Congressional Research Service
Informing the legislative debate since 1914

Vulnerable Youth: Background and Policies

Updated January 30, 2018

Congressional Research Service
https://crsreports.congress.gov
RL33975

CRS REPORT
Prepared for Members and
Committees of Congress

Summary

The majority of young people in the United States grow up healthy and safe in their communities. Most of those of school age live with parents who provide for their well-being, and they attend schools that prepare them for advanced education or vocational training and, ultimately, self-sufficiency. Many youth also receive assistance from their families during the transition to adulthood. During this period, young adults cycle between attending school, living independently, and staying with their families. A study from 2009 found that over 60% of young people ages 19 to 22 receive financial support from their parents, including help with paying bills (42%), tuition assistance (35%), providing personal vehicles (23%), and paying rent (21.5%). Even with this assistance, the current move from adolescence to adulthood has become longer and increasingly complex.

For vulnerable (or "at-risk") youth populations, the transition to adulthood is further complicated by a number of challenges, including family conflict or abandonment and obstacles to securing employment that provides adequate wages and health insurance. These youth may be prone to outcomes that have negative consequences for their future development as responsible, self-sufficient adults. Risk outcomes include teenage parenthood; homelessness; drug abuse; delinquency; physical and sexual abuse; and school dropout. Detachment from the labor market and school—or disconnectedness—may be the single strongest indicator that the transition to adulthood has not been made successfully.

The federal government has not adopted a single overarching federal policy or legislative vehicle that addresses the challenges vulnerable youth experience in adolescence or while making the transition to adulthood. Rather, federal youth policy today has evolved from multiple programs established in the early 20th century and expanded in the years following the 1964 announcement of the War on Poverty. These programs are concentrated in six areas: workforce development, education, juvenile justice and delinquency prevention, social services, public health, and national and community service. They are intended to provide vulnerable youth with opportunities to develop skills to assist them in adulthood.

Despite the range of federal services and activities to assist disadvantaged youth, many of these programs have not developed into a coherent system of support. This is due in part to the administration of programs within several agencies and the lack of mechanisms to coordinate their activities. In response to concerns about the complex federal structure developed to assist vulnerable youth, Congress passed the Tom Osborne Federal Youth Coordination Act (P.L. 109-365) in 2006. Though activities under the act were never funded, the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs was formed in 2008 under Executive Order 13459 to carry out coordinating activities across multiple agencies that oversee youth programs. Separately, Congress has considered other legislation to improve the delivery of services to vulnerable youth and provide opportunities to these youth through policies with a "positive youth development" focus. The Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs characterizes positive youth development as a process that engages young people in positive pursuits that help them acquire and practice the skills, attitudes, and behaviors that they will need to become successful adults.

In addition to the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs, the executive branch has established working groups and initiatives to coordinate supports for youth. The Department of Justice has carried out the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention since the 1970s to coordinate federal policies on youth involved in the juvenile justice system. More recently, the Obama and Trump Administrations have carried out the Performance Partnership Pilots (P3) initiative to coordinate funding across selected agencies to support local communities in serving vulnerable youth.

Contents

Introduction 1
Overview 2
Age of Youth and the Transition to Adulthood 2
Defining the Vulnerable Youth Population 4
Groups of Vulnerable Youth 5
Risk Factors 6
Disconnectedness 7
Positive Youth Development: The Importance of Resiliency and Opportunity 7
What is Youth Development? 8
The Youth Development Movement 9
Evolution of the Federal Role in Assisting Vulnerable Youth 10
1912-1950s: Children's Bureau Programs and Workforce Programs 11
1960s-1970s: War on Poverty Initiatives and Expansion of Programs 13
White House Conferences on Children and Youth: 1960s and 1970s 14
Family and Youth Services Bureau 14
1980s-Present: Current Youth Programs 15
Job Training and Workforce Development 16
Education 16
Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention 19
Social Services 20
Public Health 21
National and Community Service 23
Federal Efforts to Improve Coordination Among Programs for Vulnerable Youth 24
Overview 24
Claude Pepper Young Americans Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-501) 25
Federal Council on Children, Youth, and Families 25
Grants for States and Community Programs 25
Other Concerns about Coordination of Youth Programs 26
Youth Build Transfer Act (P.L. 109-281) 26
Tom Osborne Federal Youth Coordination Act (P.L. 109-365) 27
Executive Order 13459 28
Comparison of the Federal Youth Development Council and the Interagency Working Group 30
Federal Initiatives to Improve Coordination 31
The White House Council for Community Solutions 31
Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention 31
My Brother's Keeper 32
Performance Partnership Pilots for Disconnected Youth (P3) 32
Child Welfare Partnerships 33
Shared Youth Vision Initiative 34
Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS) Initiative 34
Drug-Free Communities Support Program 35
Conclusion 35

Tables

Table 1. Duties of the Federal Youth Development Council, by Goal 28

Table A-1. Federal Programs for Vulnerable Youth 37

Appendixes

Appendix. Federal Youth Programs and Relevant CRS Reports and Experts..... 37

Contacts

Author Information..... 60

Introduction

Congress has long been concerned about the well-being of youth. The nation's future depends on young people today to leave school prepared for college or the workplace and to begin to make positive contributions to society. Some youth, however, face barriers to becoming contributing taxpayers, workers, and participants in civic life. These youth have characteristics or experiences that put them at risk of developing problem behaviors and outcomes that have the potential to harm their community, themselves, or both. Poor outcomes often develop in home and neighborhood environments that do not provide youth with adequate economic and emotional supports. Groups of vulnerable (or "at-risk") youth include emancipating foster youth, runaway and homeless youth, and youth involved in the juvenile justice system, among others. Like all youth, vulnerable youth face a difficult transition to adulthood; however, their transition is further complicated by a number of challenges, including family conflict and obstacles to securing employment that provides adequate wages, health insurance, and potential for upward mobility.

The federal government has not adopted a single overarching federal policy or legislative vehicle that addresses the challenges at-risk youth experience in adolescence or while making the transition to adulthood. Rather, federal youth policy today has evolved from multiple programs established in the early 20th century and expanded through Great Society initiatives. These programs, concentrated in six areas—workforce development, education, juvenile justice and delinquency prevention, social services, public health, and national and community service—provide vulnerable youth with opportunities to develop skills that will assist them in adulthood.

Despite the range of federal services and activities for vulnerable youth, many of the programs have not been developed into a coordinated system of support. In response, federal policymakers have periodically undertaken efforts to develop a comprehensive federal policy around youth. Congress has passed legislation (the Tom Osborne Federal Youth Coordination Act, P.L. 109-365) that authorizes the federal government to establish a youth council to improve coordination of federal programs serving youth. The youth council has not been established, but in 2008, the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs was convened. The Working Group is made up of multiple federal departments and agencies, and has worked to address common goals for youth. In the past three decades, Congress has also considered other legislation (the Youth Community Development Block Grant of 1995 and the Younger Americans Act of 2000) to improve the delivery of services to vulnerable youth and provide opportunities to these youth through policies with a "positive youth development" focus.

This report first provides an overview of the youth population and the increasing complexity of transitioning to adulthood for all adolescents. It also provides a separate discussion of the concept of "disconnectedness," as well as the protective factors youth can develop during childhood and adolescence that can mitigate poor outcomes. Further, the report describes the evolution of federal youth policy, focusing on three time periods, and provides a brief overview of current federal programs targeted at vulnerable youth. (**Table A-1** at the end of the report, enumerates the objectives and funding levels of such programs. Note that the table does not enumerate all programs that target, even in small part, vulnerable or disconnected youth.) The report then discusses the challenges of coordinating federal programs for youth, as well as federal legislation and initiatives that promote coordination among federal agencies and support programs with a positive youth development focus.

Overview

Age of Youth and the Transition to Adulthood

For the purposes of this report, "youth" refers to adolescents and young adults between the ages of 10 and 24. Under this definition, there are approximately 64.1 million youth (or 20% of the population) in the United States.[1] Although traditional definitions of youth include adolescents ages 12 to 18, cultural and economic shifts have protracted the period of adolescence. Children as young as 10 are included because puberty begins at this age for some youth, and experiences in early adolescence often shape enduring patterns of behavior.[2] Older youth, up to age 24, are in the process of transitioning to adulthood. Many young people in their mid-20s attend school or begin to work, and some live with their parents or other relatives.

The current move from adolescence to adulthood has become longer and more complex, particularly since the postwar period.[3] Youth of the 1950s were more likely to follow an orderly path to adulthood. They generally completed their education and/or secured employment (for males), including military service, which was followed by marriage and parenthood in their early 20s. (This was not true for every young person; for example, African Americans and immigrants in certain parts of the country faced barriers to employment.) Unlike their postwar counterparts who had access to plentiful jobs in the industrial sector, youth today must compete in a global, information-driven economy that favors highly skilled, educated workers.[4] The ability for young people to secure well-paid employment is contingent on higher levels of education. From the 1970s to the 2000s, real wages and hours worked rose most significantly for those with some college or who had a college degree.[5] Many more youth now receive vocational training or enroll in colleges and universities after leaving high school compared to earlier generations.[6]

During the period of transition, young adults cycle between attending school, living independently, and staying with their parents. They also use this time to explore career options and relationships with potential long-term partners.[7] The median age of first marriage has risen

---

[1] U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Selected Age Groups by Sex for the United States, States, Counties, and Puerto Rico Commonwealth and Municipios: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2016, 2016 Population Estimates, https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=PEP_2016_PEPAGESEX&prodType=table.

[2] The federal Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs also focuses its efforts on youth ages 10 to 24. See, Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs, *Pathways for Youth: Strategic Plan for Federal Collaboration*, December 2016, p. 5, https://youth.gov/sites/default/files/IWGYP-Pathways_for_Youth.pdf. (Hereinafter, Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs, *Pathways for Youth: Strategic Plan for Federal Collaboration*.)

[3] Wayne G. Osgood et al., eds., *On Your Own Without a Net: The Transition to Adulthood for Vulnerable Populations*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), pp. 4-6. (Hereinafter, Wayne G. Osgood et al., eds., *On Your Own Without a Net*.)

[4] Sheldon Danziger and David Ratner, "Labor Market Outcomes and the Transition to Adulthood," *The Future of Children, Transition to Adulthood*, vol. 20, no. 1 (Spring 2010), p. 133, https://futureofchildren.princeton.edu/sites/futureofchildren/files/media/transition_to_adulthood_20_01_fulljournal.pdf.

[5] Ibid, pp. 136-138.

[6] Maria D. Fitzpatrick and Sarah E. Turner, "Blurring the Boundary: Changes in Collegiate Participation and the Transition to Adulthood," in *The Price of Independence: The Economics of Early Adulthood*, Sheldon Danziger and Cecilia Elena Rouse, eds., (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2007), pp. 110-111.

[7] Sheldon Danziger and Cecilia Elena Rouse, eds., *The Price of Independence: The Economics of Early Adulthood* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2007), pp. 3, 11. (Hereinafter, Sheldon Danziger and Cecilia Elena Rouse, eds., *The Price of Independence: The Economics of Early Adulthood*.)

each decade since the 1950s, to 27.4 years for women and 29.5 years for men as of 2016.[8] The extended transition to adulthood for some youth may delay becoming financially independent, which can create a burden for their families. A study of support to 19- to 22-year-olds, based on data from 2005 through 2009, found that just over 60% of these young adults receive some form of financial assistance from their parents, including help with paying bills (42.2%), tuition assistance (34.7%), providing personal vehicles (23.0%), and paying rent (21.5%). The average value of all assistance to young adult children from 2005 to 2009, reported in 2009 dollars, was $7,490. Higher income families provided more support to their children. Young adults whose parents were in the top quartile of family income received support ($15,449) six times as large as the assistance ($2,113) provided by parents in the bottom quartile.[9] Other research shows support provided by parents to their children has increased over time. Among high school graduates ages 19 through 22, both the share receiving any support and the share receiving a high level of support have increased since the early 1980s. While a greater proportion of young adults ages 23 through 28 have increasingly received more support from their parents, the amount of support has not increased. In addition, support for young adults has been concentrated in the period since 2003.[10] Related to these trends, approximately 15% of adults ages 25 to 34 lived with their parents in 2016, and nearly all of these youth had lived with their parents for at least the past year.[11]

Programs that assist youth making the transition to adulthood also recognize that adolescence is no longer a finite period ending at age 18. For example, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA, P.L. 111-148), the health reform law, requires health insurance companies to provide coverage to the children of parents who are enrolled in their health care plans up to their 26th birthday. Since January 2014, it also has provided a new Medicaid pathway for children who age out of foster care up to their 26th birthday. Since FY2003, the federal Chafee Foster Care Education and Training Vouchers program has provided vouchers worth up to $5,000 annually per youth who is "aging out" of foster care or was adopted from foster care after 16 years of age.[12] The vouchers are available for the cost of attendance at an institution of higher education, as defined by the Higher Education Act of 1965. Youth receiving a voucher at age 21 may continue to participate in the voucher program until age 23.

Further, the changing concept of the age of adulthood has gained currency among organizations and foundations that support and study youth development projects. The Youth Transition Funders Group is a network of grant makers whose mission is to help all adolescents make the successful transition to adulthood by age 25. Similarly, the Network on Transitions to Adulthood,

[8] U.S. Census Bureau, "Historical Time Series, Marital Status (MS-2), Estimated Median Age at First Marriage, by Sex: 1890 to the Present," https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/demo/tables/families/time-series/marital/ms2.xls.

[9] Patrick Wightman, Robert Schoeni, and Keith Robinson, Familial Financial Assistance to Young Adults, National Poverty Center Work Paper Series #12-10, May 2012, http://npc.umich.edu/publications/u/2012-10%20NPC%20Working%20Paper.pdf.

[10] Patrick Wightman et al., *Historical Trends in Parental Financial Support of Young Adults*, University of Michigan Institute for Research, Population Studies Center, Report 13-801, Ann Arbor, MI, September 2013, http://www.psc.isr.umich.edu/pubs/pdf/rr13-801.pdf.

[11] Richard Fry, *It's Becoming More Common for Young Adults to Live at Home – and for Longer Stretches*, May 5, 2017, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/05/05/its-becoming-more-common-for-young-adults-to-live-at-home-and-for-longer-stretches/.

[12] See CRS Report RL34499, *Youth Transitioning from Foster Care: Background and Federal Programs*, by Adrienne L. Fernandes-Alcantara.

a consortium of researchers from around the country, was created in 2000 to study the changing nature of early adulthood.[13]

Defining the Vulnerable Youth Population

The majority of young people in the United States grow up healthy and safe in their communities. Those of primary and secondary school age live with parents who provide for their emotional and economic well-being and they attend schools that prepare them for continuing education or the workforce, and ultimately, self-sufficiency. Just over one-third of young adults today have graduated from a four-year college or university.[14] Nonetheless, some young people do not grow up in a secure environment or with parents that provide a comprehensive system of support.[15] These youth often live in impoverished neighborhoods, where they may be exposed to violence, and come to school unprepared to learn. Their communities and schools often lack resources. Even youth who have adequate academic and emotional support may experience greater challenges as they transition to adulthood.

There is no universal definition of the terms "vulnerable" or "at-risk" youth,[16] and some believe that these labels should not be used because of their potentially stigmatizing effects.[17] The terms have been used to denote individuals who experience emotional and adjustment problems, are at risk of dropping out, or lack the skills to succeed after graduation.[18] They have also been used to suggest that youth grow up in unstable family or community environments.[19] Researchers, policymakers, and youth advocates, however, might agree to this definition: vulnerable youth have characteristics and experiences that put them at risk of developing problem behaviors and outcomes that have the potential to hurt their community, themselves, or both.[20] "At risk" does

---

[13] The Network has published three books on this topic. See Richard A. Settersten Jr., Frank F. Furstenburg Jr., and Rubén Rumbaut, eds., *On the Frontier of Adulthood: Theory, Research, and Public Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Osgood et al., eds., *On Your Own Without a Net*; and Sheldon Danziger and Cecilia Elena Rouse, eds., *The Price of Independence: The Economics of Early Adulthood*.

[14] This is based on the percentage of adults ages 25 to 29 who have received a bachelor's degree or higher in 2015 (defined as having completed four or more years of college). U.S. Census Bureau, "Table A-1: Percent of People 25 Years and Over Who Have Completed High School or College by Race, Hispanic Origin and Sex: Selected Years 1940 to 2016," https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/demo/tables/educational-attainment/2016/cps-detailed-tables/histtab-A-02.xlsx.

