

Youthbuild Program Manual

Written by YouthBuild USA under contract with
the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Preface

Welcome to Youthbuild! By picking up this *Program Manual*, you are taking a step toward rebuilding a community while rebuilding the lives of our nation's youth. This manual was designed to give you the basic tools with which to get started.

The *Youthbuild Program Manual* has been developed by YouthBuild USA under contract with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to assist individuals and organizations interested in establishing a Youthbuild program in their community. It represents the compilation and distillation of over 15 years of Youthbuild experience in the field. Input from Youthbuild program graduates and staff, as well as a variety of experts in the fields of youth and community development, has brought together the best practices we have to offer to date.

This *Program Manual* is being followed by a series of handbooks that will address specific aspects of the Youthbuild program in more depth. Additional publications and materials are also available from YouthBuild USA. We encourage you to contact YouthBuild USA or HUD for more information and assistance, or to get additional copies of this manual.

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YouthBuild USA
58 Day Street
Somerville, MA 02144
(617) 623-9900

U.S. Dept of Housing and Urban Development
Youthbuild Program
Office of Community Planning and Development
451 7th St. SW Room 7140
Washington, DC 20410-7000
(202) 708-2035

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Chapter One

Background and Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the basic concepts of Youthbuild and to provide a brief historical background to the Youthbuild program.

What Is Youthbuild?

Youthbuild is a comprehensive youth and community development program. Youthbuild simultaneously addresses several core issues facing low-income communities: education, housing, jobs, and leadership development. It uniquely addresses the status of unemployed young men and women who have dropped out of school and have no apparent path to a productive future. It allows them to simultaneously serve their communities and build their own future.

Policymakers and practitioners in the field of youth development, before they become familiar with Youthbuild, often ask how the Youthbuild program is different from other youth-oriented programs.

The Youthbuild program has been carefully designed by community activists with the input of young people in several neighborhoods over 14 years. Young people of many racial and ethnic groups have participated and benefited. It is appealing to groups in rural as well as urban neighborhoods.

Because it is comprehensive in its approach, the Youthbuild program is a number of things at once.

- It is a **community service program**, in which young people get to build housing for homeless and other low-income people, providing the most valuable and visible commodity for their hard-pressed communities: affordable housing.
- It is an **alternative school**, in which participants spend 50 percent of their program time pursuing academic goals, which may include vocational and remedial education, study toward a high school diploma or general equivalency diploma, and preparation for higher education.
- It is a **job training and pre-apprenticeship program**, in which young people receive on-site training in construction skills during 50 percent of their time in the program from qualified instructors who are often union journeymen, and then get placed in construction-related jobs or apprenticeships.
- It is a **leadership development program**, in which young people share in the governance of their own program and participate actively in community affairs, learning the values and the lifelong commitment needed by effective and ethical community leaders.

- It is a **youth development program**, in which young people participate in personal counseling, peer support groups, and life-planning processes that assist them in healing from past hurts, overcoming negative habits and attitudes, and pursuing achievable goals that will establish a productive life, sustaining themselves and their immediate families.
- It is a **long-term mini-community**, in which young people make new friends committed to a positive lifestyle, may pursue cultural and recreational activities together, and can continue to participate through follow-up services and a graduates program.
- It is a **community development program**, in which community organizations obtain the resources to tackle several key community issues at once, strengthening their capacity to build and manage housing for their residents, educate and inspire their youth, create leadership for the future, and generally take responsibility for their neighborhoods.

It is not accurate to define Youthbuild as any of its particular parts. It must be understood as a comprehensive whole. It fits in many places, and overlaps with everything else related to tackling poverty and engaging low-income young people as productive members and potential leaders of a democratic society.

Program Components

Any HUD-funded Youthbuild program must contain three basic components:

- 1) educational and job training services;
- 2) leadership training, counseling, and other support activities;
- 3) on-site training through actual housing rehabilitation or construction work.

To adequately support and implement these program components and ensure the best possible program outcomes, it is recommended that the following program elements also be in place:

- a participant outreach, recruitment, and selection plan;
- job and college placement services;
- post-graduation follow-up;
- accounting, reporting, and program evaluation systems.

The chapters in this manual go into detail on each of these program components and elements. They are briefly described here.

- 1) **Educational and job training services** should be designed to meet the basic educational needs of trainees. Examples include basic skills instruction, remedial education, bilingual education for persons with limited English proficiency, secondary education, and courses designed to lead to the attainment of a high school diploma or a General Equivalency Diploma (GED). It can also include assistance in attaining post-secondary education and financial aid.

For many students, basic literacy must precede preparation for a diploma or the GED exam. Cultural history, current events, social studies, and leadership skills are also

generally part of the academic curriculum. Vocational education, including classroom training in construction terminology and concepts, is generally part of the educational services provided in Youthbuild programs. “World of work” training focuses on job-seeking skills and general preparation for handling oneself maturely in the world of work.

- 2) **Leadership training** is designed to develop employment and leadership skills. Examples of such activities include participation on a program policy committee, community task force, youth council, other basic involvement in policy and decision making, work in the community, peer counseling and tutoring.
- 3) **Counseling and other support services** should help trainees handle critical life needs that might otherwise interfere with personal achievement. Direct personal counseling from program staff should be available for all trainees. Individual and peer counseling can help trainees to develop successful habits and values related to life goals, use of money, personal relationships, drug abuse, and the like. Linking young people to other community resources as appropriate to assist with problems related to health, substance abuse, housing, child care, family, or legal emergencies may be a part of the counseling process.
- 4) **On-site training** on a closely supervised construction site, with high standards of teamwork and productivity, must comprise 50 percent of the training program. Successful Youthbuild programs strive for an on-site ratio of no more than seven young people per supervisor. On-site training must focus on rehabilitation or new construction of housing for homeless, low-income or very-low-income families.
- 5) **Outreach, recruitment, and selection** should be designed to attract youth between the ages of 16 and 24, inclusive, at the time of enrollment. At least 75 percent of trainees must be very-low-income (that is, below 50 percent of median income); at least 75 percent must not have completed high school. All trainees must have educational needs that justify their participation in the program.
- 6) **Job placement** in unsubsidized jobs or post-secondary education is the key outcome of the Youthbuild program. Coordination with and integration into pre-apprentice and apprenticeship programs, whenever possible, are to be encouraged. Local programs may want to include other activities that meet the needs of their participants. Such special activities may include entrepreneurial training, courses in small business development, drivers’ training, and internships in other kinds of work environments.
- 7) **Post-graduation follow-up** counseling, support groups and education should be provided for young people after completion of their full-time enrollment in the program.
- 8) **Accounting, reporting, and program evaluation** should follow Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) for nonprofit and governmental organizations. Organizations should be prepared to meet the audit requirements of HUD, contained in OMB Circular A-133. Semiannual reports to HUD should be supported by an internal reporting system that monitors and evaluates retention, attendance, construction progress, construction skill development, leadership development, and job placement and retention.

Program Qualities

Looking at basic components is one way to get an overview of the Youthbuild program. Another, equally valuable, way is to assess the qualities that are most likely to create a meaningful, integrated, and successful program. Many years of experience have demonstrated that, to succeed to the maximum extent, a program must work to reverse the past negative experiences of trainees.

The following positive qualities have proven to create a particularly successful program environment, if incorporated into all aspects of a Youthbuild program:

- profound respect for the intelligence of participants;
- power for them over their immediate environment;
- protection, as much as possible, from disaster, or at least the support necessary to survive it;
- meaningful and important work;
- real, patient caring for their development;
- actual teaching of skills;
- a firm and loving challenge to stop self-destructive behavior and change negative attitudes;
- family-like support and appreciation from peers and adults;
- high standards and expectations;
- inspiring and caring role models;
- understanding of each participant's proud and unique cultural background;
- heightened awareness of the present day world and their important place in it;
- a path to future opportunity;
- opportunities for social activities;
- real concern and action from the agency about changing the conditions that have affected them and the people they love.

The rest of this manual is an elaboration of the eight program components, in a way that we hope reflects these positive program qualities.

Checklist of Essential Elements

Youthbuild programs have found that there is a set of factors that together can help ensure program success. While these elements are not specifically required by HUD, an overview of these factors may be helpful as a checklist for Youthbuild managers, particularly when planning and starting up a new Youthbuild project.

- **Absolute agency commitment** to the success of the project. Involvement of the highest level of management in projecting a vision and reaching objectives. Commitment of executive director and the board of directors.

- A **full-time director** of the Youthbuild program who has the authority to hire and fire all program staff and who is capable of managing the complexity of this program, unifying a diverse staff, and inspiring the confidence of the young people.
- **Clear lines of accountability** with at least three very competent full-time managers: one responsible for the construction, including on-site training and supervision; another for the academic education, counseling, job development, and leadership training activities; and a third person in charge overall.
- **Systematic mechanisms for staff supervision, coordination, accountability, and building staff cohesion.** Clear job descriptions and expectations of staff. Decent salaries. Weekly staff meetings, weekly supervisory meetings, and coordinating meetings between the site and the classroom components. Time set aside for discussion and training on program philosophy and goals. Procedures for firing staff who do not produce or who cannot relate to the young people. If an agency does not have a mechanism for removing a weak staff member, the program becomes correspondingly weak. Weekly meetings of frontline staff specifically to review the progress of and coordinate services to each trainee.
- Recruitment of a large pool of eligible young people and **selection of the most serious** from among them. Since considerable resources are being directed to helping the trainees, it is reasonable for you to select people who are most likely to show up every day.
- A **construction schedule** carefully worked out, including cash flow projections, which the project can measure itself against at all times.
- A system of **monitoring retention, attendance, and construction progress**, accompanied by rapid intervention when weaknesses appear. The project director and executive director should have up-to-date objective information about enrollment, attendance, and construction progress at their fingertips. This data will reflect the project's success or difficulties. Difficulties should trigger corrective action.
- A system of **regular youth involvement in decision making.** Responsiveness of the administration to problems raised and proposals offered by young people through a youth policy committee.
- All **program components tailored to the young people.** Adults who care deeply about them, reaching out above and beyond the call of duty; good classroom teaching and relationships; good site supervision; sensitive and effective counseling; high standards for work performance and attendance, and quick response to deviations from the standards; a responsive administration.
- **Unity and morale-building activities** such as field trips, retreats, cultural events, sports, awards ceremonies, support groups, leadership opportunities, travel, exchanges with other programs.
- **Sound fiscal management**, including methods of paying vendors that prevent being taken advantage of; reports submitted on time to avoid cash flow problems; adequate controls.

Chapter Two

Getting Started

The purpose of this chapter is to assist organizations initiating a new Youthbuild project. It describes a broad range of considerations that should be taken into account during the planning and start-up phase.

Youthbuild usually comes to communities through the efforts of an individual or group of individuals who believe that the program can meet some important needs in their community. The individual who takes the lead is often working for an organization that is well positioned to become the local Youthbuild sponsor. This person may also be a volunteer or not directly associated with an organization that is appropriate to actually administer a Youthbuild program. In either case, during the initial organizing phase, this person can begin planning by

- building broad community support for the program, involving others who represent key sectors needed to secure program resources;
- identifying or creating the organizational entity or partnership that will implement the Youthbuild program; and
- securing resources and hiring a director or program organizer who will work through a planning period to put together program details and resources prior to start-up.

Organizational Structure

There are three basic organizational structures under which Youthbuild programs have been initiated. Each has its advantages and disadvantages. Since the structure may have already been determined before initiation of planning, keep in mind that even this can change. A strong, effective program can take place under any number of structures.

Free-Standing, Independent Youthbuild Program

This is a nonprofit corporation that has as its only focus the development and delivery of a Youthbuild program. It may be a spin-off from another private nonprofit or from a government agency initiative.

Advantages

- The organizational attention focuses exclusively on Youthbuild.
- A board of directors with fiscal and programmatic oversight can bring needed skills particular to the Youthbuild program.
- The governing body can represent a variety of constituencies needed to both inform and support the Youthbuild program over the long term.

- The Youthbuild director is the organization's executive director, reporting directly to the board. As a result, decision making is generally simplified.
- This may be the only alternative if it has been determined that no existing agency is appropriate or interested in sponsoring the Youthbuild program.

Disadvantages

- A new organization may have a more difficult time raising funds.
- An independent program may be perceived as competition for resources by better established youth, housing, or job training organizations.
- The program will have to build its own credibility, capacity, skills, and resources. This will take a serious commitment on the part of both staff and board, above and beyond the commitment needed simply to manage a good program.

Youthbuild Program Within a Larger Organization

Most HUD-funded Youthbuild programs fall into this category. They may be sponsored by a community-based nonprofit corporation, a governmental agency, or a larger private nonprofit organization. The majority of currently HUD-funded Youthbuild programs are situated within such organizations as public housing authorities, city agencies, private industry councils, neighborhood-based community development corporations, and county-wide community action agencies.

Advantages

- The creation of a Youthbuild program within a well-established organization gives the new program instant recognition and credibility.
- The larger organization brings its own resources to the table, which not only can jump-start a new Youthbuild program, but also can leverage additional new resources.

Disadvantages

- The credibility of the new Youthbuild program is only as strong as that of the sponsoring organization. Any concerns or issues, whether real or perceived, with the existing organization may be carried over to the Youthbuild program.
- In most cases, the Youthbuild director in this arrangement does not have full authority and programmatic control.
- Some larger organizations may seek Youthbuild funding to support their ongoing operations, without having a serious commitment to the program.

Collaborative Youthbuild Program

Many Youthbuild programs are started as partnerships, where two or more existing nonprofit or public organizations pool their resources and expertise. Because Youthbuild brings housing development, alternative education, and youth leadership development into a single program, it is not uncommon for organizations that specialize in each of these areas to become partners in order to establish a Youthbuild program in their community.

Advantages

- A collaboration brings together depth of experience in each program component.
- Each partner can bring resources or access to resources in their own specialized area: education, housing, and youth development.

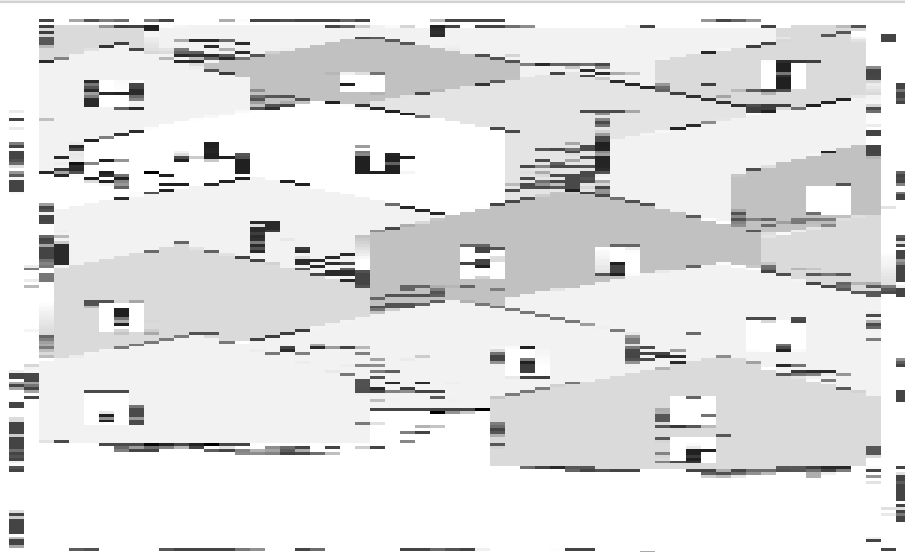
Disadvantages

- Partnerships are complicated even under the best circumstances. A written memo of agreement detailing relationships between and responsibilities of each party is essential.
- More than one locus of control can be problematic, particularly in dealing with young people who may have failed in past educational and work experiences in complicated organizational structures because they fell between the cracks.
- Lines of authority, expectations of and rules for trainees, and ongoing communication among all program staff can be difficult to establish and implement in a consistent manner.

