do you think employers are that they are a part of an innovative model?

What factors do you think keep the Workforce System (One Stop Centers) from using the intermediary model?

From what we've gathered from the site visits, growth in the number of recruitments and placement activity seems to be both a blessing and a problem given the limitations on hiring additional staff at the Centers.

Do you think the project was adequately funded to support the staff needed to fulfill DOL/ETA's requirements?

Are the expenses greater than anticipated for working with this group of constituents? If so, how?

The Centers seem to have recruited plenty of employers and RO clients. Why the push to keep expanding the network of organizations and employers?

For this final segment, we'd like to ask you some questions about sustainability and the future for BI…

If you had it to do all over again, what changes would you make in structuring the organization?

Centers seem to be under some financial strain, would you have allocated funds differently if you had it to do over?

How would you add a more entrepreneurial dimension to the model so BI could continue its work?

Could the business intermediary model function without grant money?

Can you describe some of the steps BI is taking to achieve sustainability? What challenges does BI face in trying to accomplish this goal? What successes have you had thus far?

Do you think employers would pay for this service?

Do the Centers have a plan to increase the number of youth offender participants?

Are there plans to conduct future trainings of staff at the Centers?

Do you have any questions you would like to ask us?

Thank you.

Interview with IT Consultant

How long have you been employed with BI?

Can you tell us a little bit about your background and the work you do at BI?

Are there particular staff members that you work with on a regular basis?

In what ways do you connect or communicate with the staff at the Centers?

Are there regularly scheduled meetings or conference calls? If so, how often are these? Who participates in these calls?

3.a. Does each Center have a fully operational management information system?

3.b. Can you describe the enhancements made to the MIS to ensure data accuracy and improved data collection?

When were the changes introduced?

How is the new system better or more user-friendly relative to the old system?

3.c. Have staff at the Centers been trained in using the new system?

What types of training programs have been implemented?

Do you use data to develop and revise the trainings?

Based on information gathered during the site visits, we've received mixed reviews from center staff about the new MIS. Overall, how would you characterize staffs' response to the new system of data collection?

Is there MIS data that is incomplete as a result of technical/ infrastructure problems or staff turnover?

From the site visits, we also learned that a Help Desk was set up for staff at the Centers. Can you tell us when the MIS Help Desk established and how the Help Desk system works?

Staff at the Centers mentioned some problems with equipment, like faxes and copiers, not working properly. Can you tell us about what infrastructure needs you've identified for the company?

Of those infrastructural or technical needs, which do you identify as crucial to BI's ability to accomplish its goals?

In what ways is BI taking steps to address these needs?

The evaluators for DSYODP have produced several reports based on data collected from the project. Have you seen any of the previous reports from the evaluators?

Has information from the evaluators' reports been incorporated in addressing the IT needs of BI?

Do you have any questions for us?

Thank you.

Center Staff Focus Group Questions

Third Site Visit

A. Development of a network of employers

1.a. What types of approaches have you used to identify and recruit employers and broker job placements for youth participants?

2.a. Which approaches have been the *most effective* in identifying and recruiting employers who are willing to hire participants?

3.a. To what extent were employers willing and able to pay a "retention wage" to DSYODP participants?

3.b. What challenges did you encounter in identifying employers with positions that pay a retention wage and what strategies have been effective in gaining a retention wage for participants?

4.a. How were you able to involve employers in the development and on-going operation of BI's intermediary model?

Were some employers more receptive than others to the goals of BI? If so, why?

B. Employer outcomes

1.a. To what extent would you say that employers' needs *for workers* have been met by this Center?

1.b. What additional needs did businesses desire to have met by this Center?

1.c. Have you made adjustments over time to meet those businesses' needs for workers? What types of adjustments?

Were there particular types of businesses that did not work out? Why not?

1.d. Have Business Clients indicated that they expect to have vacancies in the future that might require new skill sets? If so, what types of new skill sets?

2.a. How satisfied were employers with the services provided by the Centers?

2.b. What services did they want that they *did not* receive from BI?

2.c. What services were of the most value?

2.d. For what reasons did employers chose to work with this Center in contrast to other private or public recruitment (placement or staffing) organizations?

How conscious do you think employers were that they were a part of an innovative model?

