

**Middlesex County Workforce Investment Board**

**Youth Plan Update**

**June 2003**

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The Middlesex County Workforce Investment Board recognizes the urgency of serving the TANF, DYFS, and JJC youth populations. These youth represent an at-risk population. Services to these youth may not currently include employability skills, paid/non-paid work experience, occupational skills training, leadership development opportunities, or summer employment opportunities. We believe that, if given these types of services, these youth will gain the knowledge and opportunity to be a vital part of our workforce in the future.

### **Current Conditions**

All Program Year '02 funds have been fully obligated at this time; there will be no "carry-over" money from Program Year '02 to Program Year '03. The Middlesex County Employment & Training Department has extended its Program Year '02 contracts with youth providers through September 30, 2003, until the final selection of service providers is made for Program Year '03. This extension will provide a continuation of services to the youth currently enrolled in those programs.

The county is currently soliciting proposals for youth programs for the period of October 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004. This will place a significant constraint on any efforts to expand either the range of services, or the number of youth to be served, in Program Year '03. Our responsibility to provide continuing support for those currently enrolled will further inhibit new enrollments.

It should be noted that TANF Youth might not necessarily meet the eligibility criteria under WIA. The establishment of an additional barrier or barriers may be required to serve them through any available WIA dollars. The barrier could potentially include being a member of the TANF population and/or being enrolled in the free lunch program. Priority can be given to target groups for referrals and enrollments to the Program Year '03 Youth Programs, while still taking into account the prospective enrollee's suitability and eligibility. This possibility will be dictated by any potential referrals to youth service providers who are not full to capacity within 60 days of contract execution, for Program Year '03.

### **Prepare to Provide Additional Services and to Accommodate Additional Populations**

The chart below reflects that there are a potential 412 youth who may be in need of Employment and Training services in Middlesex County. It is not yet discernible whether there is an overlap between the TANF and DYFS youth population. However, the assumption is that overlap probably does exist. We have cross-matched the list provided by the Middlesex County Board of Social Services and have ascertained that we are already serving a few of the TANF youth within our current WIA programs.

#### **Analysis of TANF/DYFS/JJC youth that may need services in Middlesex County:**

<b>Program</b>	<b>In-School (14 – 18)</b>	<b>Out-of-School (18-21)</b>
<b>TANF</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>Data not available</b>
<b>DYFS (child-only)</b>	<b>Data not available</b>	<b>129 (16 – 20)</b>
<b>JJC</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>Data not available</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>129</b>

#### **Future Services**

Historically, we have had more proposals submitted than funding available. Priority is given to those programs which we evaluate as more promising. Until funding is defined and corresponding eligibility guidelines have been established, we will not be able to include services to TANF/DYFS/JJC youth nor submit a plan for future services. Should funding be available, a more refined plan will be developed in conjunction with the NJ Department of Labor, Department of Human Services, Family Development, Division of Youth & Family Services, Middlesex County WIB/YIC, and Community Based Organizations.