Staffing

No matter what the organizational structure, experience suggests that a Youthbuild program needs a single point person in charge. When central decision-making authority is delegated to more than one individual, the program tends to lose its coherence. Many years of experience with a variety of structures has demonstrated this to be one of the single most important factors in determining program success.

Ideally, the Youthbuild program director is hired early in the planning process. HUD Youthbuild Planning Grants have enabled many organizations to fund this position for a full year—generally adequate time to raise funds and plan for the start-up of program operations. Sample job descriptions of a program director and other recommended program positions follow.



Executive Director or Project Director

Purpose

To plan, develop, and provide oversight of the Youthbuild program or organization. This includes raising program funds, developing strong community support and collaborative partnerships, maintaining effective linkages with other agencies, ensuring the quality and integration of all components, staff supervision, and working with the youth policy committee.

Responsibilities

- 1) Raise program funds from public and private funding sources; maintain relations with funders.
- 2) Build and maintain working relations with community organizations, city, state, county, and federal agencies.
- 3) Design program and organizational structure; plan and coordinate development of program components.
- 4) Recruit, hire, and supervise administrative and program staff .
- 5) Oversee the daily operation of the program including the development and monitoring of the budget.
- 6) Establish and work with the board of directors or advisory board on planning and policy issues.
- 7) Develop workable partnerships with CDCs, youth, and educational organizations where necessary.
- 8) Establish and involve the youth policy committee in program planning and operational decision making.
- 9) Develop and maintain an ongoing working relationship with the national Youthbuild office. Collect data for any ongoing evaluation effort.
- 10) Organize and coordinate work of broad-based coalition supportive of Youthbuild goals if necessary.

Qualifications

- 1) Training and experience equivalent to a master's degree in the social sciences, planning or management, preferably in youth services or affordable housing.
- 2) Strong leadership skills and at least three years' successful management or planning experience in a community-based setting.
- 3) Demonstrated skill in nonprofit fundraising and program development.

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- 4) Strong commitment to youth leadership and empowerment and ability to work sensitively and effectively with young people.
 - 5) Successful in creating collaborative relationships or coalitions.
 - 6) Experience negotiating and working with community organizations and public agencies.
 - 7) Excellent oral and verbal communication skills.

Salary and Benefits

Varies depending on location

Construction Manager

Purpose

To manage the renovation, rehabilitation, or construction of affordable housing units and the on-site construction training of young people, including the supervision of the construction trainers or crew leaders.

Responsibilities

Depending on the construction project and organizational relationships, these duties would be carried out either in cooperation with the general contractor, or if Youthbuild is the general contractor, then in cooperation with the architect and other members of the development team.

- 1) Develop detailed construction plan and schedule.
- 2) Coordinate and monitor the progress and quality of work.
- 3) Develop construction budget and monitor costs.
- 4) Manage bid process and coordinate subcontractors.
- 5) Order supplies and materials.
- 6) Define weekly work assignments and priorities for construction trainers and trainees.
- 7) Provide oversight of the on-site construction training by
 - ensuring that trainees get consistent and adequate skills training;
 - helping to set standards for appropriate behavior and ways to handle problems on the construction site; and
 - ensuring work-site safety, learning of safety procedures, and proper construction techniques.
- 8) Supervise and evaluate the construction trainers.
- 9) Identify private contractors or developers who might be interested in collaborative partnerships with Youthbuild and willing to work with young people as construction trainees.
- 10) Keep the director informed of the progress, problems, and needs of the on-site construction work and training.
- 11) Assist in the development of job opportunities for trainees in conjunction with other members of Youthbuild, and where appropriate, help trainees set career goals.
- 12) Negotiate with unions, contractors, or other individuals on construction related matters.
- 13) Assess potential construction sites.

- 14) Support the leadership development and counseling goals of the program through appropriate site activities and processes.

Qualifications

- 1) Contractor's license demonstrated experience in construction management.
- 2) Ability to work in an enthusiastic and encouraging way with young people who have not completed high school.
- 3) Understanding of the issues facing young people who have not completed high school.
- 4) Experience or interest in training young people in the building trades and a strong commitment to helping young people succeed in an innovative training program to reorient their lives and promote leadership skills.
- 5) Experience in supervising and training staff.
- 6) Ability to work as part of a team.
- 7) Strong communication skills.
- 8) Positive relationships with local trade unions.

Salary and Benefits

Varies depending on location.

Program Manager

Purpose

To manage daily program operations, including oversight of the trainee payroll and disciplinary systems with a focus on promoting trainees' total well-being, and oversight of the educational, counseling, leadership development, and graduate programs. To facilitate coordination and team work among staff.

Responsibilities

- 1) Organize and manage internal program operations:
 - monitor daily functioning of operations and
 - review attendance and payroll records.
- 2) Manage enforcement of the contract between Youthbuild and the trainees, including
 - regular meetings with all trainees on the status of their contract,
 - complete records related to disciplinary actions taken, and
 - decisions on disciplinary action, counseling or other interventions.
- 3) Develop systems to improve program operations, coordination, and collaboration among staff.
- 4) Manage educational and counseling program, and supervise teaching and counseling staff.
- 5) Assist in planning and organizing recognition events and awards ceremonies.
- 6) Report to executive director on program status, needs, and problems.
- 7) Participate in overall program planning and decision making as part of the management team.
- 8) Assist the youth policy committee (if program has one).
- 9) Insure that leadership development philosophy and programs are being carried out.
- 10) Plan and supervise the graduate program.

Qualifications

- 1) Master's degree in counseling, education, human services or related field, or equivalent experience.
- 2) Five years' experience in counseling or alternative education in community-based setting.
- 3) Strong management and supervisory skills.

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- 4) Respect for the ideas and intelligence of young adults.
 - 5) Strong commitment to helping young people succeed in an innovative training program, to reorient their lives, nurture their leadership skills, and enable them to make a difference in their community.
 - 6) Ability to establish rapport and relate sensitively to a multiracial and multi-cultural group of young people and staff.
 - 7) Excellent oral and written communication skills.
 - 8) Ability to build team skills.
 - 9) Excellent interpersonal skills with nonjudgmental approach and style.

Salary and Benefits

Varies depending on location

Construction Trainer

Purpose

To teach youth the skills necessary to do gut rehabilitation or construction on a house and to provide supportive guidance and encourage the development of their leadership skills.

Responsibilities

- 1) In the absence of the construction manager, the construction trainer will be responsible for the construction site, maintain production safety, and interface with subcontractors and inspectors.
- 2) Teach carpentry skills including demolition, rough framing, roofing, dry-wall, and finish carpentry to Youthbuild trainees.
- 3) Teach the proper use and handling of all hand tools, power tools, and equipment.
- 4) Be responsible for overall safety enforcement.
- 5) Inform superintendent about material needs for job site.
- 6) Complete job reports—daily, accident tool checklist, job attendance, change order and back charge documentation—and submit to site superintendent.
- 7) Oversee the monitoring of students' time on the construction site.
- 8) Keep track of all tools and equipment used on the job on a daily basis.
- 9) Assist in personal and vocational counseling and development of trainees leadership skills in conjunction with other Youthbuild staff.
- 10) Help teach vocational education.
- 11) Oversee the evaluation of student knowledge and skills in construction.
- 12) Participate in community service projects.
- 13) Attend case management meetings as required by supervisor.
- 14) Attend all meetings and retreats as required.

Counselor

Purpose

To provide ongoing counseling support, advocacy, and guidance to program members in order to help them deal with their personal, legal, and social service needs, especially those that interfere with their ability to meet the program requirements and their personal goals. To work closely with the entire staff to build the youths' leadership skills.

Responsibilities

- 1) Assess personal needs of Youthbuild participants and help find resources to meet their needs.
- 2) Provide individual and group counseling to Youthbuild participants.
- 3) Facilitate weekly rap sessions or support groups.
- 4) Advocate with human service, health, court, and criminal justice systems to resolve issues facing young people.
- 5) Make home visits, as appropriate, to assess needs and support young people.
- 6) Meet regularly with staff to develop and maintain a consistent approach to supporting and expanding the personal growth and leadership skill of young people.
- 7) Identify and expose youth to cultural, political, and social events or activities that may take place after work hours, and organize youth participation.
- 8) Keep service records of contacts with youth.
- 9) Take responsibility for particular leadership development activities as defined by the program manager.

Qualifications

- 1) At least four years' counseling, job development, or crisis intervention experience with young adults.
- 2) Bachelor's degree in counseling, psychology, or related field, or equivalent experience and training.
- 3) Strong commitment to helping young people succeed in an innovative training program to reorient their lives, nurture their leadership skills, and enable them to make a difference in their community.
- 4) Ability to establish rapport and relate sensitively to a multiracial and multicultural group of young people.

- 5) Knowledge of human service, health, court, and criminal justice systems' programs, regulations, and procedures, and alternative programs.
- 6) Excellent interpersonal and problem-solving skills; ability to relate to a wide range of issues, people, and institutions.
- 7) Understanding of the issues facing young people in the community where the program is located.
- 8) Excellent public speaking, listening, and written communication skills.
- 9) Sense of humor and nonjudgmental attitude.
- 10) Willingness to teach young people about service systems and decision-making processes.
- 11) Willingness to learn from young people.
- 12) Ability to work as part of a team.
- 13) Knowledge of American history and the history of the racial and ethnic groups participating in Youthbuild, along with an ability to apply that knowledge in work with young people.

Salary and Benefits

Varies depending on location

Counselor/Job Developer

Purpose

To provide ongoing counseling support, advocacy, and guidance to program members in order to help them deal with their personal, legal, and social service needs, especially those that interfere with their ability to meet the program requirements; to help them determine their job goals, improve their job search skills, and identify local job opportunities; and to work closely with the entire staff to build the youths' leadership skills.

Responsibilities

- 1) Assess personal needs of Youthbuild participants and help get resources to meet their needs.
- 2) Provide individual and group counseling to Youthbuild participants.
- 3) Facilitate weekly rap sessions or support groups.
- 4) Advocate with human service, health, court, and criminal justice systems to resolve issues facing young people.
- 5) Make home visits, as appropriate, to assess needs and support young people.
- 6) Meet with trainees at regular intervals to assess their job and career goals, or immediate work needs.
- 7) Plan and organize job search skills workshops including interviewing, résumé preparation, and other skills; organize career exploration and motivation activities.
- 8) Market the program to potential employers; develop and make presentations about Youthbuild.
- 9) Ensure that trainees are prepared before going to job interviews, and conduct follow-up assessments.
- 10) Connect trainees with viable job opportunities; follow up after placement.
- 11) Meet regularly with staff to develop and maintain a consistent approach to supporting and expanding the personal growth and leadership skills of young people.
- 12) Identify cultural, political, and social events or activities that may take place after work hours, and organize youth participation in such events.
- 13) Keep service records of contacts with youth.

Qualifications

- 1) At least four years of counseling or crisis intervention experience with young adults.

- 2) Bachelor's degree in counseling, psychology, or related field, or equivalent experience working with young people.
- 3) Strong commitment to helping young people succeed in an innovative training program to reorient their lives and nurture their leadership skills.
- 4) Ability to establish rapport and relate sensitively to a multiracial and multi-cultural group of young people.
- 5) Knowledge of human service, health, court, and criminal justice systems' programs, regulations, and procedures.
- 6) Excellent interpersonal and problem-solving skills; ability to relate to a wide range of issues, people, and institutions.
- 7) Understanding of issues facing young people in the community where the program is located.
- 8) Excellent public speaking, listening, and written communication skills.
- 9) Sense of humor and nonjudgmental attitude.
- 10) Willingness to teach young people about service systems and decision-making processes.
- 11) Willingness to learn from young people.
- 12) Ability to work as part of a team.
- 13) Knowledge of American history and the history of the racial and ethnic groups participating in Youthbuild, along with an ability to apply that knowledge in work with young people.

Salary and Benefits

Varies depending on location

Basic Education Teacher

Purpose

To teach basic skills (reading, writing, math) and GED preparation, modifying the curriculum and materials as required to meet individual and program needs. To coordinate, develop or adapt a vocational-oriented curriculum in cooperation with the staff team.

Responsibilities

- 1) Teach basic skills to students at varied academic levels integrating information from these areas: construction work, the racial and cultural heritages of trainees, and community history or issues (academic levels can range from fourth grade to eighth grade reading levels).
- 2) Adapt curriculum and develop additional materials according to the needs of the program and trainees.
- 3) Develop learning contracts/individualized lesson plans for each trainee, and assess trainee academic progress by reviewing and updating plans regularly.
- 4) Modify curriculum and materials in conjunction with construction and counseling staff.
- 5) Team teach if appropriate.
- 6) Participate in special projects as required.
- 7) Implement attendance policies and procedures consistently.
- 8) Work as a member of the total staff team integrating basic skills with construction site activities.

Qualifications

- 1) Bachelor's degree in education or related field.
- 2) Two years' experience teaching basic skills and GED preparation to adults.
- 3) Experience in creative curriculum planning and development.
- 4) Respect for the ideas and intelligence of young adults.
- 5) Strong commitment to helping young people succeed in an innovative training program, to reorient their lives, nurture their leadership skills and enable them to make a difference in their community.
- 6) Ability to relate sensitively to a multiracial and multicultural group of young people.

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- 7) Excellent oral and written communication skills.
 - 8) Ability to team teach and work as part of team.

Salary and Benefits

Varies depending on location

Director's Planning Duties

During the planning phase, the primary work of the director is fundraising, building community support, and leading the program design process. Specific responsibilities may include

- building political and community support through contact with key individuals and ongoing strategic public relations;
- organizing and coordinating a formal advisory board or committee if the Youthbuild program is being sponsored by an existing organization;
- establishing or expanding the board of directors if the Youthbuild program is to be an independent nonprofit corporation;
- securing office space and a classroom site;
- identifying an appropriate housing construction or renovation project and securing the site and necessary financing and permits;
- developing a program budget for start-up and at least one program cycle;
- identifying and securing funds needed for program start-up and the first program cycle;
- developing all contractual arrangements with partner organizations, service providers, subcontractors, and other parties; and
- recruiting and selecting program staff.

Program Budgets

Budgets for both the planning and implementation of a Youthbuild program will vary greatly, depending on geographic location, organizational structure, and the level of in-kind resources being contributed to the program. Sample budgets for a one-year planning period and for a typical operating program follow.

The implementation budget reflects the projected annual operating costs of an independent, stand-alone Youthbuild organization. It does not include the direct costs that are customarily in a housing development budget. There are many ways to reduce costs significantly, which will vary according to the partnerships, collaborations and in-kind resources which can be developed locally. Specific suggestions are included at the end of the budget.