[15] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE), *Synthesis of Research and Resources to Support at-Risk Youth: ACF Youth Demonstration Development Project*, OPRE Report 2011-22, June 21, 2011, http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/synthesis-of-research-and-resources-to-support-at-risk-youth. (Hereinafter HHS, ACF, OPRE, *Synthesis of Research and Resources to Support at-Risk Youth*.)

[16] Ibid.

[17] Kristin Anderson Moore, "Defining the Term 'At Risk,'" Child Trends Research-to-Results Brief, Publication #2006-12, October 2006. (Hereinafter, Kristin Moore, "Defining the Term 'At-Risk.'") In fact, the White House Council for Community Solutions identified at-risk youth as "opportunity youth" because they display positive attributes and do not want to be disconnected from work and school. See, Corporation for National and Community Service, White House Council for Community Solutions, *Final Report: Community Solutions for Opportunity Youth*, June 2012. (Hereinafter, White House Council for Community Solutions, *Final Report: Community Solutions for Opportunity Youth*.)

[18] J. Jeffries McWhirter et al., *At-Risk Youth: A Comprehensive Response.* California: Thomson Brooks/Cole, 2004, p. 6. (Hereinafter, J. Jeffries McWhirter, *At-Risk Youth*.)

[19] Kristin Moore, "Defining the Term 'At-Risk.'"

[20] Martha R. Burt, Gary Resnick, and Nancy Matheson, *Comprehensive Service Integration Programs for At-Risk Youth*, The Urban Institute, 1992, pp. 13-22.

not necessarily mean a youth has already experienced negative outcomes but it suggests that negative outcomes are more likely. Youth may also experience different levels of risk, to high risk.[21] Youth may also experience multiple risk factors. Vulnerable youth may also display resiliency that mitigates negative outcomes.

Groups of Vulnerable Youth

Researchers on vulnerable youth have identified multiple groups at risk of experiencing poor outcomes as they enter adulthood.[22] These groups include, but are not limited to the following:

- youth emancipating from foster care;
- runaway and homeless youth;
- youth involved in the juvenile justice system;
- immigrant youth and youth with limited English proficiency;
- youth with physical and mental disabilities;
- youth with mental disorders; and
- youth receiving special education.

Some researchers have also classified other groups of vulnerable youth on the basis of risk outcomes: young unmarried mothers, high school dropouts, and disconnected (e.g., not in school nor working) youth.

Among the seven groups listed above, some lack financial assistance and emotional support from their families. Former foster youth, for example, often do not have parents who can provide financial assistance while they attend college or vocational schools. Other vulnerable youth have difficulty securing employment because of their disabilities, mental illness, juvenile justice history, or other challenges. Vulnerable youth who have depended on public systems of support often lose needed assistance at the age of majority.[23] Many will lose health insurance coverage, vocational services, and supplementary income.[24] They will also face challenges in accessing adult public systems, where professionals are not always trained to address the special needs of young adults. Regardless of their specific risk factor(s), groups of vulnerable youth share many of the same barriers to successfully transitioning into their 20s.

Even within these groups, the population is highly diverse. For example, among youth with disabilities, individuals experience visual or hearing impairments, emotional disturbances, congenital heart disease, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, diabetes, cancer, and spina bifida. Youth in these seven groups also represent diverse socioeconomic and racial backgrounds. However, youth of color and the poor tend to be overrepresented in vulnerable populations. This is due, in part, to

[21] J. Jeffries McWhirter, *At-Risk Youth*, pp. 7-9.

[22] See, for example, HHS, ACF, Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, *Synthesis of Research and Resources to Support at-Risk Youth*; Wayne Osgood et al., eds., *On Your Own Without a Net*; and Michael Wald and Tia Martinez, *Connected by 25: Improving the Life Chances of the Country's Most Vulnerable 14-24 Year Olds*, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation Working Paper, November 2003. *Synthesis of Research and Resources to Support at-Risk Youth* includes youth who are the focus of programs administered by HHS/ACF, including youth aging out of foster care, runaway and homeless youth, youth receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), teenage parents, and juvenile offenders. *On Your Own Without a Net* focuses on the seven groups listed above, in addition to youth reentering the community from the juvenile justice system. "Connected by 25" focuses on four groups: high school dropouts, young unmarried mothers, juvenile justice-involved youth, and foster youth.

[23] Wayne G. Osgood et al., eds., *On Your Own Without a Net*, p. 10.

[24] Ibid., pp. 10-12.

their exposure to poverty, and crime, racism, and lack of access to systems of care, such as health care and vocational assistance.[25]

Youth may also be members of multiple vulnerable populations. For instance, former foster youth are particularly at risk of becoming homeless. In recent years, approximately 20,500 to 25,000 youth have "aged out" of foster care.[26] Emancipated youth may have inadequate housing supports.[27] Recently emancipated foster youth also tend to be less economically secure than their counterparts in the general youth population because they earn lower wages and are more likely to forego college and vocational training.[28] Their economic vulnerability can place them at risk of losing their housing.

Risk Factors

Not all vulnerable youth experience negative outcomes. However, reviews of social science literature have identified multiple factors that can influence whether youth face negative outcomes in adolescence and as they transition to adulthood.[29] Such factors include the following:

- Poverty: Poverty is linked to a number of potential future problems among youth, including chronic health conditions, low educational attainment, and engagement in delinquent behaviors.
- Family Instability: Children who grow up in two-parent families tend to have better health outcomes and more positive behaviors.
- Family Dysfunction: Two types of family dysfunction are particularly detrimental to the future well-being of children: witnessing violence against their mothers and criminal activity among their family members.
- Child Maltreatment: Abuse and neglect by their parents or other caretakers puts children at risk for many negative outcomes, including poor physical and mental health, lower cognitive functioning and educational attainment, and poor social development and behavior.
- Exposure to Violence in the Community: Witnessing violence in a community is linked to several negative outcomes such as depression, aggressive behavior, anxiety, posttraumatic stress, psychological trauma, and antisocial behavior.
- School Resources and Environment: Schools with fewer resources are associated with poor academic outcomes, and schools can create environments with problematic social issues such as bullying and behavioral problems.

---

[25] J. Jeffries McWhirter, *At-Risk Youth*, pp. 9, 13, and 14.

[26] HHS, ACF, *AFCARS Report #24, Preliminary Estimates for FY2016 as of October 20, 2017*, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/afcars-report-24.

[27] Mark E. Courtney and Darcy Hughes Heuring. "The Transition to Adulthood for Youth "Aging Out" of the Foster Care System" in Osgood et al., eds., *On Your Own Without a Net*, pp. 27-32.

[28] For further information, see CRS Report RL34499, *Youth Transitioning from Foster Care: Background and Federal Programs*, by Adrienne L. Fernandes-Alcantara.

[29] This discussion is based on HHS, ACF, OPRE, *Synthesis of Research and Resources to Support at-Risk Youth*. The report draws from two reports that synthesize the research literature on risk factors for children: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study, "Major Findings," https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/about.html; and Institute of Medicine (IOM), *Preventing Mental, Emotional, and Behavioral Disorders Among Young People: Progress and Possibilities*, 2009, http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12480.

- Community Resources: Children who live in high-poverty neighborhoods might be less likely than their peers who live in low-poverty neighborhoods to perceive work as a common activity, and therefore less likely to succeed in school.
- Residential Mobility: Children who move frequently may experience negative outcomes, such as lower academic performance, high rates of school dropout, emotional and behavioral problems, and engaging in premarital sex.
- Minority Status: Children of color are more likely to live in high-poverty neighborhoods and to attend lower-performing schools, compared to white youth. Further, racial discrimination can hinder job opportunities for youth.

The research literature points out that children are particularly vulnerable if they experience two or more of these risk factors.

Disconnectedness

Youth advocates and researchers have recently focused on vulnerable youth who experience negative outcomes in both employment and educational attainment.[30] Generally characterized as *disconnected*, these youth are not working or attending school. However, there is no uniform definition of this term. On the basis of a CRS review of studies on the population, the definition of *disconnected* varies, with differences in ages of the youth and the length that youth are not in school or working. The studies count youth as young as age 16 and as old as age 24, with ages in between (i.e., 16 to 19, 18 to 24).[31] Youth are generally considered disconnected if they were not working or in school at the time they were surveyed, or over a period of time prior to the survey. Some of the definitions, however, incorporate other characteristics, such as marital status and educational attainment. Further, several studies used definitions that included only noninstitutionalized youth. This means that these studies do not count youth in prisons, college dorms, mental health facilities, and other institutions.

Positive Youth Development: The Importance of Resiliency and Opportunity

Although vulnerable youth experience more negative outcomes than their counterparts who are not considered to be at risk, some of these youth go on to attend college and/or secure employment. Advocates for youth argue that vulnerable youth can reach their goals if given adequate opportunities to develop positive behaviors during adolescence. The federal Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs characterizes positive youth development as a process that engages young people in positive pursuits that help them acquire and practice the skills, attitudes, and behaviors that they will need to become effective and successful adults in their work, family, and civic lives. Further, positive youth development emphasizes that youth can be engaged in their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a productive and constructive manner.[32]

---

[30] CRS Report R40535, *Disconnected Youth: A Look at 16 to 24 Year Olds Who Are Not Working or In School*, by Adrienne L. Fernandes-Alcantara.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs, *Pathways for Youth: Strategic Plan for Federal Collaboration*, December 2016.

What is Youth Development?

Youth development refers to the processes—physical, cognitive, and emotional—that youth undergo during adolescence. The competencies that youth begin to gain during adolescence can assist them as they transition to adulthood. Youth who master competencies across several domains are more likely to achieve desirable outcomes, including educational and professional success, self-confidence, connections to family and the community, and contributions to society. These areas of competency include the following:

- *Cognitive*: Knowledge of essential life skills, problem solving skills, academic adeptness;
- *Social*: Connectedness with others, perceived good relationships with peers, parents, and other adults;
- *Physical:* Good health habits, good health risk management skills;
- *Emotional:* Good mental health, including positive self-regard; good coping skills;
- *Personal:* Sense of personal autonomy and identity, sense of safety, spirituality, planning for the future and future life events, strong moral character;
- *Civic:* Commitment to community engagement, volunteering, knowledge of how to interface with government systems; and
- *Vocational:* Knowledge of essential vocational skills, perception of future in terms of jobs or careers.[33]

A primary factor that influences how well youth develop these competencies is the interaction among *individual characteristics*, or traits influenced by genetic inheritance and prenatal environment; the *social environment*, which encompasses societal conditions, communities, and schools that can serve to reinforce positive behaviors and promote positive outcomes for vulnerable youth; and the *home environment*, including discord among parents and monitoring of children by their parents.[34]

Individual conditions refer to the characteristics of individuals that can influence resilience. Individual-level characteristics that can promote resilience include social skills, coping strategies, a positive sense of self, and high expectations. *Societal conditions*—economic conditions, the prevalence of discrimination, and educational institutions—affect the development of youth competencies and connectedness to others. Adolescents who perceive their future in terms of jobs or careers often achieve desirable outcomes. For vulnerable youth, poor economic conditions and fewer opportunities to work can affect how they perceive their future. Youth's interaction with the community is another variable that shapes their development. Community culture, or the values and beliefs of a particular community, may support the positive development of youth by reinforcing cultural norms that favor academic achievement and professional success. Communities can play a role in fostering youth development by providing multiple pathways to help youth strengthen their competencies through schools and other institutions. Youth advocates

[33] National Research Council, *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 2002, pp. 6-7, http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED465844.pdf. See also Youth Transitions Funders Group, *Investing to Improve the Well-Being of Vulnerable Youth and Young Adults: Recommendations for Policy and Practice*, October 2015, http://www.ytfg.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Investing-in-Well-Being-small.pdf.

[34] This discussion is based on HHS, ACF, Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB), *Understanding Youth Development: Promoting Positive Pathways of Growth*, 1997; and HHS, ACF, OPRE, *Synthesis of Research and Resources to Support at-Risk Youth*.

argue that these pathways should involve services and long-term programs that provide opportunities for youth during the school day and in nonschool hours when youth may be more susceptible to risky behaviors.[35] Within schools, the availability of resources for youth and their parents, such as programs that monitor and supervise youth, and quality youth-serving institutions and organizations can buffer youth from negative community cultures. Outside of schools, youth development programs—such as mentoring and leadership programs—emphasize the positive elements of growing up and engage young people in alternatives to counteract negative pressures.

Finally, the family context plays a pivotal role in youth development. Parental oversight of their children and family structure affect how well youth transition to adulthood. Positive adolescent development is facilitated when youth express independence from their parents, yet rely on their parents for emotional support, empathy, and advice. Parenting styles and family structure play important roles in the lives of youth. Parents who discipline in a moderate and caring manner, and provide positive sanctions for prosocial behaviors can assist youth to develop a sense of control over their future. Family structures that promote positive parent-child relationships, even after divorce or times of stress (such as separation or loss of a parent), can provide youth with emotional and other support during adolescence and beyond.

The Youth Development Movement

The belief that all youth have assets has formed the basis of the youth development movement that began in the 1980s in response to youth policies and programs that attempted to curb the specific problems facing youth (e.g., pregnancy, drug use) without necessarily focusing on how to holistically improve outcomes for youth and ease their transition to adulthood. A range of institutions have promoted this approach through their literature and programming: policy organizations (Forum for Youth Investment and National Network for Youth); national direct service organizations for youth (4-H and the Boys and Girls Clubs of America); public and private research and philanthropic entities (National Research Council, Carnegie Corporation of New York, MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Transitions to Adulthood, Youth Transitions Funders Group); and government sub-agencies with a youth focus (the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Family and Youth Services Bureau and the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention).[36] The youth development movement has attempted to shift from an approach to youth that emphasizes problem prevention to one that addressed the types of attitudes, skills, knowledge, and behaviors young people need to develop for adulthood.[37]

Despite the endorsement of the positive youth development approach by prominent organizations, the movement has faced challenges.[38] Youth advocates within the movement point to insufficient

[35] Karen Pittman, Merita Irby, and Thaddeus Ferber, *Unfinished Business: Further Reflections on a Decade of Promoting Youth Development*, The Forum for Youth Investment, 2002, (Hereinafter Karen Pittman, Merita Irby, and Thaddeus Ferber, *Unfinished Business*.)

[36] See for example, Karen Pittman, "Some Things Do Make a Difference and We Can Prove It: Key Take-Aways" from *Finding Out What Matters for Youth: Testing Key Links in a Community Action Framework for Youth Development*, The Forum for Youth Investment, April 2003, http://forumfyi.org/files/Some%20Things%20Do%20Make%20a%20Difference_Comm.pdf. See also, National 4-H Council, *The National Conversation on Youth Development in the 21st Century: Final Report*, 2002, https://ia601302.us.archive.org/34/items/ERIC_ED467902/ERIC_ED467902.pdf; and National Research Council, *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development*, 2002.

[37] Pittman, Irby, and Ferber, *Unfinished Business*, pp. 20-22.

[38] Ibid., pp. 30-31.

guidance for program planners and policymakers about prioritizing which youth to serve, given the limited resources available to communities for youth programs. They have also criticized the lack of sufficient evaluation of programs and organizations using a positive development approach. According to these advocates, some youth development efforts have been built on insufficient data about demand for or supply of programs and were started without baseline data on reasonable youth indicators. Further, they argue that youth development messages have, at times, failed to generate excitement among policymakers because they did not convey how positive youth development policy and programs could respond to the challenges young people face and lead to better outcomes for youth and society at large. In turn, the movement has failed to adequately link to local and regional infrastructures that assist with funding, training, and network development.

To address these challenges, youth advocates (the same groups that have raised criticisms about the movement) have proposed a number of recommendations. For example, the Forum for Youth has urged advocates to clarify a youth development message that specifies concrete deliverables and to connect the movement to sustainable public and private resources and other youth advocacy efforts.[39] The recommendations have also called for evaluations of youth programs with a positive youth approach and improved monitoring and assessment of programs.

Since these recommendations were made (over 10 ten years ago), the federal government has increased coordination among federal agencies with youth programs and funded initiatives to assist localities and regions in responding to challenges facing youth. The role of the federal government in assisting vulnerable youth is discussed in the next section.

Evolution of the Federal Role in Assisting Vulnerable Youth

The remainder of this report describes the evolution of federal youth policy and provides an overview of current programs and initiatives that focus on vulnerable youth. Many of these initiatives promote coordination of federal youth programs and positive youth development.