2.e. What changes to the model did employers recommend?

5.a. Were employers satisfied with the quality of the youth being referred to them by BI?

6.a. What has been the experience of the employers with the persistence of BI participants?

6.b. Can you describe some of the reasons for turnover of BI participants after placement?

C. Project Organization and Staffing (Business Resource Centers)

1.a. Did the basic staffing design (RS, HRC, BRCs, and Program Assistant) appear to be appropriate for this Center?

1.b. Did this Center have the needed staff in each type of position?

3.a. Did this Center currently have a fully operational management information system?

3.b. Have additional enhancements been made to the MIS since our last visit with BI?

3.c. Have staff received any additional training on the MIS since our last visit?

Are there incomplete or possibly incorrect data in the MIS?

What factors might have contributed to incomplete or incorrect data?

Has technical/ infrastructure problems or staff turnover affected the quality of data in the MIS?

4.a. & b. How did you use MIS data to assess progress toward goals and program effectiveness? For example: number of placements; placements by types of employers who hire DSYODP-II participants; wage rates by industry; wage progression and other advancements of participants.

What tools were helpful for you to perform your job duties?

What additional resources would have been helpful to accomplish your Center's goals?

Can you describe the relationship between your center and BI headquarters? Between your center and other Centers in the project? How have these changed over time?

How often did you correspond with or receive updates from BI headquarters? What were the most common methods of communication between your center and BI headquarters? (i.e. fax, email, phone) What issues were the most commonly addressed in your correspondence? (i.e. hiring of staff, placement goals, etc.)

4.c. Did this Center receive reports produced by the evaluators?

What types of staff development or training programs have been implemented at your center?

What factors do you think would be necessary for the business intermediary model to be sustainable?

5.a. To what extent has this Center been able to develop linkages to Once-Stop Career Centers, establish fee-for-service arrangements, and leverage resources within the community?

Do you think employers would pay for this service?

D. Service Delivery to Youth

Overall, what strategies seemed to be the most effective in getting participants to be job-ready?

3.a. What resources and networks has this Center tapped into to develop "soft skills", like timeliness and professional etiquette, for youth participants?

4.a. To what extent did participants need pre-employment services beyond the basic services encompassed by the DOL/ETA funding for DSYODP? What types of additional services were most often needed?

5.a. To what extent has this Center been able to gain access to services for its participants from other sources, such as Once-Stop Career Centers, education systems, community and faith-based organizations, public agencies, and other local resources?

6.a. What strategies did you employ to increase participant retention in employment? Of these, which were the most effective?

In conclusion, if you were to construct a project based on a demand-side intermediary model, how would you do it?

What components of the model would you change? What components of the model would you keep?

Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX D

Correlation Coefficients

Pearson correlation coefficients for variables used in the OLS regressions. The data presented combine participants in the sample from Washington, DC and Miami linked to Maryland and Florida UI wage records.

Variable	N	Mean	Std	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Female	420	--	--	1.00											
Non-African-American	420	--	--	.01	1.00										
Education other than high school completion	420	--	--	.01	-.04	1.00									
Married	420	--	--	-.01	.16*	.00	1.00								
Offender	420	--	--	-.3*	-.10*	.08	-.04	1.00							
Has Children	420	--	--	.15*	-.11*	.09	.17*	.02	1.00						
Florida	420	--	--	.08	.29*	-.19*	.04	-.09	-.27*	1.00					
Non-placement	420	--	--	-.01	-.18*	.10*	-.08	.23*	.16*	-.46*	1.00				
Log Average Weekly UI Wages after Enrollment	324	4.97	1.09	.09	.15*	-.19*	.07	-.13*	-.09	.34*	-.31*	1.00			
Log Average Weekly UI Wages after Placement	316	4.98	1.10	.07	.15*	-.18*	.06	-.13*	-.09	.34*	-.30*	.99*	1.00		
Proportion of Enrollment Quarters w/ UI Wage Records	340	0.64	0.34	.04	.13*	-.16*	.08	-.16*	-.24*	.54*	-.33*	.49*	.49*	1.00	
Log N of UI Employers	340	1.8	0.92	.05	.14*	-.18*	.05	-.10	-.23*	.58*	-.32*	.53*	.52*	.93*	1.00

*$p<.05$