Sample Implementation Budget — Project Based for One 12-Month Cycle
 Assumes 30 trainees

	YR ONE (PROGRAM)
SALARIES	
Director	\$42,000
Secretary	\$20,000
PT Bookkeeper or Accountant	\$12,000
Construction Manager	\$40,000
Program Manager	\$35,000
Site Trainer	\$30,000
Site Trainer/Vocational Instructor	\$30,000
Counselor/Job Developer	\$30,000
Counselor/Leadership Coordinator	\$25,000
Teacher	\$30,000
Two Interns	\$0
TOTAL SALARIES	\$294,000
FRINGE @ 25%	\$73,500
SALARIES & FRINGE	\$367,500
CONSULTANTS & TRAVEL	
Staff Training & Technical Assistance	\$6,000
Legal	\$2,500
Audit	\$5,000
Travel	\$4,500
TOTAL CONSULTANTS & TRAVEL	\$18,000
TRAINING COSTS	
TRAINEE STIPENDS	\$175,500
Less absences @ 10%	(\$17,550)
TOTAL STIPENDS	\$157,950
FRINGE @ 10%	\$15,795
STIPENDS & FRINGE	\$173,745
BONUSES	\$6,500
RAISES	\$3,413
TOTAL PAYMENTS	\$183,658

TRAINING MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT	
Drivers' Education (optional)	\$1,500
Power Tools for Training	\$5,000
Tools, Boots, Hardhats	\$4,500
Training and Classroom Materials	\$12,500
TOTAL MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT	\$23,500
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES	
Conferences & Cultural Activities	\$8,000
Leadership Retreats	\$6,000
Entrepreneurial Training	\$0
TOTAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT	\$14,000
TOTAL TRAINING COST	\$221,158
CAPITAL COSTS	
Office and Classroom Equipment	\$10,000
Van Purchase/Lease (optional)	\$7,500
TOTAL CAPITAL COSTS	\$17,500
OTHER COSTS	
Office/Classroom Rent	\$24,000
Telephone	\$3,000
Postage	\$1,200
Office Supplies	\$1,200
Equipment Maintenance	\$1,200
Insurance	\$7,500
Payroll Service	\$900
Printing & Copying	\$1,200
Advertising	\$1,000
Van Expenses (optional)	\$6,000
Evaluation Report	\$0
TOTAL OTHER COSTS	\$47,200
TOTAL PROGRAM	\$671,358
COST PER TRAINEE	\$22,379

Note that you can reduce your program budget significantly by seeking in-kind contributions to cover a wide range of expenses. For example, local bar associations often arrange pro bono legal services for nonprofit organizations; major chain stores donate tools or construction clothing; an auto dealership may donate a van; or local corporations may donate equipment or underwrite the cost of conferences, retreats, and cultural activities.

Also, salaries and other expenses shown here may vary widely with locale.

SAMPLE PLANNING BUDGET — 12 months

NOTE: These costs are based on the experience of existing YouthBuild programs.
Please adapt to meet your needs.

	OPTION 1		OPTION 2
SALARIES			
Director /Planner	\$40,000		\$40,000
Secretary/Bookkeeper	\$20,000		\$20,000
Fiscal Mgr.	\$2,917	One month system set up	\$2,917
Construction Mgr.	\$0	2 months @ \$40,000/year	\$6,667
Program Mgr.	\$0	2 months @ \$35,000/year	\$5,833
TOTAL SALARIES	\$62,917		\$75,417
FRINGE @ 25%	\$16,458		\$18,854
SALARIES & FRINGE	\$79,375		\$94,271
CONSULTANTS			
Staff training	\$5,000	Includes site visits from TA provider	\$5,000
Legal	\$1,000		\$1,000
Auditor	\$2,000		\$2,000
Grant-writer	\$3,000	For implementation proposal	\$3,000
Preliminary a & e	\$5,000		\$5,000
Youth planners	\$600		\$600
Construction Mgr.	\$6,400	40 hrs @ \$20/hr for 8 weeks	\$0
Program Mgr.	\$4,800	40 hrs @ \$15/hr for 8 weeks	\$0
TOTAL CONSULTANTS	\$27,800		\$16,600
OTHER COSTS			
Office space	\$10,000		\$10,000
Telephone	\$1,200		\$1,200
Postage	\$600		\$600
Office Supplies	\$600		\$600
Equip. rental & maint.	\$1,200		\$1,200
Insurance	\$0		\$0
Travel	\$5,000	Trainings, seminars, and conferences	\$5,000
Printing & copying	\$1,000		\$1,000
Advertising	\$1,000		\$1,000
Payroll service	\$0		\$0
Community organizing	\$1,000		\$1,000
Board meetings	\$600		\$600
Fund-raising	\$1,500		\$1,500
TOTAL OTHER COSTS	\$23,700		\$23,700
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$130,875		\$134,571

Participant Recruitment and Selection

A later chapter details designing a participant recruitment and selection process. This section will give you some of the basic considerations to be aware of during the planning phase.

HUD's basic eligibility requirements for Youthbuild trainees are:

- Participants must be 16 to 24 years of age, inclusive, at time of enrollment. Note that a program may decide to use a narrower age range. For example, many Youthbuild programs do not enroll anybody under 18 years of age due to restrictions on construction work and use of power tools by minors.
- At least 75 percent of participants must be very-low-income individuals or members of a very-low-income family. This is defined as household income that is 50 percent or below of median income for the standard metropolitan statistical area.
- Participants must be high school dropouts, not currently enrolled in any formal educational program. An exception of not more than 25 percent of all full-time participants is permitted for young adults who do not meet the program's income or educational requirements but who have educational needs despite attainment of a high school diploma or its equivalent.

Within these requirements, local programs have a number of considerations which will affect program design. The following questions should assist you in determining your participant recruitment, selection criteria, and priorities.

Will the program have a minimum educational skill level required for entry?

In a 12-month program, it may not be realistic to expect 100 percent of trainees to attain their GEDs if they are entering the program with reading levels below seventh or eighth grade, for example. Many programs use standardized tests during their initial screening to determine basic skill levels. The program may want to determine, during the planning phase, the range of skill levels with which it can work and how important the attainment of a GED or diploma is to the defined program outcomes.

Does the program want to use the 25 percent exception and seek applicants who are either above the low-income requirements or already have their high school diplomas?

Remember that these exceptions can only be made for applicants who still have educational needs. Some programs prefer to include a few participants who have a diploma as a motivator for the rest of their participants. Other programs decide to serve only those with the greatest needs and the fewest options elsewhere. Exceptions to the income requirements may be important if you are unable to document an applicant's income or if you are working in a mixed-income community where it has been determined that there are many young adults who could benefit from a Youthbuild program even if their family income is slightly higher.

Are there cultural or language considerations among your target population that will affect program design?

If the community your program intends to serve is primarily Spanish-speaking, for example, this will affect staff qualifications, outreach and recruitment strategies, and other basic elements of your program design.

What are the construction-related opportunities in your area?

By determining in advance where the unsubsidized job opportunities are greatest in your locale, decisions can be made about participant recruitment and selection that will lead to greater chances of job placement on program completion. For example, many older cities have great demand for de-leading and asbestos removal from older housing stock. In other locations, new single-family housing construction may be the main source of construction-related employment. Some locales may have large public works jobs underway or planned, while others may be experiencing growth in the design and engineering fields. Each of these may imply a different set of interests and basic competencies, which should be taken into account when screening potential program participants.

Are there any changes in public policy that will affect your potential pool of applicants?

Welfare and education reform, cutbacks in existing training programs, and designations as enterprise communities or empowerment zones may all affect the applicant pool. In many states, young single women on public assistance are now being required to enter job training programs; charter school legislation may be increasing the educational options available to high school dropouts or enabling the program to become in effect an alternative school; special designations may require that participants are selected from a targeted neighborhood. These are just a few examples of how the current changes in public policies may affect program design.

Coordination of Program Components

Experience has shown that the Youthbuild programs with the most positive trainee outcomes are those that have tight coordination between the classroom, construction site, and other activities. This means designing your program schedule and staffing structure with regular time set aside for coordination. This may be in the form of weekly staff meetings, daily “case reviews” of trainee performance, periodic staff training on specific topics, and/or staff retreats at key points in the program cycle (before trainee recruitment, mid-way through each cycle). If trainees experience a different set of rules and expectations on the construction site than in the classroom, for example, the program staff may find themselves expending a lot of time and energy justifying varying behavioral expectations. If construction staff do not have regular times to check in with counselors or teachers, trainee problems may go unaddressed. A coordinated approach minimizes the likelihood of these problems occurring.

Classroom

Detailed information about the education component of a Youthbuild program can be found in Chapter 5 of this manual. Before your first participants even enter the classroom, before teachers are hired and educational materials are purchased, there are a number of things that should be considered.

The basic HUD requirements for the educational component of a Youthbuild program are that

- the program must be structured so that 50 percent of each full-time participant's time is spent in educational services, leadership training, counseling, and other support activities;
- educational services and activities must be designed to meet the basic educational needs of participants, possibly including
 - basic skills instruction,
 - remedial education,
 - bilingual education for individuals with limited English proficiency,
 - secondary educational services and activities designed to lead to the attainment of a high school diploma or GED, and
 - counseling and assistance in attaining post-secondary education and financial aid;
- vocational classroom courses focusing on construction terminology and concepts can also be included.

Note that these requirements do not dictate the goals of the Youthbuild educational program. Goals can be determined by the organization, based on the needs in the community and the resources potentially available.

Classroom Site Selection

One of the earlier tasks in planning the education component is the selection of an appropriate space in which to conduct classes. It is recommended that the site used for educational programming

- be in the same building or close to the administrative offices, for ease of communication and coordination;
- be easily accessible from the construction site if at all possible (this is not always possible, particularly for rural programs), as participants must sometimes travel back and forth for counseling, meetings, and other activities;
- have both large classroom space and space that is appropriate for and conducive to individual and small group work; and
- include room for vocational classroom instruction—either a corner of a large classroom with shop materials, or an actual shop classroom nearby.

Experience has shown that the use of existing school buildings can be problematic for participants. By expecting them to re-enter and succeed in a place that they failed in the first time around, you may be triggering emotional reactions that impede their openness to learning. If using an existing classroom is your only or best option, it can be useful to make some physical changes that indicate that your classroom will not be a replication of a traditional classroom. Also, during an orientation period you can ask recruits to assess the factors that made them fail in school earlier. This may minimize the resistance that a traditional setting may trigger.

Leadership Development

The requirement that young people in a Youthbuild program be involved in program decision making is one of the key factors that distinguishes the program from other job training and alternative education programs. Chapter 4 goes into detail about leadership development in a Youthbuild program.

To be most effective, however, you may want to include youth in decision making from the beginning of your planning process. By doing so, you send an immediate message to the young people in the community that this program treats them differently, respects their opinions, and believes in their potential to succeed as productive members of society.

Youth involvement during the planning phase may be accomplished in a number of ways. Young people can be invited to take part in a Youthbuild advisory or planning committee, a separate youth advisory committee can be established, or young people can be asked to take part in specific activities during the planning period, such as a needs assessment or program design review. There are advantages and disadvantages to working with youth separate from an adult committee.

Advantages to a Separate Youth Committee

- A separate committee provides space for youth to present their ideas in a less intimidating and more supportive peer environment.
- Discussions and meeting topics can focus on issues of most interest to youth.
- The young people can be trained in meeting processes without slowing down committee discussion or decision making.
- The committee can take time to provide lengthier explanations and support necessary to solicit a full range of ideas from the young people.
- Youth can practice governance and decision making in a safe environment.

Advantages to Youth Participation on Advisory Committee with Adults

- Youth have a voice and direct input on key decisions being made.
- Youth have the opportunity to understand the overall process and decisions necessary to establish a new program in their community.
- The committee has a more realistic perspective of the population they intend to serve.
- It legitimizes youth voice and perspective in the community.
- Organized youth groups in the community can be represented.

Methods to recruit young people to effectively take part in your program planning may include any or all of the following steps.

- Work with agencies that serve youth and resident groups in your targeted community to identify individual young people who might be interested.

- Hold an informational meeting, or individual interviews, to inform identified youth about the Youthbuild program and the possible roles they might play during the planning period.
- Provide orientation and training for young people who wish to be involved, to ensure that they have the information needed to participate effectively.
- Promote the importance of young people’s input by educating adult committee members about the value of including a youth perspective in program planning.
- Identify adult committee members who are committed to youth leadership and who have experience working with young adults to serve as mentors or “buddies” to the youth.
- Be sure that the youth are representative of the young people in the targeted community and include some who have dropped out of school.
- Schedule meetings with the young people’s schedules and needs in mind.
- Set aside time before each meeting to train youth on basic meeting skills and provide them with background information on agenda items to be discussed.

There are many specific tasks with which youth can help during the planning phase. These might include

- planning program outreach and recruitment strategies,
- developing staff qualifications and interviewing potential program staff;
- establishing trainee selection criteria and admission policies;
- evaluating the housing projects being considered;
- generating ideas for leadership and community service opportunities in the community;
- discussing various aspects of program design; and
- working with staff to develop initial participant rules and contract.

A last word of caution on involving youth during the planning phase: it is important to make it clear that this does not give any individuals an advantage in gaining admission into the program. For the credibility of the new Youthbuild program, fair and open selection criteria and process are critical. Also, the time lag between planning and actual start-up can be many months, setting up the young people for a long wait and possible disappointment before you even start the program.

Construction Site

Detailed information about the construction component of a Youthbuild program can be found in Chapter 6 of this manual. During the planning phase, the two most important decisions related to the construction component will be selection of a construction site, and the sponsoring organization’s role in the construction process.

Criteria for Site Selection

Project sites should be selected carefully, with several criteria in mind.

First, recognize that different sites offer different opportunities both for training and the creation of low-income housing. Make sure that in a desire to train more participants or create more housing, the program doesn't attempt a project that is too complex.

Youthbuild work sites are typically relatively small. A program of 30 to 40 trainees can expect to complete two to five units of gut rehabilitation in a program cycle of nine to 12 months. This size has been preferable because the students are more likely to complete the entire project in a program cycle and have opportunity to participate in all phases of the job, and because it is easier to manage and requires less overall funding. The smaller scale also maximizes the proportion of the work that can be performed by program staff and trainees. This encourages a greater sense of ownership and pride in project progress. Furthermore, smaller sites may be exempt from Federal Davis-Bacon prevailing wage laws, depending on the program. See page 124 for more details.

Think about logistics.

- Is there enough room at the construction site to conduct training?
- How will weather (rain, snow, cold) affect construction and training?
- How will staff and participants get from the classroom to the site?
- How will tools and materials be transported and kept secure?

Roles in the Construction Process

There are several key players involved in every construction project: the owner/developer, the general contractor, the construction manager, subcontractors, and the project architect. Youthbuild programs have played many of these roles at one time or another, depending on the expertise of the organization and the availability of construction projects and funding.

The following chart summarizes the advantages and disadvantages of a Youthbuild program playing each role.

