



Youth Workforce Readiness Act of 2021

Vision Statement: Investing in a skilled and robust workforce is essential to the future of America's local economies. The Youth Workforce Readiness Act will build knowledge, skills and learning experiences that will help youth prepare for the 21st century workforce and boost their economic potential over a lifetime. Out-of-school time programs build essential skills that are in demand by employers and are transferrable across all industries.

Background

Communities across America face significant challenges ensuring youth are adequately prepared to enter the workforce. U.S. employers say the inability to find qualified workers is their biggest obstacle to growth. In 2020, nearly **three in 10 young people** were neither working nor in school.¹ **More than 75% of youth express concerns** about whether they have the **skills necessary to secure a job.**²

Bill Summary

The Youth Workforce Readiness Act establishes a competitive grant through the Department of Labor's Employment & Training Administration for eligible national, youth-serving out-of-school time organizations to support local affiliates providing programs focused on four overarching pillars that support youth workforce readiness:

- **Essential-Skill Development:** supporting social emotional development through every developmental stage in both formal and informal learning experiences.
- **Career Exposure:** targeted programming through community business partnerships, providing discovery opportunities, career assessments, planning, and insights into both traditional and non-traditional career fields.
- **Employability & Certification:** opportunities including: interviewing, resume writing, financial literacy and certifications in specific areas that will help youth land their first job.
- **Work-Based Learning:** opportunities to apply skills in real-life, hands-on work experiences through local community business partnerships.

Additionally, the legislation re-establishes Youth Councils to work in coordination with local workforce boards providing expertise in youth policy.



Every dollar invested in Boys & Girls Clubs **returns \$9.60** in current and future earnings and cost-savings to their communities.

¹ Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/07/29/amid-coronavirus-outbreak-nearly-three-in-ten-young-people-are-neither-working-nor-in-school/>

² Measure of America. "Youth Disconnection." www.measureofamerica.org/disconnected-youth. Accessed 13 June 2019.

Club Reach & Impact

Boys & Girls Clubs of America has the reach, scale and experience to prepare today's youth for success in tomorrow's workforce by teaching essential skills including good judgment/decision-making, communications and collaboration which employers named as the most in-demand competencies in the labor market.

Boys & Girls Clubs Pillars of Youth Workforce Readiness



According to the Boys & Girls Clubs of America **2020 National Outcomes Report**:

76% of Club teens are on track to graduate on time.

52% of 12th grade Club members express interest in a STEM career compared to 27% of 12th graders nationally.

79% of Club youth report having strong problem-solving skills.

Success Stories

Boys & Girls Clubs of King County, Washington operates a career development program called **YouthForce**, which connects local companies with talented youth through on-the-job experiences that are supported by individualized training and coaching through the Club. In 2017, YouthForce **served over 1,000 youth** through events and workshops focused on career and post-high school planning, while also providing over **150 youth** with internship opportunities. Local companies providing these internship opportunities included: Seattle Seahawks, Sounders FC, Walmart, Alaska Airlines, Acumatica and Amazon. In 2016, of the 112 who had internships, **66** obtained post internship employment or pursued additional education.

The **Boys & Girls Club of Greater Memphis**, Tennessee offers Club teens culinary training via the Technical Training Center's Gardens to Groceries program, where trainees grow vegetables and prepare buffets and formal meals for the community in a commercial-grade kitchen. Teens can also learn basic car repair from the automotive track and how to drive a forklift from the logistics track. They receive training in money management, customer service and personal goal-setting, as well. Each year, the Technical Training Center instructs approximately **350 participants** and has a **100% job or college placement rate**.

An innovative food truck program at the **Boys & Girls Club of Collier County** in Florida teaches teens much more than how to flip a burger. It's preparing them for the workplace—and for life. The truck teaches teens kitchen skills as they prep and serve food, communication skills as they interact with customers and financial skills as they earn a paycheck and work the cash register. The program also partners with local businesses for events to give youth additional connections and to learn more about the business world.

Over 40 teens have completed the Food Truck Program.



For any questions please contact Sage Learn, National Director, Government Relations at SLearn@BGCA.org