The federal government has not adopted a single overarching federal policy or legislative vehicle that addresses the challenges that young people experience in adolescence or while making the transition to adulthood. Rather, federal youth policy today evolved from multiple programs and initiatives that began in the early 1900s to assist children and youth. From the turn of the 20th century through the 1950s, youth policy was generally subsumed under a broad framework of child welfare issues. The Children's Bureau, established in 1912, focused attention on child labor and the protection of children with special needs. The age boundaries of "youth" were not clearly delineated, but on the basis of proposed child labor reform legislation at that time, "child" referred to those individuals age 16 and under. Also during this period, work and education support programs were created to ease the financial pressures of the Great Depression for older youth (ages 16 to 23), and increasingly, federal attention focused on addressing the growing number of youth classified as delinquent.

The subsequent period, spanning the 1960s and 1970s, was marked by the creation of programs that targeted youth in six policy areas: workforce development and job training, education, juvenile justice and delinquency prevention, social services, public health, and national and community service. Finally, from the 1980s until the present, many of these programs have been

[39] Ibid., pp. 14-27.

expanded; others like them have been eliminated. The federal government has also recently adopted strategies to better serve the youth population through targeted legislation and initiatives.

1912-1950s: Children's Bureau Programs and Workforce Programs

At the turn of the 20th century, psychologists first formally defined the concept of adolescence. American psychologist G. Stanley Hall characterized the period between childhood and adulthood as a time of "storm and stress," with youth vulnerable to risky behavior, conflict with parents, and perversion.[40] The well-being of adolescents was emerging as an area of concern during this time, albeit as part of a greater focus on child welfare by states and localities. States began to recognize the distinct legal rights of children, generally defined as age 16 and younger, and to establish laws for protecting children against physical abuse, cruelty, and neglect. Children who were abused or neglected were increasingly removed from their homes and placed in almshouses and foster homes by the state. Juvenile courts and reform schools, first created in the late 1800s, were also expanding during this period. By 1912, 22 states had passed legislation to establish juvenile courts.[41]

The year 1912 also marked the federal government's initial involvement in matters relating to child welfare with the creation of the Children's Bureau in the U.S. Department of Labor.[42] The bureau emerged out of the Progressive Movement, which emphasized that the stresses on family life due to industrial and urban society were having a disproportionately negative effect on children. Though not a Cabinet-level agency, the purpose of the bureau was to investigate and report upon all "matters pertaining to the welfare of children and child life" for the federal government; however, the legislation creating the bureau named for special consideration: "infant mortality, the birth rate, orphanages, juvenile court, desertion, dangerous occupations, accidents and diseases of children, employment, and legislation affecting children in the several States and Territories."

The concept of a "youth policy" in those early years was virtually nonexistent. However, the bureau's efforts in combating child labor and investigating juvenile delinquency from 1912 through the early 1950s targeted youth ages 10 to 16. Bureau Chief Julia Lathrop and Progressive Era advocates pushed for laws that would prohibit the employment of children under age 16. The bureau also tracked the rising number of juvenile delinquents in the 1930s and evaluated the causes of delinquency, citing unhappy home conditions and other factors as a predictor of gang activity. In 1955, the bureau established a division on juvenile delinquency prevention.

Perhaps the most well-known policies the Children's Bureau implemented that affected youth were through the child health and welfare programs established by the Social Security Act (P.L.

---

[40] G. Stanley Hall, "Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion, and Education," (1904) in John H. Bremner, Tamara K. Hareven, and Robert M. Mennel, eds., *Children & Youth in America, Vol. II: 1866-1932, Parts 1-6*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971, pp. 81-85.

[41] John H. Bremner, Tamara K. Hareven, and Robert M. Mennel, eds., *Children & Youth in America, Vol. II: 1866-1932, Parts 1-6*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971, p. 440.

[42] The Children's Bureau was also established within the Department of Commerce, but within one year was transferred completely to the Department of Labor. The discussion of the Children's Bureau in this section is based on two publications: (1) HHS, ACF, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau, *The Children's Bureau Legacy: Ensuring the Right to Childhood*, no date (published in 2013), pp. 20-21 (Hereinafter HHS, ACF, *The Children's Bureau Legacy: Ensuring the Right to Childhood*); and (2) Kriste Lindenmeyer, *"A Right to Childhood:" The U.S. Children's Bureau and Child Welfare, 1912-46* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1997). (Hereinafter Kriste Lindenmeyer, *A Right to Childhood*.)

74-231) of 1935. As originally enacted, the law authorized indefinite annual funding of $1.5 million for states to establish, extend, and strengthen public child welfare services in "predominately rural" or "special needs" areas. For purposes of this program (now at Title IV-B, Subpart 1 of the Social Security Act), these were described as services "for the protection and care of homeless, dependent, and neglected children, and children in danger of becoming delinquent."[43] The Aid to Dependent Children Program (now Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant) was also created under the act to provide financial assistance to impoverished children. "Dependent" children were defined as children under age 16 who had been deprived of parental support or care due to a parent's death, continued absence from the home, or physical or mental incapacity, and was living with a relative. Amendments to the program extended the age of children to 18.[44]

Separately in the 1930s, the federal government addressed youth poverty triggered by the Great Depression. The Federal Transient Relief Act of 1933 established a Transient Division within the Federal Transient Relief Administration to provide relief services through state grants. Also in 1933, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) opened camps and shelters for more than 1 million low-income older youth. Two years later, in 1935, President Franklin Roosevelt created the National Youth Administration (NYA) by executive order to open employment bureaus and provide cash assistance to poor college and high school students. The Transient Division was disbanded shortly thereafter.

From 1936 to 1940, legislation was proposed to provide for comprehensive educational and vocational support for older youth. As introduced in 1938, the American Youth Act (S. 1463), if passed, would have established a federal National Youth Administration to administer a system of public-works projects that would employ young persons who were not employed or full-time students. The act would have also provided unemployed youth with vocational advisors to assist them in securing apprentice training. Further, young people enrolled in school and unable to continue their studies without financial support would have been eligible to receive financial assistance to pay school fees and school materials, and personal expenses.[45] The act, however, was never brought to a full vote by the House or Senate. The Roosevelt Administration raised concerns in hearings on the bill that it was too expensive and would have provided some of the same services already administered through the CCC and NYA.[46] (The two programs were eliminated in the early 1940s.)

By the late 1940s, the Children's Bureau no longer had jurisdiction to address "all matters" concerning children and youth because of federal government reorganizations that prioritized agency function over a particular constituency (e.g., children, poor families, etc.). The bureau was moved in 1949 from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to the Federal Security Agency (FSA), and child health policy issues were transferred to the Public Health Service. The bureau's philosophy of the "whole child" diminished further when the FSA was moved to the newly

[43] In 1962 (P.L. 87-543), child welfare services were formally defined under Title IV-B as "public social services which supplement, or substitute for parental care and supervision for the purpose of (1) remedying or assisting in the solution of problems which may result in, the neglect, abuse, exploitation, or delinquency of children, (2) protecting and caring for homeless, dependent, or neglected children, and (3) protecting and promoting the welfare of children, including the strengthening of their own homes where possible or, where needed, the provision of adequate care of children away from their homes in foster family homes or day-care or other child-care facilities."

[44] Kriste Lindenmeyer, *A Right to Childhood*, p. 193.

[45] John H. Bremner, Tamara K. Hareven, and Robert M. Mennel, eds., *Children & Youth in America, Vol. III: 1933-1973, Parts 1-4*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971, pp. 91-96.

[46] Ibid., pp. 99-104.

organized Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) in 1953, which was renamed the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in 1979.

1960s-1970s: War on Poverty Initiatives and Expansion of Programs

The 1960s and 1970s marked a period of federal efforts to assist poor and disadvantaged children and their families. President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty initiatives and subsequent social legislation established youth-targeted programs in the areas of workforce development and job training, education, delinquency prevention, social services, and health. The major legislation during this period included the following:

- Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) of 1964 (P.L. 88-452): As the centerpiece of the War on Poverty, the EOA established the Office of Economic Opportunity. The office administered programs to promote the well-being of poor youth and other low-income individuals, including Job Corps, Upward Bound, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), Head Start, and Neighborhood Youth Corps, among others. The mission of the Job Corps was (and still is) to promote the vocational and educational opportunities of older, low-income youth. Similarly, Upward Bound was created to assist disadvantaged high school students who went on to attend college.
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 (P.L. 89-10): The purpose of the ESEA was to provide federal funding to low-income schools. Amendments to the act in 1966 (P.L 89-750) created the Migrant Education Program and Migrant High School Equivalency Program to assist states in providing education to children of migrant workers.
- Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965 (P.L. 89-329): The HEA increased federal funding to universities and created scholarships and low interest loans for students. The act also created the Talent Search Program to identify older, low-income youth with potential for postsecondary education. The act was amended in 1968 (P.L. 90-575) to include two programs: Student Support Services and Upward Bound (which was transferred from the Office of Economic Opportunity to the Office of Education, and later to the U.S. Department of Education). Student Support Services was created to improve disadvantaged (defined as disabled, low-income, or first in their family to attend college) college students' retention and graduation rates.
- Youth Conservation Corps Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-378): The legislation permanently established the Youth Conservation Pilot Program to employ youth of all backgrounds to perform work on federal lands.
- Comprehensive Employment and Training Activities Act (CETA) of 1973 (P.L. 93-203): The program established federal funding for the Youth Employment and Training Program and the Summer Youth Employment Program. The programs financed employment training activities and on-the-job training.
- Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA) of 1974 (P.L. 93-415): The act extended federal support to states and local governments for rehabilitative and preventive juvenile justice delinquency projects, as established under the Juvenile Delinquency Prevention and Control Act (P.L. 90-445). The major provisions of the JJDPA funded preventive programs in local communities outside of the juvenile justice system. The act's Title III established the Runaway Youth Program to provide temporary shelter, counseling, and after-care services

to runaway youth and their families. Congress later amended (P.L. 95-115) Title III to include homeless youth (and the law is now known as the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act).

- Education for All Handicapped Children of 1975 (P.L. 94-142): The act required all public schools accepting federal funds to provide equal access to education for children with physical and mental disabilities. Public schools were also required to create an educational plan for these students, with parental input, that would emulate as closely as possible the educational experiences of able-bodied children. (This legislation is now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA.)

White House Conferences on Children and Youth: 1960s and 1970s

Since 1909, the executive branch has organized a White House Conference on Children (and youth, in later decades). The White House conferences of 1960 and 1971 focused on efforts to promote opportunities for youth. The recommendations from the 1960 conference's forum on adolescents discussed the need for community agencies to assist parents in addressing the concerns of youth, as well as improved social services to adolescents and young adults.[47] The recommendations called for the federal government to establish a unit devoted to youth and to support public and private research regarding the issues facing this population, including their employment, education, military service, marriage, mobility, and community involvement. The 1971 conference had a broader focus on issues that were important to youth at the time. Recommendations from the conference included a suspension of the draft, less punitive measures for drug possession, and income guarantees for poor families.[48]

Family and Youth Services Bureau

In the 1960s, the Children's Bureau began focusing more attention on the needs of adolescents. For example, a Youth Services Unit was established in 1966 and focused on assisting youth in the transition to adulthood by "identifying the problems and needs of adolescents and young adults in today's changing society, exploring existing resources for meeting these needs, and stimulating new approaches for dealing with them." An early focus of the unit was a program on the needs of young parents ages 14 to 19.[49]

The separate Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) was created outside of the Children's Bureau (in what was then the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW)) in 1970 to provide leadership on youth issues in the federal government.[50] At that time, it was held that young people were placed inappropriately in the juvenile justice system, while others were not receiving needed social services. Known then as the Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention Administration, the sub-agency proposed a new service delivery strategy (similar to the contemporary positive youth development approach) that emphasized youth's competence, usefulness, and belonging.[51] The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA) of

[47] Executive Office of the President, Conference Proceedings from the Golden Anniversary White House Conference on Children and Youth, March 27-April 2, 1960 (Washington: GPO, 1960), p. 212.

[48] Executive Office of the President, *Conference Proceedings from the White House Conference on Youth, 1971*. Washington: GPO, 1971.

[49] HHS, ACF, *The Children's Bureau Legacy: Ensuring the Right to Childhood*, pp. 121-122.

[50] This discussion is based on correspondence with HHS, ACF, April 2007.

[51] American Youth Policy Forum, *A Youth Development Approach to Services for Young People: The Work of the* (continued...)

1974 emphasized that youth committing status offenses (behaviors considered offenses only if carried out by a juvenile, such as truancy or running away) were more in need of care and guidance than they were of punishment. Passage of the JJDPA laid the foundation for much of FYSB's work today with runaway and homeless youth and other vulnerable youth groups.

1980s-Present: Current Youth Programs

Current federal youth policy has resulted from the piecemeal creation of programs across several areas of social policy. Many of the youth-focused programs that trace their history to the War on Poverty continue today, and several new programs, spread across several agencies, have been created. (While the Family and Youth Services Bureau, FYSB, was created to provide leadership on youth issues, it administers a small number of youth programs, including the Runaway and Homeless Youth program and the Teen Pregnancy Prevention program, among others.) Federal youth policy today also includes recent initiatives to promote positive youth development and increase coordination between federal agencies that administer youth-focused programs. **Table A-1** in the **Appendix** provides a description of over 50 major federal programs for youth in six policy areas discussed previously—job training and workforce development, education, juvenile justice and delinquency prevention, social services, public health, and national and community service. The table includes the programs' authorizing legislation and U.S. code section; objectives; FY2006 through FY2015 funding levels; agency with jurisdiction; and targeted at-risk youth population. The programs were selected based upon their objectives to serve vulnerable youth primarily between the ages of 10 to 24, or to research this population.

The CRS contributors to **Table A-1**, their contact information, and CRS reports on some of the programs are listed in Error! Reference source not found.**.**

As enacted, the programs are intended to provide vulnerable youth with the opportunities to develop skills and abilities that will assist them in adolescence and during the transition to adulthood. Congress has allocated funding to these programs for a number of services and activities, including conflict resolution; counseling; crime/violence prevention; gang intervention; job training assistance; mentoring; parental/family intervention; planning and program development; and research and evaluation. The programs differ in size, scope, and funding authorization levels and type (mandatory vs. discretionary).

The list is not exhaustive and may omit programs that serve the targeted youth population. Two major block grant programs—the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF) and the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)—are not included because they do not provide dedicated funding for youth activities. However, states can choose to use TANF and SSBG funds for such purposes. TANF law permits states to use block grant funds to provide services to recipient families and other "needy" families (defined by the state) so long as the services are expected to help lead to independence from government services or enable needy families to care for children at home.[52] States may also provide services to nonneedy families if they are directed at the goals of preventing and reducing out-of-wedlock pregnancies or encouraging the formation of two-parent families. SSBG provides funding to assist states to provide a range of social services to adults and children, and each state determines what services are provided and who is eligible. Youth-focused categories of services that can be funded through the SSBG include education and

(...continued)

Family and Youth Services Bureau, Forum Brief, June 11, 1999.

[52] For further information, see CRS Report RL32760, *The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant: Responses to Frequently Asked Questions*, by Gene Falk.

training services to improve knowledge or daily living skills and to enhance cultural opportunities; foster care services for children and older youth; independent and transitional living services; pregnancy and parenting services for young parents; and special services for youth involved in or at risk of involvement with criminal activity.[53]

The following sections briefly discuss selected programs under six policy areas—job training and workforce development, education, juvenile justice and delinquency prevention, social services, public health, and national and community service

Job Training and Workforce Development[54]

The federal government funds four major job training and workforce development programs for youth: Job Corps, Youth Activities, YouthBuild, and Youth Conservation Corps. These programs (except for the Youth Conservation Corps) are administered by the Department of Labor (DOL) and target low-income youth ages 14 (or 16) to 24 who require additional assistance in meeting their vocational goals.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA, P.L. 113-128) authorizes the DOL programs through FY2020. The Youth Activities programs fund employment training and academic support services for both in-school youth ages 14 to 21 and out-of-school youth ages 16 to 24. In-school youth includes those who are attending school, low-income, and have a specified barrier to employment. Out-of-school youth includes those who meet certain criteria such as being a high school dropout or being low-income. No less than 75% of funds may be used to serve out-of-school youth.

Job Corps has centers in all 50 states and Puerto Rico where youth live and receive training. Program training consists of career preparation, development, and transition; academic initiatives; and character building.

Created by the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act of 1992 (P.L. 101-625) and currently authorized under WIOA, YouthBuild has many of the same educational and vocational objectives as those established under the Job Corps and Youth Activities programs. YouthBuild participants ages 16 to 24 work toward their GED or high school diploma while learning job skills by building affordable housing. Finally, the Youth Conservation Corps, established in 1970 by the Youth Conservation Corps Act (P.L. 91-378) and administered by the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior, targets youth ages 15 to 18 of all backgrounds to work on projects that conserve natural resources.