Role	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Subcontractor (using fixed price lump-sum contract)</p> <p>Provides labor for a single or a few trade(s) on a project, such as carpentry, demolition, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires staff with only trade skill and not complex management and supervisory skills. • Simplifies training process and focus is more on youth training experience. • Assumes limited financial liability. • No responsibility for management logistics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not provide for steady work throughout the span of a project. • May not provide broad learning experience.
<p>General Contractor (using fixed-price, lump-sum contract)</p> <p>Responsible for hiring and coordinating the work of trades people (subcontractors) on a project.</p> <p>Will also provide labor for one or more task on project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides more control over scope and continuity of training experience. • More control over flow of money. • Controls hiring of subs with ability to place students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assumes more financial liability. • Requires more staff responsibility and skill.
<p>Developer or Developer/Owner</p> <p>Finds and acquires site, secures financing, composes a development team, ensures that project gets done on time and in budget.</p> <p>Can be turn-key developer, turn long-term ownership and management over to another party.</p> <p>Also will act as general contractor.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controls construction and development process. • Sets scope of training and timeline for completion. • Controls site. • Controls flow of funds. • Able to approach project from a design build concept. • Allows for total integration with other parts of program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires sophisticated set of skills and experience of staff and organization, most responsibility and financial liability. • Conflict and tension around training vs. budget and schedule constraints is heightened. • Training goals may tend to be subverted to housing production goals. • More at stake with reputation.

Owner/Developer

No matter how many people are above you on the organizational ladder, the owner/developer is always your ultimate boss. This is your client—the person who dictates the project budget and schedule within the limitations described by the construction manager and general contractor.

General Contractor

The general contractor is responsible for coordinating all of the various tradespeople (subcontractors) and suppliers on the project. The general contractor is hired by and answers to the owner/developer.

Construction Manager

The construction manager plays a role similar to the general contractor, but with a generally lower level of financial liability because he works directly for the owner. The construction manager needs a strong combination of technical and people skills. The construction manager is responsible for various administrative functions, including preparing and monitoring budgets, scheduling, supervising subcontracts, and hiring, training and disciplining site staff.

Subcontractor

Think of subcontractors as skilled tradespeople—plumbers, electricians, riggers, bricklayers, and so on. Sometimes, subcontractors are hired to sign off on work for which a license is necessary. At other times, subcontractors perform portions of larger jobs in order to accelerate or keep projects on schedule. Sometimes, a Youthbuild program plays the role of subcontractor, taking responsibility for demolition, carpentry, and other specified tasks appropriate for training.

Project Architect

Responsibilities range from planning and shaping the project to quality control and oversight of the construction project.

Building Support

Starting any new program during a time of shrinking resources is difficult. Even with a well-documented need and demand for Youthbuild in your community, you may need to “sell” your program to other agencies whose leadership may see it as competition for scarce resources.

Developing a well thought-out, strategic, and energetic campaign to build support and keep the community informed and involved during the planning phase can be the best line of defense. There are many ways to ensure that key groups and individuals are informed of the plans, included in the planning process, and ultimately support Youthbuild in your community.

The following chart outlines the groups or sectors that you may want represented on a Youthbuild advisory committee, or otherwise involved during the planning phase. Listed next to each sector are the possible roles or functions that they might play.

Key Sectors	Role or Function
Housing or Community Development Groups, Housing Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to affordable housing sites • Provide apprenticeships or internships to Youthbuild trainees
Community Organizations (social service; advocacy; grassroots organizations representing racial and ethnic groups within targeted community)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in identifying youth to participate in planning • Assist in recruiting trainees • Provide supportive services • Assist in promoting public awareness about the program • Assist in identifying mentors for trainees • Provide letters of support, assist in fundraising for continuation of Youthbuild program
Youth Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide youth to serve on planning or youth advisory committee • Assist in recruiting Youthbuild trainees • Provide supportive services • Provide instruction on youth development issues
Building Contractors/ Housing Developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with pre-employment training design • Provide internships and apprenticeship jobs • Assist with developing apprenticeships with other contractors
Trade Unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide apprenticeship jobs • Assist with vocational curriculum and training
Religious Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide space for meetings • Assist with outreach and recruitment of trainees • Assist with identifying mentors, tutors or role models for training • Assist in providing social supports

Key Sectors	Role or Function
City or County Representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donate land or housing • Allocate HOME, HOPE, or CDBG monies • Expedite construction permits and approvals • Provide linkages to key housing groups or contractors • Encourage city-funded projects to provide apprenticeships
Business Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide internships or job opportunities • Provide linkages to other businesses • Assist with pre-employment training design
Educational Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with developing curriculum • Assist with identifying tutors • Assist with identifying out-of-school youth • Provide school resources
Health Care Providers or Substance Abuse Treatment Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training for staff and trainees • Develop agreements to take Youthbuild referrals
Criminal Justice System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative sentencing as part of trainee recruitment • Training for staff and trainees

Public Relations

A visible series of activities or events will keep key people and groups informed of the planning progress and build support. These might include

- writing articles about Youthbuild for local community newspapers;
- having youth or adult advisory committee members speak to community groups, elected officials, or at public forums;
- creating a newsletter or “update” letter, sent out periodically to keep people informed of progress during the planning phase;
- holding press conferences at key points such as the securing of a construction site or a funding commitment;
- designing an informational brochure and distributing it widely in the community;
- creating and distributing T-shirts, posters, and other promotional materials with your Youthbuild logo on it; or
- seeking out or initiating opportunities to publicly recognize the support and assistance of key individuals or organizations.

Collaborations, Consortiums, Partnerships, and Joint Ventures

Collaborations

A collaboration is a broad term that describes an effort by two or more organizations to work together on a project. A collaboration can take a variety of forms and relationships, such as a partnership, joint venture, or lead agency/ subcontractor. A collaboration implies a linkage for the purpose of mutual problem-solving, decision-making, and respect.

Consortiums

A consortium usually involves the coming together of three or more organizations to work together on a project. Like collaborations, consortiums can encompass a wide variety of forms and relationships. Generally, however, the term consortium implies a larger number of organizational participants than a collaboration, with a somewhat looser operating relationship.

Partnerships

A partnership is a legal joining together of two or more organizations to conduct business (can be nonprofit, for-profit, or a combination) into a new entity. Each member of the partnership retains their individual identity, and puts into and gets out of the partnership amounts of money and other resources based on an agreement between the parties.

Partnerships are business entities; can secure business certificates, bank accounts, IRS Tax ID numbers; and are required to file tax returns annually, providing IRS K-1 forms to each of the partners.

Joint Ventures

Joint ventures are considered, for all intents and purposes, to be the same as partnerships, except that joint ventures usually come together for a single project, as opposed to a long term, ongoing relationship that is often the case with a partnership. Joint ventures are treated as partnerships from a legal, accounting, and tax standpoint.

Accounting for Collaborations

A single entity can oversee all of the accounting in a collaboration, or the accounting task can be divided among collaborators. When divided among collaborating organizations, the lead agency may subcontract specific tasks, or a partnership may be arranged. Auditing and preparing tax returns for the collaboration's financial records must be assigned or determined in advance as well.

Legal Issues Concerning Collaborations

- Liability questions and the need for written agreements.
- Which entity or entities will be financially liable for contracts, expenses, and other obligations of the collaboration
- Indemnification and Hold Harmless agreements.

Sample Youthbuild MOA

Whenever two or more agencies collaborate to implement a Youthbuild program, their collaboration should be governed by a written agreement. Each agreement should be custom-designed for each individual collaboration. In fact, the process of developing the written agreement can provide a very useful vehicle for working out the issues and details of the collaboration.

That said, following is a sample Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between several collaborating agencies of a Youthbuild program. In this particular collaboration, one agency serves as the lead agency and takes responsibility for all programmatic aspects of the program; the other agency is responsible for providing the site and securing the funding for the “hard and soft costs” of housing construction. It is not designed as a joint venture or partnership, though that is certainly an option. This particular MOA is also designed for a Youthbuild project in which the collaborating agencies are planning for the project to spin off as an independent effort after about one year into the program.

Please keep in mind that this is not a recommended MOA, merely a sample of what one type of collaboration might look like when put to paper. If you find some useful language in it, do not hesitate to lift it verbatim.

The MOA is not a substitute for a full discussion among the collaborating partners about how they plan to operate and finance the program. You may want to consult an attorney before signing such an agreement.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Memorandum of Agreement among [NAME OF ORGANIZATIONS] is to define the respective roles and responsibilities that the entities will have in implementing the [NAME OF YOUTHBUILD PROGRAM].

2. Lead Agency

It is agreed by the undersigned agencies that [NAME OF LEAD AGENCY] will be the lead agency with full legal and financial responsibility as the HUD Youthbuild grant recipient.

3. Authorized Representative

The authorized representative of [NAME OF LEAD AGENCY] who will execute the application, certifications, and eventual grant agreement will be [NAME OF INDIVIDUAL, TITLE].

4. Identification of the Organizations

4.1 [SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE PARTICIPATING AGENCIES, THEIR PURPOSE AND PROGRAMS SHOULD BE INSERTED HERE.]

4.2 [NAME OF PROGRAM] Sponsoring Committee

The collaboration will coordinate its activities through a coordinating committee, which shall be called the [NAME OF PROGRAM] Sponsoring Committee. It is the intent of these agencies that the [NAME OF PROGRAM] Sponsoring Committee will serve as the Board of Directors of [NAME OF PROGRAM], (which will eventually be spun off as an independent, non-

profit entity. However, in order to build the capacity of [NAME OF PROGRAM], it is agreed that at least one full cycle of youth would be trained and placed before [NAME OF PROGRAM] operates the program as an independent organization).

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The role and responsibilities of each of the participating agencies shall be those listed in Attachment 1 to this Agreement.

6. Remuneration

Each participating agency shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the development and operating of the project, those expenses having been approved by the lead agency prior to their having been incurred.

7. Dispute Resolution

Should either party fail to perform or carry out any of their obligations pursuant to this agreement, the other party, upon due notice to the party who has failed to perform, shall have the right to take any and all necessary and reasonable steps to fulfill the obligation in question and to be reimbursed for the cost thereof.

In the event of a dispute between the parties that cannot be resolved among the parties, the parties agree to settle the dispute through binding arbitration. Each party will select within 10 business days an arbitrator. The two arbitrators shall select a third arbitrator acceptable to the first two within 10 business days, and shall render their opinion within thirty (30) days. Each party shall pay for the fees and expenses of the arbitrator appointed by them. The parties will pay equally for the fees and expenses of the third arbitrator.

Termination

This joint venture shall be dissolved and its business wound up upon the happening of any of the following events, whichever shall first occur:

- a) The legal disability including, without limitation, the bankruptcy of any Participating Agency, unless the remaining Participating Agency shall, within 90 days thereafter, elect to continue the Project;
- b) The agreement of all the participating Agencies to terminate the project;
- c) the rejection of funding by HUD (or other funding source).

This agreement is entered into this ___ day of _____, 199_.

[NAME OF AGENCY]

title

Date: _____

[NAME OF AGENCY]

title

Date: _____

A. [NAME OF AGENCY 1]

[NAME OF AGENCY 1] will serve as the lead agency of the project. As lead agency, [NAME OF AGENCY 1] will have responsibility for all functions described below except for those that are specifically associated with the housing development component:

- signing all contractual documents on behalf of the project;
- maintaining all financial records according to both generally accepted accounting principles and the contractual requirements of HUD;
- providing administrative support for the contract, including personnel matters including but not limited to the hiring and firing of personnel at the request of the Executive Director;
- taking responsibility for independent auditing, project fundraising, insurance and legal matters;
- ensuring that all reporting requirements to HUD and other agencies are met in a proper and timely fashion; and
- exercising day-to-day supervision over the program and, in particular, over the [NAME OF PROGRAM] Director.

In addition, [NAME OF AGENCY 1] will be responsible for overseeing and implementing the following programmatic components of the program.

- Hire and train all project staff.
- Recruit all trainees.
- Prepare psycho-social intake on all program participants.
- Conduct orientation for all trainees.
- Prepare educational and vocational assessments of and plans for each student.
- Oversee the classroom component of the program, including
 - remediation classes,
 - GED preparation classes,
 - pre-employment classes, and
 - vocational training classes.
- Provide career planning.
- Provide life skills training.
- Provide job-seeking training.
- Prepare ongoing (monthly) assessments of academic and vocational progress towards goals as described more fully in the proposal.
- Oversee the training component of the construction site.
- Provide one-on-one and group counseling and case work services as needed.
- Refer participants to other agencies for appropriate additional services.

- Conduct youth leadership training including assisting in forming, supporting, and training Youth Council.
- Conduct job placement, provide job referrals and intensive post-graduate follow-up via alumni nights and other supportive services.
- Provide office and classroom space for the project at [ADDRESS].

B. [NAME OF AGENCY 2]

[NAME OF AGENCY 2] will serve as the housing partner for the project. [NAME OF AGENCY 2] will be responsible for serving as the Owner/ Developer/ Manager of the housing site at which all construction training will take place. The site that has been designated for this project is at [SITE ADDRESS]. Specifically, [NAME OF AGENCY 2] will responsible for:

- acquiring the site and providing access to the site as necessary for construction training to take place;
- providing all materials necessary for construction training on a timely basis;
- working with its general contractor to ensure that any subcontractors and construction workers at the site are familiar with the nature of the site as a construction training site for youth and that their work is coordinated with the Youthbuild crews; and
- maintaining ownership and managing the housing over the long term for homeless and low-income families in accordance with the funding agency’s guidelines.

It is understood that all funds for the development of the site into housing for low-income and homeless families, including acquisition, architectural, construction, and any other related “soft and hard costs” shall be the responsibility of [NAME OF AGENCY], through its allocation of [TYPE OF FUNDING] provided by the [NAME OF FUNDING SOURCE]. [NAME OF AGENCY 2] will be solely responsible for the administration and management of these funds.

C. [NAME OF PROGRAM] Sponsoring Committee

The [NAME OF PROGRAM] Sponsoring Committee shall serve for the duration of this project as the coordinating committee of the collaborating agencies. The Committee will have the following responsibilities.

- Approve the hiring of the director of [NAME OF PROGRAM].
- Approve any modifications to the program’s design or budget.
- Serve as an ongoing forum for communication and coordination among the collaborating agencies and the youth participants, meeting no less often than monthly.

The membership of the Sponsoring Committee shall consist of [INSERT HERE THE NAMES AND/OR TITLES OF INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL SERVE ON THIS COMMITTEE. CONSIDER WHETHER YOUTH REPRESENTATIVES WILL BE INCLUDED.]

Summary

The following sample timeline provides an overview of a program's possible activities during the planning stage.

