



Workforce Investment Act Youth Program

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Workforce Investment Act programs provided through Washington's WorkSource system

Nearly 4,200 served in FY 2013

Programs and services are tailored to local needs

Children from low-income families face more barriers to employment and education than their wealthier counterparts. Low-income kids also are more likely to drop out of school and not continue their education later in life, making it harder for them to secure jobs that pay self-sufficient wages.

In 1998, Congress adopted the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) to provide workforce preparation and employment services for dislocated workers and low-income youths and adults. It created an integrated service-delivery system that offers a comprehensive array of services through one-stop centers, affiliate sites and the Internet. Here in Washington, WIA services are provided through WorkSource, a partnership of state agencies, community and technical colleges, school districts, business, labor and non-profit service providers convened through local workforce development councils in 12 regions of the state.

The Workforce Investment Act's Youth Program serves low-income young people aged 14 to 21 who have significant employment and/or educational barriers. They may receive counseling, tutoring, job-training, mentoring and/or work experience. Other service options include summer employment, study-skills training or instruction toward obtaining a high school equivalency certificate. Qualified youths may obtain information and services through WorkSource, the state's one-stop career-services system and online at www.go2worksource.com.

Funding and participation

The U.S. Department of Labor allocated \$17 million to Washington for WIA Youth programs for July 2012 through June 2013 (about the same funding as the year before). During this period, 4,249 people in Washington participated in WIA Youth programs, and 1,995 completed the program.

Employment outcomes for participants are determined by cross-referencing employer tax-and-wage records. Due to lag times in reporting, it can take up to a year to calculate the employment results for participants. Of those exiting the program from October 2011 through September 2012, 69 percent increased their education level or got a job after receiving services.

Goals for WIA Youth Program

- Increase employment and educational opportunities for teens and young adults, especially those with significant barriers (i.e., homeless, in foster care, low-income).
- Increase high school graduation rates.
- Continue high-quality education and training to serve those in need

There are 12 workforce development councils in Washington that receive WIA Youth funds. In collaboration with their youth councils and service partners, each local council decides how it will provide services to young people. WIA Youth funding has

made it possible for local communities to forge strong partnerships with school districts, businesses and youth-focused non-profit organizations. These partnerships devise strategies appropriate for their communities and focus on helping young people achieve educational success and prepare for employment.

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