Education

Most federal education programs for vulnerable youth are authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 and the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, administered by the U.S. Department of Education (ED). The ESEA provides the primary source of federal funds to K-12 education programs, with the largest program being Title I-A. The purpose of the Title I-A program, from its original enactment in 1965 to the present, is, in part, to provide supplementary educational and related services to educationally disadvantaged children who attend schools serving relatively low-income areas. The Higher Education Act is the source

[53] For further information, see CRS Report 94-953, *Social Services Block Grant: Background and Funding*, by Karen E. Lynch.

[54] For additional information, see CRS Report R40929, *Vulnerable Youth: Employment and Job Training Programs*, by Adrienne L. Fernandes-Alcantara.

of grant, loan, and work-study assistance to help meet the costs of postsecondary education. The act also supports programs by providing incentives and services to disadvantaged youth to help increase their secondary or postsecondary educational attainment. Separate legislation authorizes additional education programs serving youth with disabilities and homeless youth.

Programs Authorized by Title I of the ESEA

Title I of ESEA provides most of the funding for programs that serve disadvantaged youth, and was most recently reauthorized and amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (P.L. 114-95). Title I-A (Local Educational Agency Grants) is the largest federal elementary and secondary education program.[55] Title I-A grants fund supplementary educational and related services to low-achieving and other students attending pre-kindergarten through grade 12 schools with relatively high concentrations of students from low-income families. Title I-A also directs state education agencies (SEAs) and local education agencies (LEAs) to support the enrollment, attendance, and success of homeless children and youth. Title I-C (Education of Migratory Children) provides formula grants to state education agencies (SEAs) for the development of programs targeted to migrant students, and Title I-D (Neglected, Delinquent, or At Risk Children and Youth) gives funding to LEAs and SEAs to meet the special educational needs of youth in institutions and correctional facilities for neglected and delinquent youth, as well as youth at risk of dropping out.

Other ESEA Programs

Titles III and IV of the ESEA also target disadvantaged youth. Title III (Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students) provides grant funding to states to ensure that limited English proficient (LEP) children and youth, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency. Title IV-B (21st Century Community Learning Centers) provides funding to LEAs for academic and other after-school programs. The purpose of the program is to provide opportunities for academic enrichment, offer students a broad array of additional services, and offer families of served students opportunities for active and meaningful engagement with their children's education.

Programs Authorized Under HEA

The Higher Education Act (P.L. 89-329) authorizes a few programs targeted to vulnerable youth. The primary programs are TRIO, GEAR UP, and the Migrant High School Equivalency program.

TRIO Programs.[56] The five programs that make up TRIO are designed to assist students from disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue higher education and to complete their postsecondary studies.[57] These programs are Talent Search, Upward Bound, Educational Opportunity Centers, Student Support Services, and Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement.[58] Each of these programs is designed to intervene at various points along the education continuum.

---

[55] For additional information, see CRS Report R44297, *Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act: Highlights of the Every Student Succeeds Act*, by Rebecca R. Skinner and Jeffrey J. Kuenzi.

[56] For additional information, see CRS Report R42724, *The TRIO Programs: A Primer*, by Cassandria Dortch.

[57] The precise definition of disadvantaged varies between the programs. It generally refers to individuals who are low-income, first-generation college students, or disabled.

[58] Two other TRIO programs, Staff Development program and Dissemination Partnership Grants program, provide indirect services. The Staff Development program supports training of current and prospective TRIO staff. The Dissemination Partnership Grants program funds partnerships with institutions of higher education or community organizations not receiving TRIO funds but that serve first-generation and low-income college students.

Talent Search, authorized under the original HEA legislation, encourages youth who have completed at least five years of elementary education to complete high school and enter postsecondary education; to encourage dropouts to reenter school; and to disseminate information about available postsecondary educational assistance. *Upward Bound* projects seek to motivate middle school and high school students and veterans to complete secondary education and succeed in postsecondary education through instruction and counseling, among other activities.

Educational Opportunity Centers provide information to prospective postsecondary students regarding available financial aid and academic assistance, and help them apply to college. *Student Support Services* projects are intended to improve college students' retention and graduation rates, and improve transfer rates from two-year to four-year colleges through instruction; exposure to career options; mentoring; and assistance in graduate admissions and financial aid processes. Finally, the *Robert E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement* program prepares disadvantaged students for postdoctoral study through seminars, research opportunities, summer internships, tutoring, mentoring, and exposure to cultural events and academic programs.

GEAR UP. Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Program (GEAR UP), a program not part of the TRIO array of programs, was added to the HEA by the Higher Education Act Amendments of 1998 (P.L. 105-244). GEAR UP seeks to increase disadvantaged students' secondary school completion and postsecondary enrollment by providing support services. GEAR UP differs from Trio in two key aspects: the program (1) may serve a cohort of students from seventh grade to their first year of college and (2) may assure students of the availability of financial aid to meet college costs. States or partnerships (schools and at least two other entities, such as community organizations and state agencies) are eligible for funding. Any funded state or partnership must provide comprehensive mentoring, tutoring, counseling, outreach, and support services to participating students.

Special Programs for Students Whose Families Are Engaged in Migrant and Seasonal Farmwork. This program, authorized under HEA, funds institutions of higher education (or private nonprofits in cooperation with institutions of higher education) to recruit and provide academic and support services to individuals who lack a high school diploma and who are or whose parents are engaged in migrant and other seasonal farm work. The purpose of the program is to assist students to obtain a high school equivalency diploma and gain employment, or to attend college or another postsecondary education or training program.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the major statute that provides federal funding for the education of children and youth with disabilities.[59] Part B of the act includes provisions for the education of school-aged children. As a condition for the receipt of funds states must provide "free appropriate public education" to youth as old as 21 (age may vary depending on state law). This term refers to the right of all children with disabilities to receive an education and related services that meet state curriculum requirements, at no costs to parents. Appropriateness is defined according to the child's individualized education program (IEP) which delineates the special instruction the child should receive and his or her educational goals.

[59] For additional information, see CRS Report R41833, *The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B: Key Statutory and Regulatory Provisions*, by Kyrie E. Dragoo.

Education of Homeless Children and Youths Program

The McKinney-Vento Act (P.L. 100-77), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (P.L. 114-95), authorizes the Department of Education to fund local education agencies (LEAs) to provide homeless children and youth comparable education services. LEAs must assist in determining the school that is in the best interest for a child or youth to attend, and implement policies that remove barriers from these students in attending school.

Youth ChalleNGe Program

The Youth ChalleNGe Program is a quasi-military training program administered by the Army National Guard to improve outcomes for youth who have dropped out of school or have been expelled. The program was established as a pilot program under the National Defense Authorization Act for FY1993 (P.L. 102-484), and Congress permanently authorized the program under the National Defense Authorization Act for FY1998 (P.L. 105-85). Currently, 35 programs operate in 28 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Youth are eligible for the program if they are ages 16 to 18 and enroll prior to their 19th birthday; have dropped out of school or been expelled; are unemployed; are not currently on parole or probation for anything other than juvenile status offenses and not serving time or awaiting sentencing; and are drug free. The program consists of three phases: a two-week pre-program residential phase where applicants are assessed to determine their potential for completing the program; a 20-week residential phase; and a 12-month postresidential phase. During the residential phase, youth—known as cadets—work toward their high school diploma or GED and develop life-coping, job, and leadership skills. They also participate in activities to improve their physical well-being, and they engage in community service.[60]

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) in the Department of Justice (DOJ) coordinates federal activities and administers programs relating to the treatment of juvenile offenders and the prevention of juvenile delinquency. These programs include those enacted under the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974.

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act[61]

The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDPA) was first enacted in 1974 (P.L. 90-415) and was most recently reauthorized in 2002 by the 21st Century Department of Justice Appropriations Authorization Act (P.L. 107-273). Its provisions were authorized through FY2007 and FY2008. The JJDPA as originally enacted had three main components: it created a set of institutions within the federal government that were dedicated to coordinating and administering federal juvenile justice efforts; it established grant programs to assist the states with setting up and running their juvenile justice systems; and it promulgated core mandates that states had to adhere to in order to be eligible to receive grant funding. While the JJDPA has been amended several times since 1974, it continues to feature the same three components. While the JJDPA

[60] For further information, see CRS Report RL34306, *Vulnerable Youth: Federal Mentoring Programs and Issues*, by Adrienne L. Fernandes-Alcantara.

[61] For additional information, see CRS Report RL33947, *Juvenile Justice: Legislative History and Current Legislative Issues*, by Kristin Finklea.

contains a number of major grants, those currently funded include State Formula Grants, the Juvenile Mentoring Program, and Title V Community Prevention Block Grants.

The JJDPA authorizes OJJDP to make State Formula Grants to states that can be used to fund the planning, establishment, operation, coordination, and evaluation of projects for the development of more effective juvenile delinquency programs and improved juvenile justice systems. The Juvenile Mentoring Program was repealed in 2002 by the 21st Century Department of Justice Reauthorization Act (P.L. 107-273); however, it has continued to receive appropriations each subsequent fiscal year.[62] These grants could be awarded to local educational agencies (in partnership with public or private agencies) to establish and support mentoring programs. The Title V Community Prevention Block Grant program authorizes OJJDP to make grants to states, that are then transmitted to units of local government, in order to carry out delinquency prevention programs for juveniles who have come into contact with, or are likely to come into contact with, the juvenile justice system.

Social Services

The major social service programs to assist at-risk youth are authorized under the Social Security Act, as amended, and are administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.[63]

Foster Care Program and Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP)

Title IV-E of the Social Security Act authorizes the federal foster care program.[64] Under this program, a state, territory, or tribe may seek federal funds for partial reimbursement of the room and board costs needed to support eligible children who are neglected, abused, or who, for some other reason, cannot remain in their own homes. To be eligible for Title IV-E, a child must be in the care and responsibility of the state and (1) the child must meet income/assets tests and family structure rules in the home he/she was removed from;[65] (2) have specific judicial determinations made related to reasons for the removal and other aspects of his/her removal and placement; and (3) be placed in an eligible licensed setting with an eligible provider(s).

Foster youth who reach the "age of majority" (18 years in most states) and who have not been reunited with their parents or placed with adoptive parents or guardians are said to "emancipate" or "age out" of foster care. The Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP), created in 1999 (P.L. 106-169) under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act. States, territories, and tribes with approved plans receive CFCIP funds to provide services intended to help children who are

[62] For additional information, see CRS Report RL34306, *Vulnerable Youth: Federal Mentoring Programs and Issues*, by Adrienne L. Fernandes-Alcantara.

[63] Two additional child welfare programs, Court Appointed Special Advocates and Children's Advocacy Centers, are discussed in **Table A-1**. The programs are administered by the U.S. Department of Justice.

[64] For additional information, see CRS Report R42794, *Child Welfare: State Plan Requirements under the Title IV-E Foster Care, Adoption Assistance, and Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program*, by Emilie Stoltzfus.

[65] With an exception, discussed below, the income and asset tests, as well as family structure/living arrangement rules are identical to the federal /state rules that applied to the now-defunct cash aid program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), as they existed on July 16, 1996. Under the prior law AFDC program, states established specific AFDC income rules (within some federal parameters). The federal AFDC asset limit was $1,000, however, P.L. 106-169 raised the allowable counted asset limit to $10,000 for purposes of determining Title IV-E eligibility. In addition to meeting the income/asset criteria in the home from which he/she was removed, a child must meet the AFDC family structure/living arrangement rules. Those rules granted eligibility primarily to children in single-parent families (parents are divorced, separated, or never-married and one spouse is not living with the child; or the parent is dead). In some cases a child in a two-parent family may be eligible (if one parent meets certain unemployment criteria).

expected to age out of foster care, those who aged out of foster care, and those who left foster care for adoption or guardianship at age 16 or older to make a successful transition to adulthood. Separately, formula funds are authorized for states, territories, and tribes to provide Education and Training Vouchers (ETVs) for CFCIP-eligible youth. ETVs are intended to cover the cost of attending institutions of higher education (e.g., colleges, universities, and job training programs). Only youth receiving a voucher at age 21 may continue to participate in the voucher program until age 23.

Runaway and Homeless Youth Program

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Program, established in 1974 under Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, contains three components: the Basic Center Program (BCP), Transitional Living Program (TLP), and Street Outreach Program (SOP).[66] These programs are designed to provide services to runaway and homeless youth outside of the law enforcement, juvenile justice, child welfare, and mental health systems. Services include temporary and long-term shelter, counseling services, and referrals to social service agencies, among other supports.[67]

Public Health

Public health programs for vulnerable youth are concentrated in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). These programs address youth mental health, substance abuse, teen pregnancy prevention, and support for pregnant and parenting teens.

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

Public health programs for vulnerable youth are concentrated in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).[68] These programs address youth mental health, substance abuse, teen pregnancy prevention, and support for pregnant and parenting teens.

SAMHSA is organized into four centers: the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT), the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), and the Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality (CBHSQ). Collectively, three of the centers administer approximately 13 programs (not all discussed here or in **Table A-1**) for youth ages 10 to 21 (and up to 25 for some programs). The programs primarily target youth with serious emotional disturbances (SED) and youth at risk of abusing drugs and alcohol.

- *CMHS.* Youth-focused suicide prevention activities are funded by SAMHSA's Garrett Lee Smith (GLS) Campus Suicide Prevention Grant Program and GLS State/Tribal Youth Suicide Prevention and Early Intervention Grant Program. The campus grant program funds services for all students (including those with

[66] For additional information, see CRS Report RL33785, *Runaway and Homeless Youth: Demographics and Programs*, by Adrienne L. Fernandes-Alcantara.

[67] Other program activities include a national communications system for runaway youth and their families, HHS's National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth, research, evaluations, and training and technical assistance to grantees.

[68] For additional information, see CRS Report R44860, *SAMHSA FY2018 Budget Request and Funding History: A Fact Sheet*, by Erin Bagalman and Ada S. Cornell.

mental health problems and substance abuse that makes them vulnerable to suicide), while the state/tribal program supports statewide and tribal activities to develop and implement youth suicide prevention and intervention strategies.[69]

The Children's Mental Health Services program supports community-based systems of care for children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbances and their families. The program aims to ensure that services are provided collaboratively across youth-serving systems (such as schools and foster care placements) and that each youth receives an individual service plan developed with the participation of the family (and, where appropriate, the youth) to meet the mental health needs of that youth. A second program, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, was created to establish a national network that provides services and referrals for children and adolescents who have experienced traumatic events.

- *CSAT.* The Juvenile Treatment Drug Courts provide treatment for youth who are drug dependent. This program targets juvenile offenders (preadjudicated or adjudicated status, or postdetention), and provides substance abuse treatment, wrap-around services supporting substance abuse treatment, and case management. A judge oversees the drug treatment program and may allow the youth to avoid (further) penalties for their delinquent behavior.
- *CSAP.* The Strategic Prevention Framework grants address underage drinking (among those aged 12 to 20) and prescription drug misuse and abuse (among those aged 12 to 25). These grants are intended to prevent the onset and reduce the progression of substance abuse by incorporating SAMSHA's Strategic Prevention Framework, which emphasizes strategic planning and the implementation of evidence-based prevention. The grants support implementation of a five-step process: (1) conduct a community needs assessment; (2) mobilize and/or build capacity; (3) develop a comprehensive strategic plan; (4) implement evidence-based prevention programs and infrastructure development activities; and (5) monitor process and evaluate effectiveness. CSAP also administers, in cooperation with the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, the "Drug-Free Communities Support Program" (see subsequent section).

Teen Pregnancy Prevention and Support Programs

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services administers research and education programs to reduce adolescent pregnancy or to provide care services for pregnant and parenting adolescents. The Title IV-E Abstinence Education Grants program provides competitive grants for abstinence education. States may request funding for the Abstinence Education Grants when they solicit Maternal and Child Health block grant funds (used for a variety of health services for women and children, including adolescent pregnancy prevention activities); this funding must be used exclusively for teaching abstinence.[70]

[69] SAMSHA also funds other suicide prevention programs such as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and the Suicide Prevention Resource Center.

[70] From FY2000 through FY2009, abstinence-only education for youth ages 12 to 18 was also funded through HHS's Community-Based Abstinence Education program (formerly known as Special Programs of Regional and National Significance, SPRANS).

P.L. 111-148 (the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, ACA) established a state formula grant program to enable states to operate the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP), which is a comprehensive approach to teen pregnancy prevention that educates adolescents on both abstinence and contraception to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. It is intended to provide youth with information on several adulthood preparation subjects (i.e., healthy relationships, adolescent development, financial literacy, parent-child communication, educational and career success, and healthy life skills). The program is mandated to provide programs that are evidence-based, medically accurate, and age-appropriate.