	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4
Community Support Feasibility Planning Process	Hold community meetings with youth groups and others, to explore interest and build support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify target areas for recruitment. ■ Designate point person, coordinator, planner, or director. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assess potential collaborations. ■ Create core planning group (ongoing for several months). ■ Develop funding strategy and plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify lead agency and if needed housing partner (or decide if Youthbuild will be a new organization). ■ Discuss and confirm funding strategy.
Construction Project		Identify target areas for housing.	Meet with potential housing development partners and begin to identify housing project possibilities.	Select partner and/or negotiate construction contract for housing project.
Education Component Other Program Services			Investigate and consider whether to do GED, high school diploma, or both. Meet with school district officials if considering diploma.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Decide on type of program and educational partner. ■ Begin negotiations.
Private Fundraising		Develop brochure or description of program.	Research funders.	Write boilerplate proposal.
Public Fundraising			Research sources, develop strategy for political support.	
Administrative Fiscal/Legal		Search for pro bono legal services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ File for incorporation. ■ File for federal ID and tax-exempt status. ■ Open bank account. 	
Board or Advisory Board				Develop nominees from core planning group. Look for others nominees who bring in skills or resources.
Youth Leadership			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify organizations or individuals in touch with you. ■ Identify and invite targeted youth to meeting. 	Select and train youth advisors for council.
Staffing				

	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8
Community Support Feasibility Planning Process	Structure planning process to involve different sectors of community in design of program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen political support. Continue to build community support. 		
Construction Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select site. Pursue financing, or confirm status of financing with housing partner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure access to housing document. File for permits or check status with partner. 	Search for construction manager or consultant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop construction plan with timeline and budget. Define construction skill competencies for trainees.
Education Component Other Program Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue contract negotiations. Design educational component. Create linkages and agency agreements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm contract. Refine educational program design. Research and gather curriculum. Develop referral linkages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design or modify educational curriculum. Continue with agency agreements for supportive service referrals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine educational curriculum. Design vocational education component. Plan how to integrate with GED basic skills.
Private Fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement fundraising plan. Continue to identify funding sources. Submit proposals and meet with funders. 	Submit proposals.	Submit proposals.	
Public Fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement fundraising plan. Write proposal for HUD and other public sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to identify sources. Submit proposals. 	Submit proposals.	
Administrative Fiscal/Legal	Search for office and program space.	Decide on office and program space.	File tax-exempt papers—501(c)3	File state withholding.
Board or Advisory Board			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct board training on Youthbuild program—especially leadership development. Set up search committee for director. 	
Youth Leadership		Involve youth in planning and staff hiring.		
Staffing				Hire director, if you have not yet done so.

	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12
Community Support Feasibility Planning Process				
Construction Project	Design specific modules for hands-on training.	Search for trainers and site supervisors if needed.		
Education Component Other Program Services	Complete curriculum modules.	Review and finalize trainee contract.	Begin to design and develop trainee orientation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Finalize orientation. ■ Finalize program details.
Private Fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit proposals. ■ Meet with funders. ■ Continue identifying new sources. 			
Public Fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit proposals. ■ Network. 			
Administrative Fiscal/Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Find payroll service. ■ Set up bookkeeping system. 	Set up payroll system for trainees.	Design performance tracking system for trainees and forms.	
Board or Advisory Board	Develop program and personnel policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participate in job development. ■ Meet with funders or help find resources. ■ Build public awareness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue building public awareness. ■ Finalize program policies. 	
Youth Leadership	Get input on youth outreach and recruitment.	Get input on flyers for recruitment.		
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Design staff orientation training. ■ Hire construction manager. 	Hire program manager.	Hire counselors, teacher, and administrative support staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hire construction trainers. ■ Conduct staff orientation training.

Chapter Three

Trainee Recruitment, Selection, and Orientation

All Youthbuild programs funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development must meet the following basic selection criteria:

- All participants must be between 16 and 24 years old at the time of enrollment.
- At least 75 percent of the participants must be very-low-income or come from very-low-income families, defined as earning below 50 percent of median income.
- At least 75 percent of the class must consist of high school dropouts. A dropout is defined as an individual who
 - is not attending any school,
 - is not subject to a compulsory attendance law,
 - has not received a high school diploma, and
 - has not received a certificate of equivalency or GED.

This leaves considerable latitude with local Youthbuild programs as to whom to accept. Youthbuild is not an “entitlement program.” So you don’t have to and should not select youths by lottery or on a first-come-first-served basis.

Selection Criteria

During your program planning sessions, establish criteria that define who would be a good candidate for admission. Consider the following factors.

- **Commitment to changing life.** This should be a key selection factor. You will have to assess this primarily through your interview, so care should be taken to develop questions that will address this factor. It may be reflected in the initiative which applicants have already taken to deal with housing, day care or other needs, or the steps taken to move away from a destructive lifestyle.
- **Interest in both construction and academic components.** Try to select applicants who want both the construction training and the opportunity to get the GED or to upgrade their reading and math abilities.
- **Proportion who have completed their GED or obtained a high school diploma.** The federal law requires that 75 percent of a class consist of high school dropouts. Some programs have accepted high school graduates to ensure a balance of young people who may start out with greater self-discipline and who will be eligible for trade union apprenticeships (which depend on having a high school diploma or GED). Accepting high school graduates, however, will affect the program design. College preparation will become the focus for some, while other high school graduates may have no better reading or math skills than the dropouts.

- **Reading level.** Experience has shown that most students entering the program with reading levels below seventh grade will not be able to get their GED in 12 months. You may choose to accept students with lower reading levels, as long as there are provisions for extended study for the GED. It should be explained to the applicant that her progress toward a GED will depend on her own commitment and she should understand that improvement in reading ability affects long-term earnings regardless of whether a person has received the GED.
- **Age.** Within the 16-to-24 requirement, each Youthbuild program must decide whether to give preference based on age. Some programs have found that students in their twenties are more serious than younger students. Other programs, which are affiliated with public schools and provide credits toward a diploma, give preference to younger students. Other programs do not make age a selection factor.
- **Income.** The Youthbuild law does not have specific income requirements beyond the maximum income level for 75 percent of the participants of no more than 50 percent of the area median income. Unless it is required for some other reason, think carefully before establishing specific income requirements. If other funders require income documentation, it is important to inform applicants and to obtain the appropriate documentation.
- **Criminal record.** Previous experience with Youthbuild participants has indicated that a criminal record in itself has no bearing on success or failure. Some programs have deliberately given preference to people with prison records because there are fewer options for them, and their time spent incarcerated provides a higher level of motivation.
- **Gender.** Women historically have comprised roughly 25 percent of participants in Youthbuild programs. The decision to seek nontraditional careers indicates strong individuals who may make successful participants. If welfare reform leads your program to target a higher percentage of women, plan carefully for child care and other supports. It is important for a program to develop strategies to encourage and support women who are interested in the program. These may include separate recruitment information sessions designed to meet the needs and concerns of women, identification of local child care resources, and ongoing support groups for women once in the program.
- **Cultural diversity.** Once defined, the geographic community served will affect the cultural diversity of the program. Consideration should be given to validating and respecting the diversity of cultural perspectives of all program participants.
- **Interest in leadership.** Most applicants will not have leadership experience. Interview questions can assess interest and potential for leadership—for example, interest in being involved in improving neighborhood conditions and helping other people.

Recruitment

Recruitment messages should not be misleading and should contain specific information on the program. Emphasize that this is a training program where participants can “learn while they earn” and that graduates can enter the high-paying, demanding field of

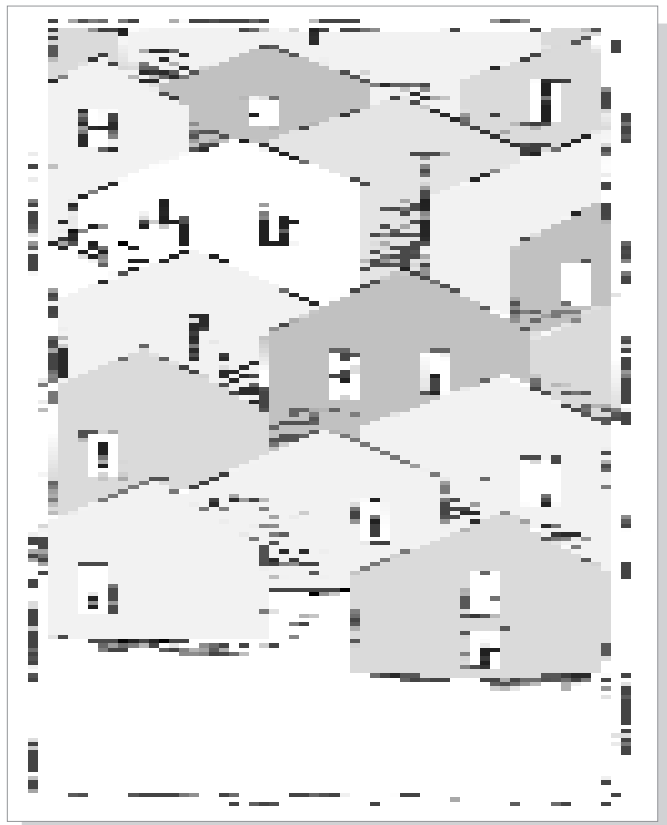
construction. Mention the chance to work toward a GED and that you will be building homes for low-income families. Invite people who are interested in becoming community leaders. Do not make or imply promises that the program cannot keep.

Following are some proven recruiting methods.

- **Want ads.** In a large city, a week of advertising in a daily newspaper should produce several hundred applicants. Often, concerned adults see the ad and bring it to the attention of potential applicants. Also consider advertising in weekly and community newspapers and radio stations whose readership includes the target group. Radio spots can be effective if you can get time on the community bulletin boards of stations with young audiences.
- **Flyers.** Go where there is a high concentration of potential candidates. You can pass out flyers at a busy street corner or visit a local community center. Put up posters in neighborhood housing projects. Any approach that allows you to make personal contact and explain the program will be effective. (See sample below.)
- **Local high schools.** Most high schools maintain lists of dropouts, which can be good sources of applicants. Contact the school's guidance counselor or principal. Many dropouts may be at a point where they can recognize that they are not equipped for survival and therefore may be receptive to the program.
- **Mailings.** A Youthbuild sponsoring organization should maintain a mailing list of past participants in its youth programs. You might also send notices to other training programs, schools, local community boards, tenant associations, employment offices, probation offices, and alcohol- and substance-abuse facilities. Contact other programs that have supported your Youthbuild program during initial organizing. If nothing else, they would appreciate being kept informed.

Application Process

A preliminary application form should request name, present mailing address, Social Security number, telephone number, current income, educational background, work experience, hobbies, and emergency-contact person. The application should determine motivation to join the program and what the applicant hopes to accomplish. Knowledge of construction should be ascertained. A sample application follows.



sample recruitment flyer

Application Form

Name _____ Date _____
Address _____ Phone _____

Where did you hear about Youthbuild?

- Newspaper
- Radio
- TV
- Flyer
- Somebody told me about it
- Other (write in)

1. Why are you interested in being in this program?

2. If you are accepted into this program, you will be in class Monday through Friday, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., studying reading, writing and math skills to help you prepare for a GED and for the construction trades. What would you like to get out of the class?

Health

Do you have any physical, medical, or health problems? Yes No

If yes, please describe:

Are you supposed to wear eyeglasses? Yes No

Do you have asthma? Yes No

Diabetes? Yes No

Do you smoke? Yes No

If you smoke, can you limit your smoking to breaks and lunchtime? Yes No

Have you ever had a physical examination? Yes No

If yes, when was your last physical exam? (date) _____

Education

Last school attended _____

Highest grade completed _____ Last year in school _____

If you did not complete high school or get your GED, why did you drop out?

Did you take any shop courses in school? Yes No

If yes, which ones? _____

Do you know how to drive? Yes No

Do you own a car? Yes No

Do you have a Driver's/Operator's License? Yes No

Do you have a Chauffer's/Commercial License? Yes No

Training and Work History

Have you ever been in another training program? Yes No

If yes, give name and location of program:

Dates you attended this program: _____

Did you complete the program? Yes No

Last Job

Have you ever held a job before? Yes No

Name of Company _____

Address of Company _____

Dates you worked there: from _____ to _____

What was the pay per week? \$ _____

Job Title _____

What kind of work did you do?

Supervisor's Name and Title _____

Why did you leave? _____

Current Job

Are you currently working? Yes No

If so, is your job Full Time Part Time

If employed, current hourly wage rate: \$_____ per hour

Number of hours, on average, you work each week: _____

Construction Experience

Have you had any construction or rehab experience? Yes No

Was it paid experience? Yes No

Please describe this experience.

What are you interested in doing for a career?

What types of jobs do you think are available in the field of construction?

Additional Information

U.S. Military Service Yes No

If yes, what branch? _____

Rank _____ Discharge _____ Dates _____

Have you ever been convicted of any crime? Yes No

If yes, please describe and include dates and status of case:

If yes, are you on probation? Yes No

Name and phone number of officer _____

Are you on parole? Yes No

Name and phone number of officer _____

The Interview

It is recommended that all program staff who will be dealing directly with the trainees should participate in the interview process. If possible, each interview should be conducted by two or three staff members who represent the job training, counseling, and academic components. For existing Youthbuild programs, it helps to get input from a current student. Staff participation in the interview process begins to build rapport and can provide a diversity of opinions about the suitability of the applicant.

During the interview, tell the applicant more about the program and the responsibilities of the participant. Be sure to explain that construction can take place under difficult weather conditions. Explain that the varied components of the program are both an opportunity and a challenge.

Every applicant should express an interest in the construction field. Ask questions that might identify manual aptitude, but keep in mind that many women in particular may not have had opportunities for exposure or hands-on experience that men often get.

Don't overlook the physical aspects of construction. In the past, Youthbuild programs have made the mistake of selecting applicants with health conditions that make construction work difficult. Ask applicants if they are afraid of heights or have any physical limitations that may affect their participation. Ask about asthma, allergies to dust, back problems, or other conditions.

Determine if the applicant can participate and still meet financial obligations. Explain your wage or stipend structure. If a part-time job will be necessary, determine the motivation to make that commitment.

Following is a sample format for an interview.

Instructions for Interview

Individual interviews are conducted in one-half-hour sessions. Applicants are rated on a scale of one to five, five being the best. The interviews are conducted by the director or program manager and one or two other staff.

Purpose of Interviews

The purpose of the interview is to learn if applicant is motivated to

- improve educationally,
- learn construction skills,
- do hard, physical work,
- stay with a job for a long period,
- show up on time, all the time,
- get along with peers,
- deal with personal problems so he or she can succeed, and
- take on leadership role in program or community.

Interview Questions

Education

Why did you leave school? What subjects did you like? Why should we believe you want to come back to a school setting? Do you know construction involves math?

Work Attitude

What have you been doing since you left school? Do you help out at home? What time do you go to bed at night? When was the last time you got up at 6:30 or 7:00 a.m. to arrive some place by 8:00 a.m.?

Construction

Why do you want to do construction? Have you ever done anything in construction or other physical labor?

Attitude Toward Peers

Do you like working alone or with other people? Have you ever worked as part of a team or group? How would you feel about working with people of the opposite sex on the construction site?

Money

Is [STIPEND AMOUNT] every two weeks enough money to support you? Can you make it through the two-week trial, plus two more weeks before getting a paycheck, if we help you with the bus fare and lunch?

Family

Are you a parent? Do you provide child support? How much time do you spend with your child? How are you going to take care of problems at home, so you can keep your mind on Youthbuild?

Leadership

Have you ever been seen as a leader? Have you ever been the one who made good things happen for other people? If so, describe it. What changes would you like to see in the community? How do you think that could be done?

Final Selection

Interviewers should take notes and make evaluations immediately after the interview.

Then all the interviewers should come together to select those most suitable for the program. Try to identify any problems and ask, "Is this person right for this program? Is the program right for this person?"

Acceptance or Rejection Procedure

Accepted applicants should be given at least one week notice to make final preparations. Avoid last-minute selections and notifications.

