

6. School to Career Programs

- a. *Job Corps*: This is the nation's largest and most comprehensive residential education and job training program for at-risk youth, ages 16 through 24. Since 1964, the program has provided more than 1.7 million disadvantaged young people with integrated academic, vocational, and social skills training for gaining independence and getting quality, long-term jobs or furthering their education. It is a public-private partnership, administered by the U.S. Department of Labor. Benefits are reported as accruing for the disadvantaged youth who attend the program, for communities and schools where centers are located, and for employers who hire the students. More than 75% of those who enroll become employed, obtain further training, or join the military. Students who stay in the program to completion increase their chances for getting better jobs and higher wages.

For more information, contact:

Job Corps: 1-800-733-JOBS (1-800-733-5627), or visit their website at www.jobcorps.org

- b. *Career Education*: This program reports that students with low motivation to attend school improve in school attendance and retention. Vocational students are more likely to complete the vocational program they have selected, and all else being equal, the more vocational classes students took, the less likely they were to drop out of school.

For more information, see:

Mertens, D.M., Seitz, P., and Cox, S. (1982). *Vocational education and the high school dropout*. Columbus: The National Center for Research in Vocational Education, The Ohio State University, ED 228397.

Miller, J.V., and Imel, S. "Some Current Issues in Adult, Career, and Vocational Education." In: *Trends and Issues in Education*, 1986, edited by E. Flaxman. Washington, DC: Council of ERIC Directors, Educational Resources Information Center, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, 1987. ED 281 897.

Naylor, M. (1987). Reducing the Dropout Rate through Career and Vocational Education. Overview. *ERIC Digest* ED 282094.

Weber, J.M. (1986). *The Role of Vocational Education in Decreasing the Dropout Rate*. Columbus: The National Center for Research in Vocational Education, The Ohio State University. ED 264 444.

- c. *Cognitive Career Interventions*: Studies evaluating cognitive career interventions for youth with learning disabilities report counseling group interventions produced significant increases in self-awareness and career awareness, improved skills in employment writing and interviewing, and advanced strategies in problem solving and anger management.

For more information, see:

Biller, E.F. (1987). *Career Decision Making for Adolescents and Young Adults with Learning Disabilities: Theory, Research and Practice*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

Hutchinson, N.L. (1995). Career Counseling of Youth with Learning Disabilities. *ERIC Digest*: ED 400470

Hutchinson, N.L., Freeman, J.G., & Fisher, C. (1993). "A Two-Year Cohort Study: Career Development for Youth with Learning Disabilities." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta, GA.

- d. *Jobs for Ohio's Graduates (JOG)*: JOG's mission is to identify students at greatest risk of dropping out of school and provide them with a support system that not only keeps them in school, but also helps them adjust to the transition from school to work after graduation. Launched in 1986-87, it reports achieving a graduation rate in excess of 91 percent. More than 80 percent of students identified as at-risk when they entered were on the job, in the military, or in post-secondary education 12 months following graduation. Eighty percent of those working were in full-time placement. Cost were less than \$1,000 per student, \$750 of which came from State funds; the rest was from private and federal sources.

For more information, see:

Jobs for Ohio's Graduates, 65 South Front Street Room 912, Columbus, OH 43215-4183. 614-466-5718

Keeping Young People in School: Community Programs That Work. By Sharon Cantelon and Donni LeBoeuf. Published in *OJJDP Bulletin*, June 1997. <http://www.ncjrs.org/txtfiles/dropout.txt>

- e. *Mat-Su Alternative School (MSAS)*: This program reports working closely with businesses, government, and nonprofit agencies to provide at-risk youth with the academic and vocational skills needed to make the successful transition from school to work, including the military. (Mat-Su is a Tier I school for acceptance of graduates into the military.) Graduates have gone on to colleges and vocational schools; some are reported as having earned places on the dean's list at the University of Alaska. The program networks with 150 business owners to provide job sites. Students have 100% job placement and continue employment after graduation.

For more information, contact:

Mat-Su Alternative School, Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District, 1775 West Parks Highway, Wasilla, AK 99654. 907-373-7775

- f. *Stay-in-School*: This is a Canadian government initiative to encourage youngsters to finish high school and acquire the skills needed for the jobs of tomorrow. The initiative cites increases in student retention, and student reported improvement in self-confidence, work habits, life and academic skills, and expressed a desire to continue with and succeed in school. In-school coordinators reported that 84% of students involved in dropout interventions in 1992-93 completed their year. Of these, it is estimated that less than 25% would have finished the year. Fifty percent of school contacts noted enhanced academic performance in over half of the participants. Improved life skills were reported by 70% of respondents. Almost all contacts stated the initiative was cost-effective.

For more information, see:

Hackett, H. & Baron, D. (1995). Canadian Action on Early School Leaving: A Description of the National Stay-in-School Initiative. *ERIC Digest*. ED399481.

Renihan, F., Buller, E., Desharnais, W., Enns, R., Laferriere, T., & Therrien, L. (1994). "Taking Stock: An Assessment of The National Stay-In-School Initiative." Hull, PQ: Youth Affairs Branch, Human Resources Development Canada.