Two additional programs have been created under recent appropriation laws. The FY2010 omnibus appropriations law (P.L. 111-117) established the authority and funding for HHS to create the Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) program. Subsequent appropriation laws have provided funding as well. As required in appropriations law, the majority of TPP program grants (Tier 1) must use evidence-based models that have been shown to be effective in reducing teen pregnancy and related outcomes. A smaller share of funding is available for research and demonstration grants (Tier 2) for innovative strategies to prevent teenage pregnancy. Separately, the Sexual Risk Avoidance Education (SRAE) program was established and funded by the FY2016 omnibus appropriations law (P.L. 114-113), and was subsequently funded by the FY2017 omnibus appropriations law (P.L. 115-31). These laws have specified that SRAE funding is available for education in sexual risk avoidance, defined as "voluntarily refraining from non-marital sexual activity."

National and Community Service

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) is an independent federal agency that administers programs authorized by two statutes: the National and Community Service Act (NCSA, P.L. 101-610) of 1990, as amended, and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act (DVSA, P.L. 93-113) of 1973, as amended.[71] The focus of these programs is to provide public service to communities in need through multiple service activities. Although CNCS works to involve a diverse range of individuals in their programs, the agency makes particular efforts to engage disadvantaged youth, either because they enroll these youth to help to carry out the programs (i.e., members or volunteers) or provide services to them through the programs (i.e., beneficiaries).

The major CNCS programs are organized into two service streams, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps.

- *AmeriCorps:* AmeriCorps identifies and addresses critical community needs by tutoring and mentoring disadvantaged youth, managing or operating after-school programs, helping communities respond to disasters, improving health services, building affordable housing, and cleaning parks and streams, among other services. There are three AmeriCorps programs: AmeriCorps State and National, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), and National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC). Some of the projects funded under the program support youth who are disadvantaged, and a certain share of participants in the NCCC program must be disadvantaged. For example, grantees under the AmeriCorps State and National program place members in organizations and schools to serve

[71] For additional information, see CRS Report RL33931, *The Corporation for National and Community Service: Overview of Programs and Funding*, by Abigail R. Overbay and Benjamin Collins, and archived CRS Report R40432, *Reauthorization of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (P.L. 111-13)*, by Ann Lordeman.

disadvantaged youth in grades K through 12 in after-school, before school, and enrichment programs. For providing services full-time for a term of service (up to one year), AmeriCorps members earn an education award equal to the maximum amount of a Pell Grant in the year in which service is rendered (and proportionally less if they provide services for half-time, reduced half-time, etc.).

- *Senior Corps:* Senior Corps is composed of volunteers age 55 or older who help to meet a wide range of community challenges through three programs: Foster Grandparents Program (FGP), Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), and Senior Companion program. The first two provide assistance in the community by working with children and youth with a variety of needs, among other populations and activities. The FGP provides aid to children and youth with exceptional needs, including children who have been abused or neglected or are otherwise at risk; mentors troubled teenagers and young mothers; cares for premature infants and children with physical disabilities; and teaches reading instruction to children who are falling behind their grade level. RSVP provides a variety of services to communities. These services include tutoring children and teenagers, renovating homes, and serving as museum docents.

Federal Efforts to Improve Coordination Among Programs for Vulnerable Youth

Overview

Despite the range of services and activities programs for vulnerable youth, many of these programs appear to have developed with little attempt to coordinate them in a policy area or across policy areas. Policymakers and youth advocates argue that federal agencies must develop mechanisms to improve coordination—defined, at minimum, as communication and consultation. They argue that coordination is necessary because of the expansion of programs that serve youth, the increasing complexity and interrelated nature of public policies that affect youth, the fragmentation of policy-making among agencies, and the establishment of new policy priorities that cross older institutional boundaries.[72]

The following section discusses federal efforts to improve coordination of youth programs. The section first addresses laws and an executive order that have sought to spur coordination across multiple government agencies. These laws include the Claude Pepper Young Americans Act (P.L. 101-501), YouthBuild Transfer Act (P.L. 109-281), and Tom Osborne Federal Youth Coordination Act (P.L. 109-365). Of the three, only the YouthBuild Transfer Act has been funded. In 2008, President George W. Bush signed Executive Order 13459 to establish an Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs. Following this discussion is a description of efforts to coordinate programs around specific youth topic areas and youth populations, such as through coordinating councils and grant programs carried out by two or more agencies.

[72] For additional information about rationales for coordination, see archived CRS Report RL31357, *Federal Interagency Coordinative Mechanisms: Varied Types and Numerous Devices*, by Frederick M. Kaiser. For a discussion of federal efforts to coordinate and integrate various social service programs, see archived CRS Report RL32859, *The "Superwaiver" Proposal and Service Integration: A History of Federal Initiatives*, by Cheryl Vincent.

Claude Pepper Young Americans Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-501)

The Claude Pepper Young Americans Act of 1990 (Title IX of the August F. Hawkins Human Services Reauthorization Act, P.L. 101-501) was the first law in recent history to address youth coordination issues; however, the law was never funded. P.L. 101-501 sought to increase federal coordination among agencies that administer programs for children and youth, while also enhancing the delivery of social services to children, youth, and their families through improved coordination at the state and local levels.[73] In its report supporting the act's coordinating provisions, the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee noted:[74]

> The Committee is concerned that the current system of service is fragmented and disjointed, making it difficult, if not impossible for children and families who are being served in one system to access needed services from another. This creates a situation in which problems of children and families not only go unmet but undetected and unresolved. Through the inclusion of these proposals, the Committee hopes to articulate a national commitment to our nation's children, youth, and families and to encourage greater cooperation at federal, state, and local levels.

Federal Council on Children, Youth, and Families

The Federal Council on Children, Youth, and Families was authorized by the Young Americans Act to address concerns about the fragmentation and duplication of services for youth at the federal and local levels. The act provided that the council comprise representatives from federal agencies and state or local agencies that serve youth, rural and urban populations; and national organizations with an interest in young individuals, families, and early childhood. The duties of the council were to include (1) advising and assisting the President on matters relating to the special needs of young individuals (and submitting a report to the President in FY1992 through FY1998); (2) reviewing and evaluating federal policies, programs, or other activities affecting youth and identifying duplication of services for these youth; and (3) making recommendations to the President and Congress to streamline services, reduce duplication of services, and encourage coordination of services for youth and their families at the state and local levels. The act was amended in 1994 (P.L. 103-252) to require that the council also identify program regulations, practices, and eligibility requirements that impede coordination and collaboration and make recommendations for their modifications or elimination. Though the council was to be funded through FY1998, funding was never appropriated.

Grants for States and Community Programs

The Young Americans Act also established grant funding for coordinating resources and providing comprehensive services to children, youth, and families at the state and local levels. For states to receive funding, the act required each state to submit a plan discussing how state and local entities would coordinate developmental, preventive, and remedial services, among other provisions. This grant program was never funded.

---

[73] For further discussion of concerns with coordination at the state and local levels and local initiatives to improve coordination in the early 1990s, see CRS Report 96-369, *Linking Human Services: An Overview of Coordination and Integration Efforts*, by Ruth Ellen Wasem (available upon request to CRS).

[74] U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, *Human Services Reauthorization Act*, report to accompany P.L. 101-501, 101st Cong., 2nd sess., S.Rept. 101-421 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1990), p. 1963.

Other Concerns about Coordination of Youth Programs

In addition to the programs described in **Table A-1**, dozens of other programs in multiple federal agencies target, even in small part, vulnerable youth. The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) cataloged 131 programs for at-risk or delinquent youth across 16 agencies in FY1996. GAO defined these youth as individuals age five to 24 who, due to certain characteristics or experiences, were statistically more likely than other youth to encounter certain problems—legal, social, financial, educational, emotional, and health—in the future.[75] The White House Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth, convened in 2002 under President George W. Bush, compiled a similar list of over 300 programs for disadvantaged youth (using nearly the same definition as GAO) in 12 agencies for FY2003 targeting vulnerable youth and youth generally.[76] (Some of these programs do not necessarily target the most disadvantaged youth or have a singular focus on youth populations.) The task force's final report identified concerns with coordinating these programs. One concern raised was that the federal government does not coordinate services for specific groups of youth (e.g., abused/neglected youth, current or former foster youth, immigrant youth, minority youth, obese youth, urban youth, and youth with disabilities, among others).

Congress has also examined challenges to coordinating programs targeted to certain groups of youth. For example, the House Committee on Government Reform held a hearing to examine the federal agencies and programs responsible for responding to abused and neglected children. The committee sought to determine the extent to which overlap and duplication among federal child abuse and neglect programs creates inefficiencies that hinder overall effectiveness.[77] In addition, the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Income Security and Family Support (now known as the Subcommittee on Human Resources) held a hearing on disconnected and homeless youth, and the programs that can assist this population. The hearing examined the ways some of these programs are coordinated or otherwise collaborate.[78]

Youth Build Transfer Act (P.L. 109-281)

The Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth identified several programs, including YouthBuild, that were located in a federal department whose mission does not provide a clear and compelling reason for locating them within that agency. As such, the task force recommended that YouthBuild be transferred from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to the U.S. Department of Labor because of DOL's mission of administering workforce and training programs.[79] As discussed previously, the YouthBuild program provides educational services and job training in construction for low-income youth ages 16 to 24 who are not enrolled in school.

---

[75] U.S. General Accounting Office, *At-Risk and Delinquent Youth: Multiple Federal Programs Raise Efficiency Questions*, GAO/HEHS-96-34, March 1996, at http://www.gao.gov/archive/1996/he96034.pdf. (GAO is now known as the U.S. Government Accountability Office.)

[76] The programs provide services such as: academic support; support for adults who work with youth; after-school programs; AIDS prevention activities; counseling; mental health services; mentoring; self-sufficiency skills; tutoring; and violence and crime prevention. See Executive Office of the President, *White House Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth Final Report*, October 2003, pp. 165-179. (Hereinafter *White House Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth Final Report*.)

[77] See for example, U.S. Congress, House Committee on Government Reform, *Redundancy and Duplication in Federal Child Welfare Programs: A Case Study on the Need for Executive Reorganization Authority*, hearing, 108th Cong., 2nd sess., May 20, 2004 (Washington: GPO, 2004).

[78] U.S. Congress, House Ways and Means Committee, Income Security and Family Support Subcommittee, "Hearing on Disconnected and Disadvantaged Youth," June 19, 2007 (Washington: GPO, 2007).

[79] *White House Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth Final Report*, pp. 33-34.

On September 22, 2006, the YouthBuild Transfer Act (P.L. 109-281), authorizing the transfer of the program from HUD to DOL, was signed into law. The program is authorized under the Workforce Investment Act, which will be superseded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act as of July 1, 2015.

Tom Osborne Federal Youth Coordination Act (P.L. 109-365)

In response to the concerns generally raised by the White House Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth, Congress passed the Tom Osborne Federal Youth Coordination Act (Title VIII of the Older Americans Act, P.L. 109-365), which created the Federal Youth Development Council and specified that it would be chaired by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Council was authorized for FY2007 and FY2008, but was not ultimately established. Funds were not appropriated for these years (or subsequent years). However, on February 7, 2008, President Bush signed Executive Order 13459 to establish an Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs, discussed in the next section, to improve coordination of youth policy.[80]

Although not explicitly stated in P.L. 109-365, the purpose of the legislation appeared to be twofold: to improve coordination across federal agencies that administer programs for vulnerable youth and to assist federal agencies with evaluating these programs. **Table 1** describes the duties of the Council that were discussed in the law to meet these two goals. Prior to the passage of the law, policymakers and advocates asserted that the council could help to improve policy effectiveness by reducing the duplication of effort and working at cross-purposes, while integrating distinct but reinforcing responsibilities among relatively autonomous agencies.[81] They argued that the council could improve accountability of various federal components by consolidating review and reporting requirements. Other duties of the council that are not listed in the table, include providing technical assistance to states to support a state-funded council for coordinating state youth efforts, at a state's request, and coordinating with other federal, state, and local coordinating efforts to carry out its duties.

The law specified that the council coordinate with three existing interagency bodies: the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, the Interagency Council on Homelessness, and the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. (The legislation did not describe how the council should coordinate with these other bodies. For further information on the Coordinating Council, see below.) Further, the law required that the council provide Congress with an interim report within one year after the council's first meeting, as well as a final report not later than two years after the council's first meeting. The final report was to include (1) a comprehensive list of recent research and statistical reporting by various federal agencies on the overall well-being of youth; (2) the assessment of the needs of youth and those who serve youth; (3) a summary of the plan in coordinating to achieve the goals and objectives for federal youth programs; (4) recommendations to coordinate and improve federal training and technical assistance, information sharing, and communication among federal programs and agencies; (5) recommendations to better integrate and coordinate policies across federal, state, and local levels of government, including any recommendations the chair determines appropriate for legislation

[80] Executive Order 13459. "Improving the Coordination and Effectiveness of Youth Programs." *Federal Register*, vol. 73 (February 7, 2008), pp. 8003-8005.

[81] U.S. Congress, House Committee on Education and the Workforce, Subcommittee on Select Education, *Coordination Among Federal Youth Development Programs*, hearing 109th Cong., 1st sess., July 12, 2005, statements of Rep. Tom Osborne and Marguerite W. Sallee, Alliance for Youth (Washington: GPO, 2005).

and administrative actions; (6) a summary of the actions taken by the council at the request of federal agencies to facilitate collaboration and coordination on youth serving programs and the results of those collaborations, if available; (7) a summary of the action the council has taken at the request of states to provide technical assistance; and (8) a summary of the input and recommendations by disadvantaged youth, community-based organizations, among others.

Table 1. Duties of the Federal Youth Development Council, by Goal

(The council was not convened)

Goal: To Improve Coordination	Goal: To Assess Youth Programs
—Ensure communication among agencies administering programs for disadvantaged youth; —Identify possible areas of overlap or duplication in the purpose and operation of programs serving youth and recommending ways to better facilitate the coordination and consultation among such programs; —Identify target populations of youth who are disproportionately at risk and assist agencies in focusing additional resources on such youth; —Assist federal agencies, at the request of one or more agencies, in collaborating on (1) model programs and demonstration projects focusing on special populations, including youth in foster care and migrant youth; (2) projects to promote parental involvement; and (3) projects that work to involve young people in service programs; —Solicit and document ongoing input and recommendations from (1) youth, especially youth in disadvantaged situations; (2) national youth development experts, researchers, parents, community-based organizations, foundations, business leaders, youth service providers, and teachers; and (3) state and local government agencies.	—In coordination with the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, assess (1) the needs of youth, especially those in disadvantaged situations, and those who work with youth; and (2) the quality and quantity of federal programs offering services, supports, and opportunities to help youth in their development; —Recommend quantifiable goals and objectives for federal programs to assist disadvantaged youth; —Make recommendations for the allocation of resources in support of such goals and objectives; —Develop a plan (that is consistent with the common indicators of youth well-being tracked by the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics) to assist federal agencies (at the request of one or more such agencies) coordinate to achieve quantifiable goals and objectives; —Work with federal agencies (1) to promote high-quality research and evaluation, identify and replicate model programs and promising practices, and provide technical assistance relating to the needs of youth; and (2) to coordinate the collection and dissemination of youth services-related data and research.

Source: Table prepared by the Congressional Research Service based on P.L. 109-365.

Executive Order 13459

On February 7, 2008, President Bush signed Executive Order 13459 to establish an Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs (hereinafter, IWGYP). In the order, President Bush cited the success of the interagency collaboration that resulted from the Helping America's Youth (HAY) initiative as the impetus for creating an Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs. HAY was a national initiative, led by First Lady Laura Bush, to promote positive youth development by raising awareness about the challenges facing youth and motivating caring adults to connect with youth through forums and an online resource.[82] This online resource was known as the Community Action Guide, and sought to help communities assess their needs and resources and link them to effective programs to help youth. This tool was created in partnership with nine federal agencies.

[82] The website is now http://www.youth.gov. It was previously http://helpingamericasyouth.org and http://www.findyouthinfo.gov.

The IWGYP was convened in 2008. Pursuant to the executive order, the working group consists of multiple federal departments and federal agencies.[83] The primary functions of the working group, as specified in the executive order, include (1) identifying and engaging key government and private or nonprofit organizations that can play a role in improving the coordination and effectiveness of programs serving and engaging youth, such as faith-based and other community organizations; (2) developing a new federal website on youth, built upon HAY's Community Guide, (3) encouraging all youth-serving federal and state agencies, communities, grantees, and organizations to adopt high standards for assessing program results, including through the use of rigorous impact evaluations, as appropriate; and (4) reporting to the President on its work and on the implementation of any recommendations arising from its work.