Applicants who have not been accepted should be notified with the same speed and respect as those who have. At no time should contact with a Youthbuild program be discouraging for young people who have taken an important step of reaching out and seeking help. Your staff should make it a priority to be familiar with other job training and educational opportunities so that they can refer applicants who are not accepted.

Youthbuild Yourtown

address • phone number

Dear [TRAINEE NAME]:

Congratulations! We are pleased to inform you of your acceptance into Youthbuild [NAME OF PROGRAM] for the upcoming year.

The orientation for new trainees will start on [DATE]. It will be held from [BEGINNING TIME] to [ENDING TIME] at the [LOCATION]. During this period, you will receive a [AMOUNT] stipend to cover meals and transportation for two weeks.

This two-week orientation is considered a trial period and you will be expected to show up every day on time. Trainees who are absent without a legitimate excuse, or are late, will be automatically dropped from the program.

If you have question, or need further information, please call [NAME OF CONTACT PERSON] at [TELEPHONE NUMBER].

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

Director

sample acceptance letter

Over-Enrollment and Open Enrollment

Most Youthbuild programs over-enroll by as much as 25 to 30 percent. If your budget assumes 30 participants, for example, you may want to enroll about 40 participants and be very stringent about rule enforcement during the first month. The students who are not ready for the program will usually screen themselves out.

At the end of the orientation, the organization may still be over-enrolled, enabling it to absorb further attrition over the course of the project.

Over-enrolling generally works better than accepting only your budgeted class size, having dropouts and terminations during the course of the year, and then accepting students in the middle of the program. It is difficult for the new students to miss orientation and some of the training, and for the program to accommodate new participants midway through a program cycle.

Orientation

A well-organized orientation of at least one to two weeks can be critical to setting the tone, expectations, and relationships in the program. A program orientation for the participants could incorporate the following elements:

- goal-setting and team-building presentations and exercises;
- introduction and overview of program goals and expectations;
- introduction of staff—their roles and expectations;
- trainee expectation of program, staff, themselves;
- awareness of factors contributing to trainees' past success and failures, and analysis of barriers to success;
- conflict resolution skills;
- examination of issues related to gender, substance abuse, and sexual harassment;
- building appreciation of different cultural and racial groups;
- listening and communication skill building;
- review of trainee contract, if your program has one (see sample below).

An effective orientation process can utilize large and small group discussions, videos, guest speakers, role plays, youth panels, team building exercises, support groups, specific goal-setting practices, Outward Bound-type trust-building activities, and a completion ceremony. This is also an opportunity to explain to participants about the larger Youthbuild movement and their relationship to other programs, regionally and nationally.

Sample Trainee Contract

We expect the best of Youthbuild trainees. The fact that you were accepted into the program means that we trust that you want to learn and to grow. We intend to help you in that process. In coming to Youthbuild, you have made a commitment to take your life in a new direction, to strive to do your best and contribute as a leader. As a Youthbuild trainee you are agreeing to:

- 1) Participate fully in all aspects of the program. To attend every day, arrive and leave at the scheduled time. To achieve an attendance rate of at least 85 percent for the entire year.
- 2) Come to the classroom or the worksite prepared to work—bringing the appropriate tools and equipment, and wearing clothing and shoes that will be protective or appropriate for the activity that you will be engaged in.
- 3) Express an attitude and a spirit of respect and cooperation toward all staff and students. Remember that your actions not only reflect on yourself, but on the group as a whole and the Youthbuild program.

Best of luck and welcome to Youthbuild!

This agreement describes the payment and rewards you will receive by behaving and achieving to the best of your ability. You will be asked to agree to and sign this contract, which outlines the behavior expected of you during this program and specifies the consequences of violating the contract.

Base Pay

Trainees are paid starting at \$ _____ / _____ (specify weekly, biweekly, etc.).

Raises

Every _____ trainees are eligible for a raise. Over the year, you can get a total of _____ raises, bringing your pay up to \$ _____ per pay period.

To be eligible for a raise, you must:

1. Receive an education certificate for completing all school work *and*
2. Receive a construction certificate for achievement on the construction site
and
3. Average a at least nine days out of ten attendance for the period *and*
4. Complete social skills requirements as set forth by your counselor for each unit.

At the beginning of every unit, your counselor, teachers and construction manager will meet with you individually to discuss what you need to do to earn a certificate of achievement for the coming unit. We encourage you to talk to them at any time during the unit about how you are doing, so you can stay on track for getting a raise.

Attendance Bonuses

Trainees with perfect attendance during a pay period (no absence, no lateness) will receive a \$_____ bonus with their pay check.

Infractions

The Youthbuild program must have rules and guidelines to achieve order and accomplish its goals. In keeping with this basic principal, we have identified some behaviors/infractions that, when they occur in the program, have the potential to threaten the achievement of program goals.

Students are expected to follow all of the rules at all times. Violation of these infractions will be dealt with swiftly and appropriately. Infractions have been divided into two groups. Those identified as serious infractions have the potential to cause immediate harm to self, others, and the program and will not be tolerated.

Infractions—Group 1

- Absence Without Advance Approval by Program Staff
- Bad Attitude/Disruptive Behavior
- Lateness
- Smoking in the Building

Serious Infractions—Group 2

- Leaving Without Notice
- Dangerous or Careless Behavior
- Physical, Verbal, or Emotional Abuse or Threats of Violence
- Possession of Weapons, Drug Paraphernalia, Beepers, or Pornographic Materials
- Possession of Alcohol/Illegal Drugs, or Coming To Work or School Drunk or High
- Destroying Property
- Stealing
- Drug Dealing
- Lying
- Severely Bad Attitude/Disruptive Behavior

Repeated violation of the same infraction may result in dismissal from the program. Violation of a serious infraction may result in immediate dismissal from the program. Your attitude and willingness to change is the key to successfully completing this program.

Description of Infractions

Absence

If you need to be absent for *any reason*, you must call in by _____ a.m. Youthbuild expects all trainees to have excellent attendance—100 percent if at all possible. Trainees present less than four days/week may be asked to leave the program. Any trainee who does not contact the program within 48 hours of being absent will automatically be terminated from the program.

Bad Attitude/Disruptive Behavior

Bad attitudes and disruptive behaviors include not following directions, preventing others from learning, excessive lateness, and disrespecting others. Trainees with a “bad attitude” have a negative effect on fellow trainees and staff, and will not be tolerated in the program. If you are unreliable, lazy, have constant arguments, turn people against each other, sleep or otherwise do not participate in class, or undermine your supervisors and/or teachers, you will be considered to have a “bad attitude.” *Non-participation is not an option at Youthbuild.* “Bad attitude” can result in dismissal from the program.

Lateness

Trainees are expected to arrive on time to their designated site/class. Coming late in the morning or returning late after break or lunch will not be tolerated and will be dealt with from a verbal warning to possible dismissal from the program.

Smoking in the Building

Smoking is a fire and health hazard in the building and work sites, and is prohibited. If you must smoke, you must do it in the designated places during designated times.

Leaving Without Notice

Youthbuild expects all trainees to remain on the work site/school site once they are there. Leaving without authorization will result in loss of pay for a period not to exceed five days.

Dangerous or Careless Behavior

Dangerous or careless behavior ranges from blatant misuse of equipment and tools to failure to pull up and/or report a fellow trainee who is engaged in a violation of the program rules. Such behaviors will not be tolerated and will be dealt with from a verbal warning to possible dismissal from the program.

Physical, Verbal, or Emotional Abuse or Threats of Violence

Violence and abuse, as defined by the program, will not be tolerated at Youthbuild in any form. Anyone engaging in such behavior will immediately be placed on unpaid status for five days or dismissed from the program.

Possession of Weapons, Drug Paraphernalia, Beepers, or Pornographic Materials

Weapons will not be permitted in any way, shape, or form at Youthbuild. Anyone found in possession of a weapon, particularly a gun, will automatically be dismissed. Possession of any other types of weapons will result in trainee being sent home and five days unpaid. Possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia will not be permitted either. Drug use indicates to us that there is a problem. Those caught will be given an opportunity to correct the problem or may be dismissed from the program. Pornographic materials or beepers are a distraction to the educational process at Youthbuild. Therefore, they are not acceptable on the work or school site.

Alcohol/Drugs: Coming to Work or School Drunk or High

Use of alcohol and drugs, or coming to work or school under the influence of alcohol or drugs, will not be tolerated in any shape or form. Anyone strongly suspected of being under the influence will be sent home without pay. The student will be asked to get a urine test at a certified place designated by Youthbuild. If the test is negative, the student will be reimbursed the loss of pay and Youthbuild will pay for the urine test. If the test is positive, the student will pay for the cost of the test and may be dismissed from the program.

Destroying Property

Trainees will be held financially accountable for destruction of any property occurring as a result of negligence and/or intent.

Stealing

Stealing is not acceptable at Youthbuild. Anyone caught stealing or suspected of stealing must return or replace the property. Continuation in the program depends upon one's level and willingness to be honest in resolving the issue.

Drug Dealing

Drug dealing will not be permitted by anyone participating in the program. Anyone caught or strongly suspected of dealing drugs will be dismissed from the program.

Lying

Lying or creating negative rumors creates an atmosphere of mistrust, particularly when people are not courageous enough to be honest or sensitive to the feelings of others. People who demonstrate a lack of willingness to be honest and sensitive may be dismissed from the program.

Consequences of Contract Violation

Group 1 Infractions

1. Verbal Warning
2. Written Warning
3. Second Written Warning and Possible Learning or Service Activity
4. Visit to Program Manager
5. Sent Home Without Pay for a Designated Period, or Intervention Meeting
6. Termination

Group 2 Infractions

1. Written Warning (Possible Service Activity)
2. Sent to Program Manager
3. Dismissal (in Some Instances Immediate Dismissal May Be a Consequence)

Buy Back Policy

Youthbuild recognizes that trainees have a great need for their stipends, and it is not our desire to keep any trainee's pay. Nevertheless, students need to understand that pay is a privilege within the context of a training program. Therefore, some students may place themselves in a position where the privilege of pay is lost. "Buy back" refers to those trainees who have experienced loss of pay as a result of disciplinary action. Those trainees who demonstrate a reasonable permanent change in their behavior and attitude will have the opportunity to be considered to have their lost pay reinstated.

I _____, have read and understand the conditions that are described above in the Youthbuild Trainee Contract and agree to abide by these conditions. I also acknowledge that I have received a copy of this contract which I am expected to learn.

Trainee

Date

Counselor

Date

(Adapted from YouthBuild Boston Trainee Contract)

Chapter Four

Leadership Development and Support Services

Youthbuild programs don't just build and rehabilitate buildings. They also help youths build leadership.

In fact, Congress specifically required the development of leadership when it financed Youthbuild.

Leadership development can be challenging and trying. It requires patience and sharing responsibility. It is undoubtedly easier and less frustrating for the staff to make all the decisions and rules. But experience has shown that the completed project is better when it has the benefit of youth leadership.

While a new or rehabilitated building might be a visual monument to a program's success, the development of youth leadership can be at least as valuable to the community.

Leadership Defined

Good leadership is defined by many Youthbuild programs as taking responsibility to make things go right for your life, your family, your program, and your community.

It is important to foster personal leadership skills in all participants, so that they can take responsibility for their own lives. In this area, there are no followers. Participants must confront issues in their personal lives, which often means changing self-destructive behaviors, becoming free of drug or alcohol addictions, unshackling themselves from a feeling of hopelessness and making the transition from the street to a positive lifestyle.

This frequently means developing such skills as

- managing time, personal budgeting and setting personal goals;
- dealing with emotions in a positive way;
- communicating effectively; and
- developing good work and learning habits.

A successful Youthbuild program can develop leaders with the skills and inspiration to

- help make decisions in all phases of a project;
- move on to organize and lead other projects in the community; and
- organize and lead their neighborhoods on a variety of community issues.

Staff Attitudes

A Youthbuild staff should help to develop the leadership capacities of young people. The challenge for the staff is to do the following:

- View young people as leaders, not as clients or problems. How students are viewed will affect how students sees themselves.
- Recognize that leadership development is an essential part of the program.
- Consult young people whenever possible in making decisions.
- Express appreciation for all kinds and levels of leadership, from people who are responsible for their lives and take care of their families, to people who quietly contribute, to people who inspire and organize whole communities.

Staff Strategies

Each staff member should design specific strategies to foster leadership. Here are some examples.

- The director can involve young people in fundraising activities and take them to local planning boards or government hearings. She could also seek opportunities for participants to represent the program off-site as speakers or participants in conferences, at community meetings, as advocates regarding the use of public funds, as spokespeople with the media, or at fundraising meetings with private foundations.
- The program manager can train people to take on certain administrative responsibilities like answering phones, handling some reports, and showing visitors around.
- The construction manager can be sure the entire group is aware of the overview of the construction process by doing such things as having young people attend sessions during estimating, bidding, or negotiating with unions or subcontractors.
- Crew chiefs should encourage participants to find solutions to construction problems and involve participants when estimating how long a job will take and how much material and how many people will be needed.
- Teachers can involve the participants in determining part of what they study and have students teach each other.
- Counselors can help participants make individual development and life-skill plans.

Setting a Tone for Developing Leadership

There are many sources of stress for Youthbuild students. They include

- the nature of the work itself. Doing construction, learning academic skills, and making decisions in a Youthbuild program all carry a level of frustration, anger, and fear of failure or success.
- personal issues. Each youth brings personal issues to the program. They include poor habits, addictions, low self-confidence, and emotional problems.

- societal barriers. Each person works in the context of many societal barriers. For example, there are numerous sources of tension between men and women, youth and adults, and different races and ethnic groups.

Unless these stresses are effectively addressed, a Youthbuild program may be doomed to fail. Tensions may grow, cultural and other divisions may fester, attendance may fall, and productivity and learning may suffer.

Setting a positive tone is essential to minimize these stresses. Here are some examples.

- Communicate respect at all times with young people. Though there are times when it may be necessary to use authority, try to avoid being authoritarian. Be firm and respectful.
- Validate and appreciate the participants all the time. This goes a long way toward countering the hurts they carry in the door with them.
- Show personal interest. Learn everyone’s name and greet them by name. In informal settings, ask the students about their lives. Let them know something about you. Let them use you as a role model.
- Interrupt all put-downs. Do this from the first day. This is one occasion where you should use adult authority to set a correct policy.
- Encourage laughter and humor (although never at someone else’s expense). Keeping things light can go a long way toward improving the mood of a group.
- Start with personal sharing. Begin each meeting, class, or workday with a chance for each person to share something new. Just a minute lets people check in and reconnect with each other.
- Practice giving “good attention.” Explain that the power of attention can make a big difference. Some of this is taught by example. Genuinely pay attention to what participants say. Youthbuild participants often enter the program feeling unimportant. Making sure that others listen attentively when someone speaks is a good way of changing that attitude.

Leadership development can be woven throughout all phases of Youthbuild programs. Depending on the skills involved, leadership can be developed

- in the classroom,
- at a retreat,
- on a policy committee or other decision-making body,
- during individual counseling sessions, and
- at the work site.

Students are introduced to these basic skills in the classroom. Learning is best accomplished by doing—for instance, by helping run a Youthbuild program as a member of a policy council or tackling construction problems at the work site.

Measuring Growth in Leadership Development Skills

As Youthbuild has matured, experience showed that a list of specific skills or competencies related to leadership and a way of measuring them helped strengthen the leadership aspects of the program. Your curriculum—both in and outside the classroom—might include the following competencies.

These competencies are intended to be the basic qualifications that Youthbuild graduates need to succeed in the world of work.

Personal Development

- 1) Can keep and use a weekly schedule and calendar for the entire program year.
- 2) Can set and achieve personal development goals.
- 3) Can manage anger constructively.
- 4) Can make and use a personal budget.
- 5) Can demonstrate dependability, responsibility for self, and other basic skills required to secure and hold a job.

Group Leadership Skills

- 6) Can listen well to others in class, in a meeting, and on the work site.
- 7) Can take useful notes in class, in a meeting, and on the work site.
- 8) Can lead an effective group discussion.
- 9) Can explain and participate in methods used to make group decisions.
- 10) Can define the functions, skills, and attitudes of good leaders.
- 11) Can participate in various forms of self-evaluation and group feedback as a way to evaluate his or her progress.

Community Leadership Skills and Knowledge

- 12) Can effectively use a telephone system.
- 13) Can find information through researching.
- 14) Can give basic information of how local, state, and federal government works.

A Policy Committee

Every organization has a governing core of people who make important decisions that affect how well the organization works.

In many Youthbuild programs, youth participants are made part of the governing core, sharing decision making with the director and the staff. Typically they are elected by their peers at the end of a retreat or after an orientation period.

Occasionally, the director must make a final decision that some people do not support. But most of the time, people in the governing core work together to reach decisions that everyone can support.

A Youthbuild policy committee can be the central place where these decisions are made. Its members often undergo intense leadership development and then use these leadership skills elsewhere in the community. A policy committee can also ensure that the Youthbuild program is genuinely responsive to the participants' needs.

The benefits of sharing decision-making responsibilities are great. But so are the pitfalls. The Youthbuild director and staff must learn how to genuinely share responsibility without abdicating. Failing to prepare a policy committee for its duties may be setting it up to fail.

To avoid these traps, we recommend that a Youthbuild program have

- a director who has deep faith in the ability of young people to make decisions and take responsibility for the program and who is willing to bring the program's most fundamental issues to a policy committee;
- staff members who agree with and support the concept of sharing decision making with young people;
- a structure and group process that draws out the best in young people; and
- serious and ongoing training in the leadership skills needed on a policy committee.

Suggestions

If a policy committee has no real responsibility, the young people will sense it immediately. If they are led to believe that they will have real responsibility and then are left to flounder by themselves, are not taken seriously, and decide only unimportant matters, then they will be disillusioned, disappointed, and will not respect the process.

Here are suggestions for working with a policy committee:

- A policy committee works well as a partnership between the young people, the staff, and the director, not as an adversarial relationship.
- Youthbuild programs emphasizes mutual respect between all program participants. When respect prevails, coercion on the part of the staff or director fades as a method of handling conflict.
- A policy committee will not work just on its own. Members need training, good leadership, and constant nurturing.

The Role of the Director

The directors in many programs meet regularly and consistently with their policy committees. If the policy committee meets with only the counselor, the young people may feel they are being slighted: "You're not important enough for the director to meet with. Whatever we decide here will still have to be approved by the director."

If a director trusts young people with a high level of decision making, they feel respected and have an investment in seeing that things go right.

The director must perform a balancing act to keep the policy committee on course while not dominating it. The director's role may include

- giving full information as background for good decisions,
- raising concerns not raised by the young people,
- nurturing the group dynamics so that all members participate,
- consulting without supplanting the thinking process of the group,
- guiding decisions so that the judgment of the young people becomes increasingly sound,
- hanging back enough so as not to be a dominant force, and
- being directive and firm when necessary.

Policy Committee Responsibilities

Traditionally, youth committees in other programs make rules that only affect the young people, such as a dress code or the planning of extracurricular events. Rarely, if ever, do they participate in such basic decisions as hiring staff members or budgeting.

In contrast, a Youthbuild policy committee may have a far reaching set of responsibilities, possibly including

- participation in the hiring of staff;
- recommending improvements in program management and services;
- consultation on program design, policy, and changes;
- review of the annual budget, where appropriate;
- consultation on the firing of staff, although the director has final authority;
- reporting to and consulting with the rest of the program;
- planning events of its own design; or
- solving problems as needed.

Sharing decision making with youths can be challenging. The director must want the policy committee to succeed and give its members the tools to succeed.

Sample Process

A policy committee may be asked to participate in hiring staff. To illustrate how a policy committee can work well, let's look at an example of a hiring process that involves a policy committee.

To begin with, everyone understands their roles. Hiring is a central function of a director. So the director is sharing decision making, not abdicating power.

The director or other staff person screens all the applicants. The director conducts a complete interview of serious candidates.

A staff member thoroughly checks the references of all serious candidates, talking to the last three supervisors and writing down comments verbatim so they can be shown to the policy committee. It is essential that the references be fully checked before the candidates are presented to the policy committee. In that way, the policy committee will have the information it needs to make a decision and will not be in a position of seeing its decision reversed if the references are negative. It also demonstrates to the young people the importance of references and of building a track record for oneself.

While the director is screening candidates, the policy committee is also prepared to make its decision. The youths review and understand the job description, list the required qualities and responsibilities, write down questions to ask candidates, and decide whether the decision will be by consensus or overwhelming majority. (Many programs feel that a simple majority is not enough; they want most, if not all, of the people to agree. It's not a win/lose situation, but one of building unity.)

The policy committee interviews the final candidates. (The policy committee has been prepared to conduct these interviews. They know what questions to ask. They have been reminded always to give the candidates their full attention, always looking at them, not giggling or chewing gum or otherwise distracting the group.)

After each interview, each policy committee member gives a one-word response—yes, no, or maybe. This gives everybody a quick reading of first impressions.

Then each member states the reasons for his decision, with everybody listening to each person fully and respectfully. People should be encouraged to express all of their concerns.

The group discusses the candidates thoroughly until a consensus is reached. If a consensus cannot be reached, then other candidates may be interviewed.

After the candidate is chosen, the group decides who will inform him or her and when.

Staff members then express appreciation to the policy committee members for a job well done!

When the policy committee successfully participates in the hiring process, a stronger staff and program can be created because

- The interview weeds out candidates who show discomfort with sharing decision making with youths.
- More frequently, it leaves qualified candidates extremely impressed with the seriousness and intelligence of young people and they enter the program with positive firsthand impressions.
- The interview allows the director to see the candidates in action with young people. Job applicants reveal a different set of qualities when interviewed by young people.

- There is both symbolic and real significance for the participants to select the adults who will work with them. The process reverses the feeling that they will have no say in the institutions that affect them.
- The process allows the participants to use the leadership skills they have learned in other parts of the program.

The process of the director screening all applicants and only sending to a policy committee those deemed acceptable, and the policy committee making the final selection, creates a positive situation in which both the young people and the director must agree that a person is well suited for the job.

Ingredients for a Successful Policy Committee

A policy committee will never just work by itself. Its members are inexperienced, untrained, and will be set up to fail if not nurtured.

The following suggestions may help you build a successful policy committee.

- Have the committee meet weekly at a regular time and place and never be canceled.
- Allow time on the work site and school meetings for policy committee members to get input from other young people.
- As much as possible, the policy committee should have a private meeting space, so that the members feel safe in discussing sensitive issues.
- The young people may deliberate on important issues: money, hiring, personnel problems, and long-range plans. The director's role is to consult, inform, ask questions, guide discussion, check the judgment of the young people, and be sure they understand the extent and limitations of authority they have.
- Teach certain skills formally—terminology, good group process, planning, taking minutes, communication skills, making goals, creating timelines, and preparing a budget.
- The director must ensure good group process. Some elements of this are a clear structure with a chairman, an agenda, and time allocations and making sure that everyone has a chance to talk and is listened to and that a few members don't dominate the discussion.
- Encourage the young people to set high standards for themselves. Let them set policy on their own behavior and attendance and periodically review how well they are doing.

Directors in the past have encountered problems when they did the following:

- adopted an overly controlling attitude or were afraid to let the committee make decisions;
- condescended to the young people;
- gave the policy committee insignificant or boring tasks;

- harshly criticized or scolded the committee;
- talked too much, to the point of boring the committee;
- gave too little guidance, leaving the young people too much on their own;
- were too busy to make the policy committee a priority;
- were full of empty rhetoric about sharing decision making;
- failed to confront issues of abuse of power and let problems just slide;
- failed to ensure that the young people were supported by the staff;
- empowered the young people at the expense of the staff, ending up with the staff resenting the policy committee.

Be prepared for difficulty. There will be many obstacles—the press of decisions that tend to crowd out training, personal crises, self-doubt among the young people or just plain boredom because the youths don't find the job exciting enough. But building a strong policy committee offers many rewards. It is well worth the time.

Counseling

Counseling is a key component of Youthbuild programs. Counselors help participants deal with their feelings, behavior, and thoughts. Because participants generally come to a Youthbuild program with a variety of past negative experiences, the counseling process is critical to healing and turning their lives around.

Counselors have been most successful when they enter Youthbuild with certain underlying assumptions about young people, for example:

- Young people have inherent worth.
- They deserve respect.
- They need to be included in decision making.
- They are partners and not clients.
- Various obstacles interfere with their full development and this requires working on behavior, feelings, and thoughts.

Counseling Components

Possible components for a counseling program include

- one-to-one counseling sessions, scheduled as needed;
- rap groups;
- various types of support groups;
- behavior management training;
- conflict resolution/mediation training;
- group interventions (by either staff or peers) when behavior becomes disruptive;

- life skills development and planning;
- a case management system;
- referral to outside agencies.

A counselor is not a psychologist, physician, or policeman. There may be circumstances that the counselor is not qualified to handle. Look for signs of severe mental illness, risk of suicide or homicide, or other problems that may be beyond the expertise of the staff. If warranted, contact the appropriate professional.

Counseling Approaches

Counseling can be done in any or all of the following ways:

- Case-management, in which the counselor coordinates the use of social services available in the community and links the young person, on a one-to-one basis, with appropriate services.
- Life-skills training, aimed at providing information and training toward achieving personal goals, and life-management skills including hygiene, housekeeping, handling one's finances, dealing with anger, birth control or pregnancy care, AIDS and STD prevention, self-presentation skills, conflict resolution, time management, and so on.
- Individual and group counseling sessions, led by a trained counselor, where specific issues and problems can be discussed and analyzed, and resolutions proposed and encouraged.

While the form of counseling services delivery may vary, your program may also approach counseling from a variety of perspectives. The following are perhaps the most common, and may be used in combination with each other or additional approaches.

- In a therapeutic approach, participants confront negative behavior within a residential program (usually for the treatment of substance abuse) based on reality therapy, behavioral change, and peer challenge and support.
- In a psychotherapeutic approach, counselors attempt to heal pain rooted in the past by exploring the family, social, and cultural experiences that shaped a person, rather than focusing on instinctive, biological factors.
- Peer counseling allows laypeople, rather than professional therapists, to assist each other with life difficulties, most commonly exchanging turns as counselor and counseled.

Each of these counseling approaches can be useful, depending on the skills of the counseling staff, the needs of the participants, and their willingness to participate in the counseling effort.

Personal Involvement

It is important that participants know that you care about them and feel they can confide in you. This must be balanced against the actual or perceived impression of a counselor becoming too personal.

Individual, personal counseling is valuable. This can take the form of

- providing a shoulder to cry on,
- being available to listen to dilemmas and feelings brought by a student faced with a problem or decision to be made,
- challenging students to take responsibility for the consequences of their actions and behavior, or
- give sound advice or a good scolding when necessary.

Counselors should also take some common-sense precautions.

- Don't meet with students, especially those of the opposite sex, in a totally private setting. Keep a door open.
- Document your interactions with students. Keep a daily record of issues discussed and follow-up required for each trainee.
- Do a periodic reality check. Ask yourself, "Am I getting too personally involved?"

Confidentiality

Confidentiality of personal information secured as part of the counseling process is fundamental. Counseling files should be locked at all times, and only authorized individuals should have access to these files. Maintaining confidentiality of the counseling process is important not only to protect the privacy of participants, but also to gain and keep their trust in you.

However, both counselors and participants should know that the counselor-participant relationship has no legal protection or rights to privacy. In some situations, counselors are required by law to inform the program director or other authorities—if the participant has, for example, committed a crime or threatened to kill someone or commit suicide. In other cases, the counselor may need to share information with other staff members in order to deal with a problem effectively.

Initial Assessments

At the time that a participant enters the program, it is useful to prepare an initial assessment form to establish a baseline of information about each participant. The information recorded in this form should be coordinated with the general program application form so that duplication is minimized. The form should be filled out as part of an initial assessment interview conducted by the counselor with the participant.

A sample Initial Assessment form is included on pages 71–73.

Personal Development Plans

A few weeks after the participants start work, it is recommended that each prepare a personal development plan with the assistance of the counselor. A personal development plan is a tool to help the participants think about and measure their short-term (three to

six months), intermediate-term (one year), and long-term (three to five year) plans for themselves. The personal development plan should be reviewed and updated every three months by the participant, with the assistance of the counselor. In this way, trainees can measure and evaluate their progress towards meeting their personal goals during the course of the program.

Staff Role in Counseling

Everyone in Youthbuild has a role in counseling participants. Although only one person may have the title “counselor,” participants tend to gravitate toward individuals with whom they feel comfortable. To take advantage of the staff’s insight into the counseling needs of the participants, it is useful to hold regular “case review” meetings with all staff. At these meetings, staff reviews the cases of participants that are in need of special attention. By sharing their insights about a trainee and agreeing on a common plan, the staff can implement an effective counseling approach that is consistently applied on the site, in the classroom, and at the office.

One Youthbuild program devotes every Friday afternoon to staff meetings. The participants are let out in the early afternoon so that the entire staff can meet. Every other Friday is “case review” time, when the personal development of up to five participants’ is discussed in detail, and a plan of action for the staff to follow is agreed upon.

Youthbuild: Looking Back and Looking Ahead

Name _____ Program _____

Date _____ Age _____

This survey will help us learn about you, your needs and expectations from Youthbuild. We will ask you to answer the same questions when you finish the Youthbuild program to help us see how you have changed and how effective the program has been.

PART 1: THE PROGRAM

For each part of the Youthbuild program listed below, please indicate HOW IMPORTANT it is to you:

	Most Important	Very Important	Important	Not Important	Doesn't Apply To Me
a. Construction training and classroom instruction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Help getting into college or technical school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Better math & reading skills & GED preparation skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. New friends and positive people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Helping my community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Getting paid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Helping me learn about my community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Learning how to become a better leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PART 2: THE FUTURE

1. Five years from now, how likely do you think it is that you will:

	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Likely	Not Likely	I have not thought about it
a. Have a good job?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Have a H.S. diploma or GED?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Have a college degree?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Vote regularly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Be proud of yourself?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Be married?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Be politically active?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Be in trouble with the law?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Be living?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Participate in organizations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Speak at some public meeting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Want to be a leader in your community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Play a positive role in your community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. Have a positive attitude towards life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o. Have children? (or more children)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
p. Have moved out of the neighborhood?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. What goals have you recently accomplished?