Congress has appropriated funds for the IWGYP in one year since the group was established. The IWGYP received a one-time appropriation of $1 million in FY2009 to HHS to be used for soliciting input from young people, state children's cabinet directors, and nonprofit organizations on youth programs; developing an "overarching strategic plan for federal youth policy," and "recommendation to improve the coordination, effectiveness, and efficiency of programs affecting youth."[84] The IWGYP developed a framework to guide development of the plan, which focuses on three overarching outcomes for youth up to the age of 24: health, safety, and wellness; school, family, and community engagement and connections; and education, training, employment, transitions, and readiness for careers and adulthood.[85] From May to December 2010, the Working Group convened listening sessions in 10 communities throughout the United States to solicit input from stakeholders, including state leaders and youth, about the plan.[86] In August and October 2010, the Working Group held meetings, at HHS, to solicit information from the public on the strategic plan.[87] In December 2010, the Working Group published an outline of the strategic plan in the *Federal Register* and asked for public comments.[88] In February 2013, the IWGYP released a draft report of the strategic plan based on these public comments. A final report was issued in December 2016.[89] The plan describes three overarching goals to improve outcomes for youth:

- Collaboration and coordination: This refers to promoting coordinated strategies to improve youth outcomes across a number of youth-serving programs at the federal, state, local, and tribal levels.

[83] These include the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Education, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, the Interior, Justice, Labor, State, and Transportation; and the Corporation for National and Community Service, National Science Foundation, Office of National Drug Control Policy, Social Security Administration, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and U.S. Small Business Association. See, http://www.youth.gov, "Federal Collaboration," http://youth.gov/feature-article/federal-collaboration.

[84] U.S. Congress, House Committee on Appropriations, Division F of committee print to accompany the Omnibus Appropriations Act, 2009 (H.R. 1105), 111th Cong., 2nd sess. (Washington: GPO, 2009).

[85] For further information, see Interagency Working Group on Youth Program *Pathways for Youth: Strategic Plan for Federal Collaboration.*

[86] Ibid.

[87] HHS, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, "Public Meeting To Solicit Input for a Strategic Plan for Federal Youth Policy," 75 *Federal Register* 154, August 11, 2010; and HHS, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, "Public Meeting To Solicit Input for a Strategic Plan for Federal Youth Policy," 75 *Federal Register* 190, October 1, 2010.

[88] HHS, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, "Input for a Strategic Plan for Federal Youth Policy," 75 *Federal Register* 244, December 21, 2010.

[89] Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs, *Pathways for Youth: Strategic Plan for Federal Collaboration*.

- Evidence-based and innovative strategies: This refers to disseminating and encouraging evidence-based programs that have been studied with rigorous evaluation designs and have shown positive effects on intended outcomes.
- Youth engagement and partnership: This refers to promoting youth engagement and partnership to strengthen programs and benefit youth and their families, and can involve strategies such as information sharing and shared decisionmaking.

Comparison of the Federal Youth Development Council and the Interagency Working Group

Major differences between the Federal Youth Development Council and the Interagency Working Group, as outlined in the law and executive order, appear to be their leadership structures, membership, and some of their duties. Under both the Federal Youth Development Council and IWGYP, the HHS Secretary is to serve as chair. As part of the IWGYP, the Secretary has the discretion to designate other agency heads as the chair and vice chair after two years, and biennially thereafter. Although the Federal Youth Development Council was authorized for a two-year period (FY2007 and FY2008), the executive order does not specify a date that the IWGYP should be terminated.

The authorization for the two entities identified different, but overlapping, memberships. The Council was authorized to include representatives from outside organizations and groups, and the President would have been required to consult with Congress about these appointments. In contrast, the IWGYP consists exclusively of federal staff. The two bodies have some distinct duties, as specified in the law and executive order. Unlike the IWGYP, the Council would have been charged with assessing the needs of youth and those who work with youth to promote positive youth development; recommending quantifiable goals and objectives for youth-serving programs; and advising on the allocation of resources in support of these goals and objectives. And unlike the Council, the IWGYP was directed to create a new federal website on youth that provides training to youth-serving entities and to develop and disseminate strategies to reduce the factors that put youth at risk.

Despite these differences, the functions of the Council and the IWGYP, as described in law and E.O. 13459, respectively, are similar. Both bodies were directed to improve coordination and collaboration among federal agencies. For example, the law specifies that one of the duties of the Council would have been to ensure communication among the agencies; to assist federal agencies in collaborating on model programs, such as those involving special populations and projects to promote parental involvement; and to coordinate with federal interagency entities, including the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Likewise, the IWGYP is charged with identifying and promoting initiatives and activities that merit strong interagency collaboration because of their potential to offer cost-effective solutions, including mentoring, in concert with the Federal Mentoring Council. The IWGYP is actively working with other partnerships as well.

The law and executive order also directed the two bodies to identify and disseminate information about promising youth programs. The law specified that the Council should work with federal agencies to "promote high-quality research and evaluation, identify and replicate model programs and promising practices, and provide technical assistance relating to the needs of youth." Similarly, the executive order directs the IWGYP to encourage various levels of government and organizations to adopt "high standards for assessing program results ... so that effective practices can be identified and replicated." The role of the Working Group's website is to disseminate

promising practices and to provide technical assistance to youth-serving organizations and partnerships.

Finally, the executive order appears broad enough to permit the IWGYP to take on some of the functions that were specified for the Council, such as identifying target populations of youth who are disproportionately at risk for negative outcomes; supporting initiatives that target certain populations of youth, such as migrant youth or youth in foster care; and soliciting and documenting ongoing input and recommendations from youth, national youth development experts, researchers, community-based organizations, state and local governments, and other stakeholders.

Federal Initiatives to Improve Coordination

The White House Council for Community Solutions

The White House Council for Community Solutions was created by President Obama under Executive Order 13560.[90] The order directed leaders from public, private, and other sectors to identify areas in which the federal government can contribute to cross-sector collaboration, among other responsibilities. The council focused its efforts on disconnected youth, or those youth ages 16 to 24 who are not working or in school. The council engaged in outreach and listening sessions with youth and other stakeholders, and determined that it would refer to disconnected youth as "opportunity youth" because they found that young people have "energy and aspirations and do not view themselves as disconnected."[91] The council also developed a final report of its findings and recommendations for creating these collaborative initiatives.[92] The report discusses types of collaborations, identifies the characteristics of successful collaborations, and addresses the resources these collaborations need to be sustained.

Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

The Coordinating Council (Council) on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention was established by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-415) and is administered by the Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The Council's primary functions are to coordinate federal programs and policies concerning juvenile delinquency prevention, unaccompanied juveniles, and missing and exploited children; however, the Council has convened meetings on other groups of vulnerable youth.[93] The Council is led by the Attorney General and the Administrator of OJJDP and includes the heads of all the federal agencies that touch on these broad areas, including the Secretary of Health and Human Services; the Secretary of Labor; the Secretary of Education; the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy; the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service; and the Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization (now the Commissioner of Immigration and Customs Enforcement).

---

[90] Executive Order 13560. "White House Council for Community Solutions." *Federal Register*, vol. 75 (December 17, 2010), pp. 78875-78876.

[91] Corporation for National and Community Service, White House Council for Community Solutions, *Final Report: Community Solutions for Opportunity Youth.*

[92] White House Council for Community Solutions, *Final Report: Community Solutions for Opportunity Youth.*

[93] U.S. Department of Justice, Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, "Meetings," http://www.juvenilecouncil.gov/meetings.html.

My Brother's Keeper

In February 2014, President Obama established the My Brother's Keeper Task Force ("MBK Task Force") to determine the public and private efforts needed to enhance positive outcomes for boys and young men of color. The MBK Task Force is made up of representatives from various federal agencies. In a June 2014 report, the MBK Task Force developed a set of recommendations that identify roles for government, business, nonprofit, philanthropic, faith-based, and community partners. The recommendations focus on ensuring that boys and young men of color are ready for school, achieve in school, complete postsecondary education or training, and successfully enter the workforce. In addition, the report discusses the need for partnerships between the public and private sector, such as recruiting mentors for youth.[94] In its April 2016 report, the MBK Task Force described selected federal, state, and local initiatives aimed at improving the educational and employment outcomes for young men of color under the auspices of the MBK initiative. The report noted that the private sector has committed more than $600 million in grants and in-kind resources (and $1 billion in low-interest financing) to support activities that are aligned with the priorities outlined in the initiative.[95] It continues as an initiative of the Obama Foundation.[96]

Performance Partnership Pilots for Disconnected Youth (P3)

President Obama's FY2013 budget request proposed using existing funds to support Performance Partnership Pilots (P3) for disconnected youth. Specifically, the proposal sought to identify, through a demonstration, strategies for providing services to assist youth ages 14 to 24 with specified barriers (homeless, in foster care, involved in the juvenile justice system, or neither employed nor enrolled in an educational institution) in achieving educational, employment, and other goals. Such strategies would be carried out at the local, regional, or state level and would involve two or more federal programs with related goals.[97] This proposal was not funded in FY2013; however, the FY2014 appropriations law (P.L. 113-76), FY2015 appropriations law (P.L. 113-235),[98] FY2016 appropriations law (P.L. 114-113), and FY2017 appropriations law (P.L. 115-31) have provided authority for the Departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services (along with the Corporation for National and Community Service and related agencies) to carry out up to 10 Performance Partnership Pilot projects. In addition, the appropriation laws

[94] White House, *Fact Sheet & Report: Opportunity for All: My Brother's Keeper Blueprint for Action*, May 30, 2014, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/05/30/fact-sheet-report-opportunity-all-my-brother-s-keeper-blueprint-action.

[95] White House, My Brother's Keeper Task Force, *My Brother's Keeper 2016 Progress Report, Two Years of Expanding Opportunity and Creating Pathways to Success,* April 2016, https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/images/MBK-2016-Progress-Report.pdf.

[96] Obama Foundation, "Statement From My Brother's Keeper Alliance (MBK Alliance) on Integration with the Obama Foundation," press release, September 13, 2017.

[97] Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, *Fiscal Year 2013 Appendix, Budget of the U.S. Government*, p. 14, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2013/assets/appendix.pdf. The budget also proposed Performance Partnership Pilots to help with revitalizing distressed neighborhoods. See also consultation paper by multiple federal agencies, *Changing the Odds for Disconnected Youth: Initial Design Consideration for Performance Partnership Pilots*, April 28, 2014, https://youth.gov/docs/P3_Consultation_Paper_508.pdf.

[98] House of Representatives, *Congressional Record*. "Explanatory Statement on Appropriations Regarding the House Amendment to the Senate Amendment on H.R. 83," *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 160, part I (December 11, 2014), p. H9187. Section 4 of H.R. 83 provides that the Explanatory Statement, when published in the *Congressional Record*, is to have the same effect as a conference agreement.

for FY2015 through FY2017 specified that selected appropriations for the Department of Justice and Department of Housing and Urban Development can be used to support the P3 initiative.

Generally, these federal agencies may use discretionary funding to carry out pilots that involve federal education, training, employment, social services, juvenile justice, and housing assistance programs targeted to disconnected youth, or are designed to prevent youth from disconnecting from school or work. The law enables the agencies to enter into agreements with states, regions, localities, or tribal communities that give them flexibility in using discretionary funds across these programs. The pilots must identify the populations to be served, outcomes to be achieved, and methodology for measuring outcomes, among other items. Federal agencies must ensure that their participation does not result in restricting eligibility of any individual for any of the services funded by the agency or will not otherwise adversely affect vulnerable populations that receive such services under the pilot. The law also specifies that federal agencies that use discretionary funds may seek to waive certain program requirements necessary for achieving the outcomes of the pilots, provided that the agencies deliver written notice to Congress (and subject to limitations on waivers related to nondiscrimination, wage and labor standards, or allocation of funds to states or other jurisdictions). In addition, appropriation laws for FY2016 and FY2017 have specified that the pilot communities must include those that have experienced civil unrest.

The Department of Education, on behalf of the agencies involved, has invited eligible entities to apply for funding.[99] Eligible applicants could include partnerships that involve public and private (nonprofit, business, industry, and labor) organizations, with a lead entity being a state, local, or tribal government entity head. The most recent authority for the initiative, the FY2017 appropriations law, enables P3 to extend through September 30, 2021.

Child Welfare Partnerships

HHS's Administration for Children and Families (ACF), the agency that carries out most federal child welfare programs, has partnered with other agencies to focus on the mental health and educational needs of children in foster care. ACF is coordinating with the Centers on Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), both agencies at HHS, to "support effective management" of prescription medication for children in foster care, and they have called on their state counterparts to do the same. Further, CMS, ACF, and SAMHSA convened state directors of child welfare, Medicaid, and mental health agencies in August 2012 to address use of psychotropic medications for children in foster care as well as the mental health needs of children who have experienced maltreatment. In a letter to states about their joint work, the three federal agencies said that "State Medicaid/CHIP agencies and mental health authorities play a significant role in providing continuous access to and receipt of quality mental health services for children in out-of-home care. Therefore it is essential that State child welfare, Medicaid, and mental health authorities collaborate in any efforts to improve health, including medication use and prescription monitoring structures in particular."[100]

Separately, HHS has partnered with the Department of Education (ED) in an effort to improve the educational outcomes of youth in foster care. HHS and ED convened a meeting in 2011 with state

[99] U.S. Department of Education, *Performance Partnership Pilots for Disconnected Youth: First Annual Report to Congress*, June 2017, https://youth.gov/sites/default/files/P3-Report-to-Congress-508.pdf.

[100] George Sheldon, Acting Assistant Secretary, ACF; Donald Berwick, Administrator, CMS; and Pamela Hyde, Administrator, SAMHSA, to "State Director," November 23, 2011, http://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/mentalhealth/effectiveness/jointlettermeds.pdf.

child welfare, education, and juvenile court officials for every state, Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico. The purpose of the meeting was to encourage collaboration across these different systems as a way to ensure that youth are continuously enrolled in school and that schools are meeting the needs of these youth. The jurisdictions worked on action plans to implement strategies for collaboration, and they continue to implement these plans. Since this time, the two departments have published guidance on educational support for children in foster care. In June 2014, ED and HHS issued a joint letter to education authorities about the provisions in the Fostering Connections Act (P.L. 110-351, enacted in 2008) that seek to increase educational stability for children in foster care. In June 2016, the two departments released guidance on the provisions in the Every Student Succeeds Act (P.L. 114-95, enacted in 2015) for supporting children in foster care.[101]

Shared Youth Vision Initiative

In response to the recommendations made by the Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth, the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Justice, and Labor partnered with the Social Security Administration to improve communication and collaboration across programs that target at-risk youth groups under an initiative called the "Shared Youth Vision." The agencies convened an Interagency Work Group and conducted regional forums in 16 states to develop and coordinate policies and research on the vulnerable youth population. Representatives from federal and state agencies in workforce development, education, social services, and juvenile justice participated in the forums. The purpose of these forums was to create and implement plans for improving communication and collaboration between local organizations that serve at-risk youth. In FY2014, DOL competitively awarded grants to these states (totaling $1.6 million) for assisting them in developing strategic plans to link their systems that serve youth. For example, Arizona created an initiative to bring together state and county agencies that can help youth exiting foster care or the juvenile justice system in two counties in connecting to education and employment services and supports.[102]

Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SS/HS) Initiative[103]

Since FY2009, HHS, ED, and DOJ have supported the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative to reduce violence and drug abuse at schools (K-12) and in communities. Local education agencies—in partnership with local law enforcement, public mental health, and juvenile justice entities—apply for SS/HS funding. The initiative has sponsored projects in schools and communities that (1) provide a safe school environment; (2) offer alcohol-, other drug-, and violence-prevention activities and early intervention for troubled students; (3) offer school and community mental health preventive and treatment intervention programs; (4) offer early childhood psychosocial and emotional development programs; (5) support and connect schools and communities; and (6) support safe-school policies. Examples of programs for youth K through 12th grade have included after-school and summer tutoring programs; recreational activities such as chess club; volunteering; and coordinated social service and academic activities

[101] For further information, see U.S. Department of Education, "Students in Foster Care," http://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/foster-care/index.html.

[102] For additional information about the programs in each state, see U.S. Department of Labor, *Common Sense, Uncommon Commitment: A Progress Report on the Shared Youth Vision Partnership*, January 2009, https://www.doleta.gov/ryf/pdf/Shared_Youth_Vision_Report_FINAL.pdf.

[103] For additional information, see HHS, SAMHSA, "Safe Schools/Healthy Students (SSHS)," http://www.samhsa.gov/safe-schools-healthy-students.

for youth at risk of engaging in delinquent behavior, including mental health care services, peer mentoring, and parent workshops.

Drug-Free Communities Support Program[104]

The Drug-Free Communities Support Program is administered by SAMSHA and the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (which has entered into an agreement with OJJDP to manage the program on behalf of the agency). The program awards grants to community coalitions through a competitive grant award process. The program is intended to strengthen the capacity of the coalitions to reduce substance abuse among youth (and adults) and to disseminate timely information on best practices for reducing substance abuse.

Conclusion

This report provided an overview of the vulnerable youth population and examined the federal role in supporting these youth. Although a precise number of vulnerable youth cannot be aggregated (and should not be, due to data constraints), these youth are generally concentrated among seven groups: youth "aging out" of foster care, runaways and homeless youth, juvenile justice-involved youth, immigrant youth and youth with limited English proficiency (LEP), youth with physical and mental disabilities, youth with mental disorders, and youth receiving special education. Each of these categories is comprised of youth with distinct challenges and backgrounds; however, many of these youth share common experiences, such as unstable home and neighborhood environments, coupled with challenges in school. Without protective factors in place, vulnerable youth may have difficulty transitioning to adulthood. Detachment from the labor market and school—or disconnectedness—is perhaps the single strongest indicator that the transition has not been made adequately. Despite the negative forecast for the employment and education prospects of vulnerable youth, some youth experience positive outcomes in adulthood. Youth who develop strong cognitive, emotional, and vocational skills, among other types of competencies, have greater opportunities to reach their goals. Advocates for youth promote the belief that all youth have assets and can make valuable contributions to their communities despite their challenges.

The federal government has not developed a single overarching policy or program to assist vulnerable youth, like the Older Americans Act program for the elderly. Since the 1960s, a number of programs, many operating in isolation from others, have worked to address the specific needs (i.e., vocational, educational, social services, juvenile justice and delinquency prevention, and health) of these youth. More recently, policymakers have taken steps toward a more comprehensive federal response to the population. The YouthBuild Transfer Act of 2006 moved the YouthBuild program from HUD to DOL because the program is more aligned with DOL's mission of administering workforce and training programs. Also in 2006, the Tom Osborne Youth Coordination Act was passed to improve coordination across federal agencies that administer programs for vulnerable youth and to assist federal agencies with evaluating these programs. In February 2008, President Bush signed an executive order establishing a federal Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs. Other coordinating efforts, such as the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and Shared Youth Vision initiative, may have the

[104] For additional information, see Executive Office of the President, Office of National Drug Control Policy, https://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/grants-programs.

resources and leadership to create a more unified federal youth policy, albeit the Council has a primary focus on juvenile justice-involved youth.

In addition to the Federal Youth Coordination Act, the few youth-targeted acts over the over the past several years have not passed or have passed without full implementation. The unfunded Claude Pepper Young Americans Act of 1990 sought to increase coordination among federal children and youth agencies by creating a Federal Council on Children, Youth, and Families that would have streamlined federal youth programs and advised the President on youth issues.

Though federal legislation targeted at vulnerable young people has not been passed or implemented in recent years, Executive Order 13459 and current collaborations (My Brother's Keeper and the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention) appear to have begun addressing, even in small measure, the needs of this population.

Appendix. Federal Youth Programs and Relevant CRS Reports and Experts

Table A-1. Federal Programs for Vulnerable Youth

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Job Training and Workforce Development					
Job Corps	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 29 U.S.C. §3191 et seq.	To assist eligible youth who need and can benefit from an intensive workforce development program, operated in a group setting in residential and nonresidential centers, to become more responsible, employable, and productive citizens.	FY2006: $1.6 billion FY2007: $1.6 billion FY2008: $1.6 billion FY2009: $1.7 billion (plus $250,000 under P.L. 111-5) FY2010: $1.7 billion FY2011: $1.7 billion FY2012: $1.7 billion FY2013: $1.6 billion FY2014: $1.7 billion FY2015: $1.7 billion FY2016: $1.7 billion FY2017: $1.7 billion	U.S. Department of Labor	Youth ages 16 through 24 who are low-income and meet one or more of the following criteria: (1) basic skills deficient; (2) homeless, a runaway, a foster child, or aged out of foster care; (3) a parent; (4) an individual who requires additional education, career and technical education or training, or workforce preparation skills to be able to obtain and retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency; or (5) a victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Youth Activities	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 29 U.S.C. §3161 et seq.	To provide services to eligible youth seeking assistance in achieving academic and employment success, including the provision of mentoring, support services, training, and incentives.	FY2006: $941 million FY2007: $941 million FY2008: $924 million FY2009: $924 million (plus $1.2 billion under P.L. 111-5) FY2010: $924 million FY2011: $824 million FY2012: $824 million FY2013: $781 million FY2014: $820 million FY2015: $832 million FY2016: $873 million FY2017: $873 million	U.S. Department of Labor	"In-school" and "out-of-school" youth are eligible. In-school youth are those ages 14 to 21, low-income, and either deficient in basic literacy skills, homeless, a runaway, a foster child or aged out of foster care, pregnant, a parent, an offender, an English language learner, or an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment. Out-of-school youth are those who meet certain criteria such as being a high school dropout or being low-income.
YouthBuild	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 29 U.S.C. §3226	To enable disadvantaged youth to obtain the education and employment skills while expanding the supply of permanent affordable housing for homeless individuals and low-income families.	FY2006: $62 million FY2007: $62 million FY2008: $59 million FY2009: $70 million (plus $50 million under P.L. 111-5) FY2010: $103 million FY2011: $80 million FY2012: $80 million FY2013: $76 million FY2014: $78 million FY2015: $80 million FY2016: $85 million FY2017: $85 million	U.S. Department of Labor	Youth ages 16 through 24 who are (1) members of low-income families, in foster care, offenders, disabled, the children of incarcerated parents, or migrants; and (2) are school dropouts or were school dropouts and subsequently reenrolled in school.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Youth Conservation Corps	Youth Conservation Corps Act of 1970, as amended 16 U.S.C. §1701 et seq.	To further the development and maintenance of the natural resources by America's youth, and in so doing to prepare them for the ultimate responsibility of maintaining and managing these resources for the American people.	No specific amount appropriated or requested. The Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies generally directs the four agencies to allocate no less than a particular amount to Youth Conservation Corps activities (funding generally ranges from $1.5 million to $2 million per agency).	U.S. Department of the Interior (Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Agency, and the National Park Service) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (Forest Service)	All youth 15 to 18 years of age (targets economically disadvantaged, at-risk).
Education					
Title I-A: Local Education Agency Grants	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended 20 U.S.C. §6301 et. seq.	To improve the educational achievement of educationally disadvantaged children and youth, and to reduce achievement gaps between such pupils and their more advantaged peers.	FY2006: $12.7 billion FY2007: $12.8 billion FY2008: $13.9 billion FY2009: $14.5 billion (Plus $10.0 billion under P.L. 111-5) FY2010: $14.5 billion FY2011: $14.5 billion FY2012: $14.5 billion FY2013: $13.8 billion FY2014: $14.4 billion FY2015: $14.4 billion FY2016: $14.9 billion FY2017: $15.5 billion	U.S. Department of Education	Educationally disadvantaged children and youth, in areas with concentrations of children and youth in low-income families.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Title I-C: Migrant Education	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended 20 U.S.C. §6391	To support high quality and comprehensive educational programs for migrant children and youth.	FY2006: $387 million FY2007: $387 million FY2008: $380 million FY2009: $395 million FY2010: $395 million FY2011: $394 million FY2012: $393 million FY2013: $373 million FY2014: $375 million FY2015: $375 million FY2016: $375 million FY2017: $375 million	U.S. Department of Education	Migrant children and youth.
Title I-D: Prevention and Intervention Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At Risk	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended 20 U.S.C. §6421-6472 et seq.	To meet the special educational needs of children in institutions and community day school programs for neglected and delinquent children and children in adult correctional institutions.	FY2006: $50 million FY2007: $50 million FY2008: $49 million FY2009: $50 million FY2010: $50 million FY2011: $50 million FY2012: $50 million FY2013: $48 million FY2014: $48 million FY2015: $48 million FY2016: $48 million FY2017: $48 million	U.S. Department of Education	Abused/neglected youth, delinquent youth, and juvenile offenders.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Title III: English Language Acquisition	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended 20 U.S.C. §6801 et seq.	To ensure that limited English proficient children (LEP) and youth, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency.	FY2006: $669 million FY2007: $669 million FY2008: $671 million FY2009: $730 million FY2010: $730 million FY2011: $800 million FY2012: $750 million FY2013: $732 million FY2014: $732 million FY2015: $737 million FY2016: $737 million FY2017: $737 million	U.S. Department of Education	Children and youth with limited English proficiency.
Title IV-B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended 20 U.S.C. §8241 et seq.	To create community learning centers that help students meet state and local educational standards, provide supplementary educational assistance, and offer families meaningful opportunities for active and meaningful engagement in their students' education.	FY2006: $981 million FY2007: $981 million FY2008: $1.1 billion FY2009: $1.1 billion FY2010: $1.2 billion FY2011: $1.2 billion FY2012: $1.2 billion FY2013: $1.1 billion FY2014: $1.1 billion FY2015: $1.2 billion FY2016: $1.2 billion FY2017: $1.2 billion	U.S. Department of Education	Children and youth who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Title IV: Promise Neighborhoods Program	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended 20 U.S.C. §7274	To improve the academic and developmental outcomes for children, youth, and their families living in the most distressed communities in the United States. To design and implement a comprehensive, effective continuum of coordinated services from birth through college.	FY2015: $57 million FY2016: $73 million FY2017: $73 million	U.S. Department of Education	Children and youth in neighborhoods with high rates of poverty, childhood obesity, academic failure, and involvement of community members in the justice system.
Title IV: Full-Service Community Schools	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended 20 U.S.C. §7275	To support full-service community schools in providing academic, social, and health services in school settings to improve coordination in neighborhoods with high rates of poverty, childhood obesity, academic failure, and involvement of community members in the justice system.	FY2016: $10 million FY2017: $10 million	U.S. Department of Education	Children and youth in neighborhoods with high rates of poverty, childhood obesity, academic failure, and involvement of community members in the justice system.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Education for Homeless Children and Youths	McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987, as amended 42 U.S.C. §§11431-11435	To provide activities for and services to ensure that homeless children enroll in, attend, and achieve success in school.	FY2006: $62 million (plus $5 million for hurricane supplemental) FY2007: $62 million FY2008: $64 million (plus $15 million for disaster supplemental) FY2009: $65 million (plus $70 million under P.L. 111-5) FY2010: $65 million FY2011: $65 million FY2012: $65 million FY2013: $62 million FY2014: $65 million FY2015: $65 million FY2016: $70 million FY2017: $77 million	U.S. Department of Education	Homeless children and youth in elementary and secondary schools, homeless preschool children, and the parents of homeless children.
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part B Grant to States	Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, as amended (currently known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq.	To provide a free appropriate education to all children with disabilities.	FY2006: $10.6 billion FY2007: $10.8 billion FY2008: $11.0 billion FY2009: $11.5 billion (plus $11.3 billion under P.L. 111-5) FY2010: $11.5 billion FY2011: $11.5 billion FY2012: $11.6 billion FY2013: $11.0 billion FY2014: $11.5 billion FY2015: $11.5 billion FY2016: $11.9 billion FY2017: $12.0 billion	U.S. Department of Education	School-aged children and youth with disabilities, up to age 21 (pursuant to state law).

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Special Programs for Students Whose Families Are Engaged in Migrant and Seasonal Farmwork	Higher Education Act, as amended 20 U.S.C. §1070d-2	To provide academic and support services to help eligible migrant youth obtain their high school equivalency certificate and move on to employment or enrollment in higher education and to help eligible migrant youth enroll in and succeed in higher education.	FY2006: $34 million FY2007: $34 million FY2008: $33 million FY2009: $34 million FY2010: $37 million FY2011: $37 million FY2012: $37 million FY2013: $35 million FY2014: $35 million FY2015: $38 million FY2016: $45 million FY2017: $45 million	U.S. Department of Education	Migrant youth or youth engaged in seasonal farmwork ages 16 and older.
Upward Bound (includes Regular Upward Bound and Upward Bound Math and Science and excludes Veterans Upward Bound, which serves veterans)	Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended 20 U.S.C. §1070a-13	To increase the academic performance of eligible enrollees so that such persons may complete secondary school and pursue postsecondary educational programs.	FY2006: $299 million FY2007: $301 million FY2008: $347 million FY2009: $350 million FY2010: $349 million FY2011: $340 million FY2012: $312 million FY2013: $290 million FY2014: $308 million FY2015: $307 million FY2016: $324 million *FY2017: Funding for TRIO programs generally was provided at $900 million.*	U.S. Department of Education	Low-income individuals and potential first generation college students between ages 13 and 19, and have completed the 8th grade but have not entered the 12th grade (with exceptions).

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Educational Opportunity Centers	Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended 20 U.S.C. §1070a-16	To provide information to prospective postsecondary students regarding available financial aid and academic assistance, and help them apply for admission and financial aid.	FY2006: $48 million FY2007: $47 million FY2008: $47 million FY2009: $47 million FY2010: $47 million FY2011: $48 million FY2012: $46 million FY2013: $44 million FY2014: $47 million FY2015: $47 million FY2016: $56 million *FY2017: Funding for TRIO programs generally was provided at $900 million.*	U.S. Department of Education	At least two-thirds of participants in any project must be low-income students who would be first-generation college goers. They must also be at least 19 years old.
Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaurete Achievement	Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended 20 U.S.C. §1070a-15	To provide grants to institutions of higher education to prepare participants for doctoral studies through involvement in research and other scholarly activities.	FY2006: $42 million FY2007: $45 million FY2008: $45 million FY2009: $47 million FY2010: $48 million FY2011: $46 million FY2012: $37 million FY2013: $37 million FY2014: $46 million FY2015: $33 million FY2016: $35 million *FY2017: Funding for TRIO programs generally was provided at $900 million.*	U.S. Department of Education	Low-income college students or underrepresented students enrolled in an institution of higher education.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Student Support Services	Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended 20 U.S.C. §1070a-14	To improve college students' retention and graduation rates, and improve the transfer rates of students from two-year to four-year colleges.	FY2006: $271 million FY2007: $272 million FY2008: $284 million FY2009: $302 million FY2010: $301 million FY2011: $291 million FY2012: $290 million FY2013: $282 million FY2014: $282 million FY2015: $297 million FY2016: $304 million *FY2017: Funding for TRIO programs generally was provided at $900 million.*	U.S. Department of Education	At least two-thirds of participants in any project must be either disabled individuals or low-income, first-generation college goers. The remaining participants must be low-income, or first-generation college goers, or disabled. Not less than one-third of the disabled participants must be low-income as well.
Talent Search	Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended 20 U.S.C. §1070a-12	To identify disadvantaged youth with potential for postsecondary education; to encourage them in continuing in and graduating from secondary school and in enrolling in programs of postsecondary education; to publicize the availability of student financial aid; and to increase the number of secondary and postsecondary school dropouts who reenter an educational program.	FY2006: $150 million FY2007: $143 million FY2008: $143 million FY2009: $142 million FY2010: $142 million FY2011: $139 million FY2012: $136 million FY2013: $128 million FY2014: $135 million FY2015: $135 million FY2016: $155 million *FY2017: Funding for TRIO programs generally was provided at $900 million.*	U.S. Department of Education	Project participants must be between 11 and 27 years old (exceptions allowed), and two-thirds must be low-income individuals who are also potential first-generation college students.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR-UP)	Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended 20 U.S.C. §1070a-21-1070a-28	To provide financial assistance to low-income individuals, including students with disabilities, to attend an institution of higher education and support eligible entities in providing counseling, mentoring, academic support, outreach, and supportive services to students at risk of dropping out of school.	FY2006: $303 million FY2007: $303 million FY2008: $303 million FY2009: $313 million FY2010: $323 million FY2011: $303 million FY2012: $302 million FY2013: $286 million FY2014: $302 million FY2015: $302 million FY2016: $323 million FY2017: $340 million	U.S. Department of Education	Low-income students and students in high-poverty schools.
Juvenile Justice					
State Formula Grants	Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, as amended 42 U.S.C. §5631-33	To increase the capacity of state and local governments to support the development of more effective education, training, research, and other programs in the area of juvenile delinquency and programs to improve the juvenile justice system (e.g., community-based services for the prevention and control of juvenile delinquency, group homes, and halfway houses).	FY2006: $80 million FY2007: $79 million FY2008: $74 million FY2009: $75 million FY2010: $75 million FY2011: $62 million FY2012: $40 million FY2013: $41 million FY2014: $56 million FY2015: $55 million FY2016: $58 million FY2017: $55 million	U.S. Department of Justice	Delinquent youth, juvenile offenders, and at-risk youth.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Title V Incentive Grants for Local Delinquency Prevention Program	Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, as amended 42 U.S.C. §4781-85	To fund delinquency prevention programs and activities for at-risk youth and juvenile delinquents, including, among other things, substance abuse prevention services; child and adolescent health and mental health services; leadership and youth development services; and job skills training.	FY2006: $65 million FY2007: $64 million FY2008: $38 million FY2009: $63 million FY2010: $65 million FY2011: $4 million FY2012: $20 million FY2013: $19 million FY2014: $15 million FY2015: $15 million FY2016: $18 million FY2017: $15 million	U.S. Department of Justice	Delinquent youth, juvenile offenders, at-risk youth.
Gang Free Schools and Communities—Community Based Gang Intervention	This program was repealed by P.L. 107-273 but funding continues to be appropriated.	To prevent and reduce the participation of juveniles in the activities of gangs that commit crimes (e.g., programs to prevent youth from entering gangs and to prevent high school students from dropping out of school and joining gangs).	FY2006: ($25 million) FY2007: ($25 million) FY2008: ($19 million) FY2009: ($10 million) FY2010: ($10 million) FY2011: ($8 million) FY2012: ($5 million) FY2013: ($5 million) FY2014: ($3 million) FY2015: ($3 million) FY2016: ($5 million) FY2017: ($4 million) *Funding Set Aside From Title V Incentive Grants for Local Delinquency Prevention Program*	U.S. Department of Justice	At-risk youth, delinquent youth, juvenile offenders, gang members, and youth under age 22.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP)	This program was repealed by P.L. 107-273 but funding continues to be appropriated.	To develop, implement, and pilot test mentoring strategies and/or programs targeted for at-risk youth.	FY2006: $10 million FY2007: $10 million FY2008: $70 million FY2009: $70 million FY2010: $100 million FY2011: $83 million FY2012: $78 million FY2013: $84 million FY2014: $89 million FY2015: $90 million FY2016: $90 million FY2017: $80 million	U.S. Department of Justice	Delinquent youth and other at-risk youth.
Social Services					
Foster Care	Social Security Act of 1935 (Sections 471 and 472), as amended 42 U.S.C. §§671, 672	To assist states in providing foster care for eligible children, including maintenance payments (i.e., room and board) and case planning and management for children and youth in out-of-home placements.	FY2006: $4.7 billion FY2007: $4.8 billion FY2008: $4.6 billion FY2009: $4.7 billion FY2010: $4.7 billion FY2011: $4.5 billion FY2012: $4.3 billion FY2013: $4.3 billion FY2014: $4.3 billion FY2015: $4.6 billion FY2016: $4.8 billion FY2017: $5.1 billion *(This is based on the most current information on program obligations)*	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Federal support available for children and youth who are removed from low-income families (meeting specific criteria) for their own protection. However, federal protections related to case planning and management are available to all children/youth who are in foster care.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Chafee Foster Care Independence Program	Social Security Act of 1935 (Section 477), as amended 42 U.S.C. §677	To assist states and localities in establishing and carrying out programs designed to assist eligible foster youth in making the transition to self-sufficiency.	FY2006: $140 million FY2007: $140 million FY2008: $140 million FY2009: $140 million FY2010: $140 million FY2011: $140 million FY2012: $140 million FY2013: $140 million FY2014: $140 million FY2015: $140 million FY2016: $140 million FY2017: $140 million	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Children and youth who are expected to age out of foster care, those who aged out of foster care, and those who left foster care for adoption or guardianship at age 16 or older.
Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Education and Training Vouchers	Social Security Act of 1935, (Section 477), as amended 42 U.S.C. §677	To make education and training vouchers available for eligible youth to attend institutions.	FY2006: $46 million FY2007: $46 million FY2008: $45 million FY2009: $45 million FY2010: $45 million FY2011: $45 million FY2012: $45 million FY2013: $45 million FY2014: $43 million FY2015: $43 million FY2016: $43 million FY2017: $43 million	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Children and youth who are expected to age out of foster care, those who aged out of foster care, and those who left foster care for adoption or guardianship at age 16 or older.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Court Appointed Special Advocates	Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990, as amended 42 U.S.C. §13011-13014	To ensure every victim of child abuse and neglect receives the services of a court appointed advocate.	FY2006: $12 million FY2007: $12 million FY2008: $13 million FY2009: $15 million FY2010: $15 million FY2011: $12 million FY2012: $5 million FY2013: $6 million FY2014: $6 million FY2015: $6 million FY2016: $9 million FY2017: $9 million	U.S. Department of Justice	Abused and neglected children and youth.
Children's Advocacy Centers	Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990, as amended 42 U.S.C. §13001-13004	To establish advocacy centers to coordinate multi-disciplinary responses to child abuse and to provide training and technical assistance to professionals involved in investigating and prosecuting child abuse, and to support the development of Children's Advocacy Centers on multi-disciplinary teams.	FY2006: $15 million FY2007: $15 million FY2008: $16 million FY2009: $20 million FY2010: $23 million FY2011: $19 million FY2012: $18 million FY2013: $18 million FY2014: $18 million FY2015: $19 million FY2016: $20 million FY2017: $21 million	U.S. Department of Justice	Abused and neglected youth.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Basic Center Program (BCP)	Runaway and Homeless Youth Act of 1974, as amended 42 U.S.C.§5711-5713 et seq.	To establish or strengthen locally controlled community-based programs outside of the law enforcement, child welfare, mental health, and juvenile justice systems that address the immediate needs of runaway and homeless youth and their families.	FY2006: $48 million FY2007: $48 million FY2008: $53 million FY2009: $53 million FY2010: $54 million FY2011: $54 million FY2012: $54 million FY2013: $54 million FY2014: $53 million FY2015: $53 million FY2016: $54 million FY2017: $54 million	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Runaway and homeless youth and their families.
Transitional Living Program for Older Homeless Youth (TLP)	Runaway and Homeless Youth Act of 1974, as amended 42 U.S.C. §5714 et seq.	To establish and operate transitional living projects for homeless youth, including pregnant and parenting youth.	FY2006: $40 million FY2007: $40 million FY2008: $43 million FY2009: $44 million FY2010: $44 million FY2011: $44 million FY2012: $44 million FY2013: $44 million FY2014: $44 million FY2015: $44 million FY2016: $48 million FY2017: $48 million	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Runaway and homeless youth ages 16-21.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Street Outreach Program	Runaway and Homeless Youth Act of 1974, as amended 42 U.S.C. §5714 et seq.	To provide grants to nonprofit agencies to provide street-based services to runaway, homeless, and street youth, who have been subjected to, or are at risk of being subjected to sexual abuse, prostitution, or sexual exploitation.	FY2006: $15 million FY2007: $15 million FY2008: $17 million FY2009: $17 million FY2010: $18 million FY2011: $18 million FY2012: $18 million FY2013: $18 million FY2014: $17 million FY2015: $17 million FY2016: $17 million FY2017: $17 million	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Runaway and homeless youth who live on or frequent the streets.
Public Health					
Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act Youth Suicide Prevention Program	Public Health Service Act of 1974, as amended 42 U.S.C. §§290bb-36 et seq., 290bb-36b	To provide grants to states and college campuses for youth suicide prevention activities.	FY2006: $23 million FY2007: $23 million FY2008: $34 million FY2009: $35 million FY2010: $35 million FY2011: $42 million FY2012: $43 million FY2013: $41 million FY2014: $42 million FY2015: $42 million FY2016: $42 million FY2017: $42 million	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Youth under age 25 who are college students.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Children's Mental Health Services Program	Public Health Service Act of 1974, as amended 42 U.S.C. §290ff	To provide community-based systems of care for children and adolescents with a serious emotional disturbance and their families.	FY2006: $104 million FY2007: $104 million FY2008: $102 million FY2009: $108 million FY2010: $121 million FY2011: $118 million FY2012: $117 million FY2013: $111 million FY2014: $117 million FY2015: $117 million FY2016: $119 million FY2017: $119 million	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Youth under age 22 with a serious emotional disturbance.
National Child Traumatic Stress Network	Public Health Services Act of 1974, as amended 42 U.S.C. §290hh-1	To create a national network that develops, promotes, and disseminates information related to a wide variety of traumatic events.	FY2006: $29 million FY2007: $29 million FY2008: $33 million FY2009: $38 million FY2010: $41 million FY2011: $41 million FY2012: $46 million FY2013: $43 million FY2014: $46 million FY2015: $46 million FY2016: $47 million FY2017: $49 million	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Children and youth who have experienced traumatic events.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Strategic Prevention Framework State Infrastructure Grant	Public Health Service Act of 1974, as amended 42 U.S.C. 290bb-22	To provide funding to states for infrastructure and services that implement a five-step strategy for preventing substance and alcohol abuse among youth.	FY2006: $106 million FY2007: $105 million FY2008: $103 million FY2009: $110 million FY2010: $112 million FY2011: $110 million FY2012: $110 million FY2013: $108 million FY2014: $109 million FY2015: $109 million FY2016: $119 million FY2017: $119 million	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Youth at risk of using and abusing drugs.
Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act (STOP Act)	Public Health Service Act of 1974, as amended 42 U.S.C. 290bb-25b	To provide effective substance treatment and reduce delinquent activity.	FY2007: $840,000 FY2008: $5 million FY2009: $7 million FY2010: $7 million FY2011: $7 million FY2012: $7 million FY2013: $7 million FY2014: $7 million FY2015: $7 million FY2016: $7 million FY2017: $7 million	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Youth using alcohol.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Abstinence Education Program	Social Security Act of 1935 (Section 510), as amended 42 U.S.C. §710	To provide formula grant funding for states to provide abstinence education and, at the option of the state, where appropriate, mentoring, counseling, and adult supervision to promote abstinence from sexual activity.	FY2006: $50 million FY2007: $50 million FY2008: $50 million FY2009: $38 million FY2010: $50 million FY2011: $50 million FY2012: $50 million FY2013: $48 million FY2014: $46 million FY2015: $50 million FY2016: $75 million FY2017: $75 million *(These funds are pre-appropriated)*	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Youth likely to bear children outside of marriage.
Abstinence Education Program	Omnibus Appropriations Act, 2013 (P.L. 113-6)	To provide competitive grants to public or private entities for abstinence education as defined by 42 U.S.C. §710.	FY2006: $0 FY2007: $0 FY2008: $0 FY2009: $0 FY2010: $0 FY2011: $0 FY2012: $5 million FY2013: $5 million FY2014: $5 million FY2015: $5 million FY2016: $10 million	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Youth likely to bear children outside of marriage.
Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program (TPP) (replaced the Community-Based Abstinence Education program in FY2010)	Appropriation Laws: P.L. 112-74, P.L. 113-6, P.L. 113-76, P.L. 113-164/P.L. 113-235	To provide competitive project grants and contracts to public and private entities for medically accurate and age appropriate programs that reduce teen pregnancy.	FY2010: $110 million FY2011: $105 million FY2012: $105 million FY2013: $98 million FY2014: $101 million FY2015: $101 million FY2016: $101 million FY2017: $101 million	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Youth ages 12 to 18.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP)	The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (P.L. 111-148) 42 U.S.C. §713	To provide formula grant funding for states to educate youth on both abstinence and contraception for the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS.	FY2010: $75 million FY2011: $75 million FY2012: $75 million FY2013: $71 million FY2014: $70 million FY2015: $75 million FY2016: $75 million FY2017: $75 million	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Youth under the age of 21.
National and Community Service					
AmeriCorps State and National	National Community Service Act, as amended 42 U.S.C. §12571 et seq., 42 U.S.C. §12061 et seq.	To address the educational, public safety, human, or environmental needs through services that provide a direct benefit to the community.	FY2006: $265 million FY2007: $265 million FY2008: $257 million FY2009: $271 million (plus $89 million under P.L. 111-5) FY2010: $373 million FY2011: $349 million FY2012: $344 million FY2013: $326 million FY2014: $335 million FY2015: $335 million FY2016: $386 million FY2017: $386 million	Corporation for National and Community Service	Youth up to age 25 with exceptional or special needs, or who are economically disadvantaged and for whom one or more of the following apply: (1) out-of-school, including out-of-school youth who are unemployed; (2) in or aging out of foster care; (3) limited English proficiency; (4) homeless or have run away from home; (5) at-risk of leaving school without a diploma; and (6) former juvenile offenders or at risk of delinquency.

Program	Authorizing Legislation and U.S. Code Citation	Objective(s) of Program	FY2006-FY2017 Appropriations (including funding under the Recovery Act, P.L. 111-5)	Agency with Jurisdiction	Target At-Risk Youth Population
AmeriCorps VISTA	Domestic Volunteer Service Act, as amended 42 U.S.C. §4951, 42 U.S.C. §12061 et seq.	To bring low-income individuals and communities out of poverty through programs in community organizations and public agencies.	FY2006: $95 million FY2007: $95 million FY2008: $94 million FY2009: $96 million (plus $65 million under P.L. 111-5) FY2010: $99 million FY2011: $99 million FY2012: $95 million FY2013: $90 million FY2014: $92 million FY2015: $92 million FY2016: $92 million FY2017: $92 million	Corporation for National and Community Service	Youth up to age 25 with exceptional or special needs, or who are economically disadvantaged and for whom one or more of the following apply: (1) out-of-school, including out-of-school youth who are unemployed; (2) in or aging out of foster care; (3) limited English proficiency; (4) homeless or have run away from home; (5) at-risk to leave school without a diploma; and (6) former juvenile offenders or at risk of delinquency.
AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps	National Community Service Act, as amended 42 U.S.C. §12611 et seq., 42 U.S.C. §12061 et seq.	To address the educational, public safety, environmental, human needs, and disaster relief through services that provide a direct benefit to the community.	FY2006: $37 million FY2007: $27 million FY2008: $24 million FY2009: $28 million FY2010: $29 million FY2011: $29 million FY2012: $32 million FY2013: $30 million FY2014: $30 million FY2015: $30 million FY2016: $30 million FY2017: $30 million	Corporation for National and Community Service	Youth up to age 25 with exceptional or special needs, or who are economically disadvantaged and for whom one or more of the following apply: (1) out-of-school, including out-of-school youth who are unemployed; (2) in or aging out of foster care; (3) limited English proficiency; (4) homeless or have run away from home; (5) at risk of leaving school without a diploma; and (6) former juvenile offenders or at risk of delinquency.

Senior Corps Foster Grandparents	Domestic Volunteer Service Act, as amended 42 U.S.C. §5011 et seq.	To provide service to children with special or exceptional needs.	FY2006: $111 million FY2007: $111 million FY2008: $109 million FY2009: $109 million FY2010: $111 million FY2011: $111 million FY2012: $111 million FY2013: $105 million FY2014: $108 million FY2015: $108 million FY2016: $108 million FY2017: $108 million	Corporation for National and Community Service	Youth up to age 25 with exceptional or special needs, or who are economically disadvantaged and for whom one or more of the following apply: (1) out-of-school, including out-of-school youth who are unemployed; (2) in or aging out of foster care; (3) limited English proficiency; (4) homeless or have run away from home; (5) at risk of leaving school without a diploma; and (6) former juvenile offenders or at risk of delinquency.
Senior Corps RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program)	Domestic Volunteer Service Act, as amended 42 U.S.C. §5001	To involve seniors in community service projects that address the educational, public safety, human, or environmental needs in ways that benefit both the senior and community.	FY2006: $60 million FY2007: $60 million FY2008: $59 million FY2009: $59 million FY2010: $63 million FY2011: $50 million FY2012: $50 million FY2013: $48 million FY2014: $49 million FY2015: $49 million FY2016: $49 million FY2017: $49 million	Corporation for National and Community Service	Youth up to age 25 with exceptional or special needs, or who are economically disadvantaged and for whom one or more of the following apply: (1) out-of-school, including out-of-school youth who are unemployed; (2) in or aging out of foster care; (3) limited English proficiency; (4) homeless or have run away from home; (5) at risk of leaving school without a diploma; and (6) former juvenile offenders or at risk of delinquency.

Source: Table prepared by the Congressional Research Service.

Author Information

Adrienne L. Fernandes-Alcantara
Specialist in Social Policy

Acknowledgments

Clarissa Gregory, Sarah Caldwell, and Erin Bagalman assisted with updates to Table A-1 and selected other parts of the report.

Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. It operates solely at the behest of and under the direction of Congress. Information in a CRS Report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to Members of Congress in connection with CRS's institutional role. CRS Reports, as a work of the United States Government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS Report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS Report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain the permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.