3. What do you want to be when you are 30 years old?

4. What is the most important way you hope to change during your year in Youthbuild?

Please use the rest of this page to tell us anything else about your Youthbuild experience that you would like people to know.

Chapter Five

The Education Component

The purpose of this chapter is to help programs develop goals for their education components. The chapter will also introduce program managers to the issues involved in designing and managing the education component, and to the most effective techniques in working with Youthbuild participants at varying academic levels.

HUD requires the following from a Youthbuild education component:

Educational Services designed to meet the basic educational needs of participants. Examples include basic skills instruction, remedial education, bilingual education for individuals with limited English proficiency, secondary education, and courses designed to lead to the attainment of a high school diploma or its equivalency (GED). It can also include counseling and assistance in attaining post-secondary education and required financial aid.

Key Elements of the Education Component

The Youthbuild education component will be most effective if the following four elements are all taught in the classroom, as well as in other parts of the program. For students who have not succeeded in traditional educational settings, the integration and relevance of all aspects of your education component can be the key to success.

Academic Skills

Academic skills training is required by HUD, and provides for functional skills learning in reading, writing, and math. It sets a foundation for future learning. It fosters critical thinking, problem solving, and conceptual understanding in a practical-skills context.

Academic skills may be effectively integrated with construction, job readiness, and leadership development. Reading and writing skills can be linked to construction; mathematics learning can involve the measurement and geometry of the worksite. Academics can also be linked to the development of important life skills—for example, through reading and writing assignments that require students to reflect on their behavior, their community, and their future direction.

Students often learn more successfully when their academic work seems relevant and meaningful. Students can be given the opportunity to explore and analyze their community, racial, and cultural issues that are important to them and related to their experience.

Classroom instruction may be individualized, within a group context. When each student's skills are carefully assessed at intake, the academic program can be tailored to individual needs. If the path for achievement and advancement is established specifically for every student, no student will work too slowly or too rapidly in any area.

Academic training should facilitate the development of skills in a conceptual framework that guides students toward passing the GED examination or earning a high school diploma, and builds the foundation for college.

Vocational Skills

Vocational skills training is also required by HUD. This area of training introduces students to the basic tools, materials, and skills necessary to work in the building trades at an entry level.

Expectations for student vocational skills learning can and should be clearly established up front. Every effort should then be made to help students meet those expectations.

Vocational skills can be taught both on site and in class. When possible, students can be introduced to new skills in a workshop setting, allowing time for review and practice. The skills taught in class can then be correlated with the skills needed for production at the site. On the site, students can be given structured, daily opportunities to discuss and review skills learned.

Job and College Readiness Skills

Job and college readiness skills training introduces students to the essential skills necessary to find and keep a job, and to apply for and attend college and trade schools. Each student might build an individual job readiness portfolio, possibly including a résumé, job application, cover letter, job interview practice sheets, and other samples of the student's work that demonstrate job readiness.

Leadership Development Skills

Leadership development training introduces students to the essential skills needed to develop awareness of their circumstances in the context of the larger world, to participate in democratic decision making, and to have a positive impact on their own lives and the lives of others.

Leadership training is most effective when it occurs in all aspects of the program.

Opportunities for the development of leadership skills can be made available through participation in program governance, community service projects, and through a variety of activities in the classroom and on the site. (See page 60 for sample leadership activities in the classroom and on the job site.)

Educational Models

One of the most important decisions a program will make is the choice of an educational model. Which model you choose depends on a number of factors particular to your site. In the adult basic education (ABE) model, students acquire the high school equivalency diploma (HSED, or, as it is more commonly known, GED) by passing a series of tests. In the high school diploma model, students acquire diplomas not by passing tests but by completing an agreed-upon number of credit hours, within an approved curriculum.

The Adult Basic Education Model

Many Youthbuild programs have opted to gear their education program toward the attainment of the GED. By deciding to use the ABE/GED program model, they have chosen to run an independent education program in which attainment of basic academic skills and eventual attainment of the GED are primary. In this model, the program can be self-directing, self-monitoring, and self-evaluating. Success is defined by students successfully passing a series of standardized tests. How your program gets them there is totally up to you to determine.

There are important factors to consider in opting for the ABE/GED-preparation approach. In choosing to use this model, a program must

- become acquainted with its state's guidelines related to the attainment of the GED:
 - what ages are eligible to take the test?
 - what requirements are there to take the test?
 - what are the costs of the test?
- be prepared to teach the skills necessary to passing the test:
 - can the program find teachers who are experienced with the GED exam, with using GED preparation materials, with designing GED preparation curricula?
- investigate possible links to the local school system related to the GED:
 - are there other GED programs in the community that receive support from the local school board?
 - is it possible to contract with the local school district to receive salaries for teachers who teach GED skills?

Collaboration With Adult Education Programs

A new Youthbuild program not within an agency with ABE/GED experience may well consider a collaborative approach to the education component. Many locales have existing ABE/GED/adult literacy programs that are well developed and experienced working with the population served by Youthbuild. A number of Youthbuild programs have effective collaborations with existing ABE/GED programs within either the local public school or community college system to provide the education component. Working with a community-based organization that offers such programming may also be an option.

The following steps are helpful when approaching existing adult education programs.

Investigate their track record. Ask about their success rate in preparing their program participants to pass the GED. Ask about their student profile, then talk to individuals who have been through their program, especially individuals who fit the profile you expect to serve in your Youthbuild program. Find out about the stability and consistency of quality of their teaching staff.

Determine their willingness to collaborate. Find out if they have worked with other agencies, then talk to staff in those agencies to find out how it worked out. Ask if they would be comfortable allowing you to select your own classroom teacher, perhaps from a pool of their choosing, or if they would agree to jointly interview and select your teaching staff.

Discuss details. Be clear about the need to allocate some teacher's time for coordination between the academic and on-site components, both during the initial planning and on a regular (at least weekly) basis once the program is underway. Discuss supervision, support for staff development and training, funding, what costs each organization can cover and from what sources, and payment procedures.

Advantages of the ABE/GED Model

Autonomy. Programs typically are not bound to fulfill bureaucratic requirements of any other agency or the local school district, though this depends on funding sources.

Creativity. Programs that choose this option generally have more flexibility in curriculum design and can prepare students for the GED in a variety of innovative ways.

Flexibility and individualization. There may be more flexibility in relation to student selection criteria; if programs are prepared to, they can offer an individualized approach that provides beginning students with appropriate ABE instruction and channel GED-ready students into a GED-oriented curriculum. Students can progress at their own speed, and are not bound to any external requirements of hours in the classroom.

Educational value. While the high school diploma may have greater social value, some argue that passing the GED exam signifies greater knowledge. Passing the GED may require higher reading skills, for example, than earning credits or passing state graduation competency exams.

Disadvantages of the ABE/GED Model

Low marketability. Some studies indicate that students with a traditional high school diploma are more likely to be hired than students with a GED.

Tendency to “teach to the test.” There is often a temptation to focus solely on the skills needed to pass the test, rather than the competencies and skills required for broader intellectual development. This is avoidable, but requires a philosophy that sees attainment of the GED as only one of many significant academic benchmarks.

The High School Diploma Model

Many Youthbuild programs have become interested in establishing a high school diploma program. In most states, the local school system has a legislative mandate to educate young people up to the age of 21. Diploma programs can be established in numerous formats, including independent study within a traditional high school or in a school-to-work program.

Charter Schools

In the last few years, a number of states have instituted charter schools as part of education reform legislation, thereby making it possible for alternative school programs to grant high school diplomas and access public education funds. Two programs in the Youthbuild network have been granted charter school status. To find out more about the possibility of forming a charter school in your area, contact your state department of education.

Collaboration with the Local Public School System

Collaboration with the school system may be an option if you can identify individuals within the system who are willing to be innovative, flexible, and supportive of alternative approaches to education. If you choose this option, the following process may be helpful.

Determine the school's capabilities. Research the school system's attempts to bring back young adults who have dropped out. Are they seeking out alternative programs to remedy their dropout problem? If the school demonstrably cannot handle the problem, Youthbuild has a role to play in the system.

Get the school administrator to buy in. Seek out the person responsible for alternative education, and convince her of the benefits of establishing an off-site alternative program, with the possibility of bringing private funds to address the high dropout rate. Find out if the system is already running unique and creative programs that demonstrate administrative capability to handle alternatives. If the local school system does not have anybody responsible for alternative education, find a senior administrator who is open and willing to explore alternatives for those students whom the system has failed.

Find a good match in a local school. In some school systems you may be required to establish a collaboration with a particular local high school. If this is the route suggested to you by school administrators, several factors need to be considered in deciding on a school:

- a strong faculty or pool to draw from which an enthusiastic, flexible, and interested teacher might be found to work with Youthbuild;
- an innovative and creative principal who is enthusiastic about the Youthbuild model; and
- someone with a sense of urgency who would consider and push for policy alternatives if roadblocks arose related to the implementation of Youthbuild within the system.

Determine and approve graduation requirements. The next step is to work out the graduation requirements and curriculum content with the school system. This should be done by your program's teaching staff as part of the planning process.

It is important to work out an agreement that allows for the integration of construction and leadership material in the basic skills curriculum. The agreement should

involve the ability to award credit for leadership material and other less traditional program content. Ask if the school system offers options for earning the high school diploma, including either credit-based, competency-based, or certificate-based.

Investigate other factors. Can the school system help you with funding? Are they willing to let your program hire, train, supervise, and fire its own teachers? Experience has shown that a Youthbuild director's ability to select, supervise, and if necessary dismiss teachers is key to successfully working with the public school system.

Advantages of High School Diploma Model

Credibility. The local school district has legitimacy as the institution responsible for providing education within a community. Districts have the public mandate and resources to carry out comprehensive educational programs. Thus, a diploma granted by the school district may be more respected than a GED awarded by an independent agency.

Marketability. In the last few years, studies have shown that GED attainment only results in a four percent gain in wages. Based on this, more alternative schools are considering ways to grant a high school diploma. In some geographic areas, employers have a marked preference for diplomas.

Motivation. Many programs have found that students are sometimes more motivated to seek a high school diploma than a GED.

Systemic support. Local school districts have financial resources, teaching staffs, libraries, computers, and other equipment and resources that a program might access.

In addition, a high school diploma model may be best for students who are close to finishing their diplomas. It will be relatively easy for them to acquire the few credits they need to graduate.

Disadvantages of High School Diploma Model

Less flexibility. Many schools have specific credit requirements for graduation. Young people who have dropped out of school with few credits will have a more difficult time making up the necessary credits to receive a high school diploma.

Bureaucratic constraints. The hiring process for teachers, administrative paperwork, and programmatic decision making may be cumbersome and lengthy.

Mistrust. School districts with significant high school drop-out rates may have staff, curriculum, and learning environments that are viewed negatively by youth and communities of color.

Deciding Which Program Model Is Most Appropriate

There are a number of factors to consider in deciding which program model is best for your organization.

Examine the needs and opportunities in the local community first.

- What are the demographics? Are you likely to find Youthbuild applicants who are only a year or two of credit hours short of attaining a high school diploma? Or will you more likely get applicants who are eager to learn but many years short of the credits needed for a traditional diploma?
- What is the value of obtaining a high school diploma over a GED?
- What is required in the local community to earn a diploma?
- Are there opportunities in your community to earn diplomas by passing the GED exam?

In determining the advantages and disadvantages in providing either an ABE/GED or diploma option, examine the strengths of your existing staff and of the potential staff available in your community.

- Do you have instructors who are experienced with teaching in ABE or GED programs?
- Is it easy in your community to hire qualified GED teachers?
- Are there certified high school teachers in your community who could adapt to the innovative Youthbuild approach?

Examine what other support is available in the local community for the model you choose.

- Is it possible to forge relationships with community agencies that provide ABE/GED instruction?
- What links can be made to union apprenticeship programs to provide students with opportunities to take entrance examinations?
- What links can be made for sharing resources with local colleges and vocational schools?

Staffing Procedures

The education component requires an adequate number of staff members to ensure quality education for participants. All members of the academic staff should demonstrate sound educational knowledge, experience working with youth, and an understanding of your program's goals. Curriculum development experience is particularly important. Your staffing pattern should reflect all functions necessary to the academic program's effective and successful operation.

What Staff Should Be Hired?

It is recommended that the staff involved in the education component should at least include, but not be limited to, the following.

Program Manager

A program manager functions as the principle coordinator of all educational, leadership development, counseling, and follow-up activities. The program manager should have experience teaching or managing education or youth programs. Important qualities for a program manager include creativity, energy, sensitivity to staff concerns, and ability to build a team.

It is recommended that a program manager supervise the teachers and counselors, and coordinate regular reviews of student performance and needs. Other duties may include the following.

- **Provide adequate planning time for staff.** The trainees' schedule should be set up in a manner that facilitates planning time for staff. One half hour may be allocated before trainee arrival on-site to permit instructor planning or meeting to review the day's activities. Daily staff planning times may be set up for the morning, midday, or later in the afternoon. Weekly planning meetings may be established once a week when trainees are scheduled for a regular enrichment activity. This permits the academic, construction, and counseling staff to coordinate and integrate trainee learning and development.
- **Facilitate development of education component.** The manager may coordinate in-service training for teachers, supervise teachers, and coordinate regular reviews of student needs and performance.
- **Facilitate communication between components.** The program manager must establish, with input from staff, meeting schedules and various other means for staff to communicate ideas for trainee development, and more particularly for integration of their various activities with each other. The program manager can be the point person who coordinates education activities with the on-site construction manager.

Classroom Teachers

The classroom teachers must have experience teaching basic skills to a diverse group of young adults and experience in creative curriculum planning and implementation.

Vital qualities to seek in classroom teachers include strong commitment to the trainees and a deep respect for their intelligence and capacity for learning. Teachers should be creative, energetic, responsible, and open to supervision. They must be able to work as part of a team, to ensure seamless delivery of services to trainees.

Many programs use non-academic staff as classroom teachers in certain subjects. For instance, counselors often teach job readiness and leadership skills; construction managers or site trainers might teach vocational skills in the classroom. Assess the skills of your staff to determine how best to use them.

The teaching staff works together to teach academic, vocational, career, and life skills at varied academic levels. It is important that they know how to assess the needs

and progress of students, to develop individual learning plans for each student, and implement a relevant interdisciplinary curriculum.

How to Find Qualified Candidates

Clarify Staff Roles and Qualifications

You may ask local vocational schools, community colleges, GED programs, and alternative public or private schools for specific advice on what to include and not include in job descriptions and staff qualifications, and where to find the best qualified staff for your Youthbuild program. Current or former teachers, educational administrators, and counselors are excellent prospects. Prospective staff may also have had experience as employees or volunteers in other programs that work with a similar population of young people. Your local or state employment security office may be able to refer you to qualified unemployed persons.

Interview

It is often a challenge to find teaching staff with both the necessary academic credentials and successful experience with the population group that participates in Youthbuild. Take time to thoroughly interview candidates. Introduce candidates to the uniqueness of your Youthbuild educational model and ask them to respond to its key principles. Look for flexibility, creativity, respect for young people, and skill in their area of expertise.

Ask candidates about their experiences with young people and their feelings about working with young adults who have not succeeded in traditional settings. Give them scenarios to help you determine their ability to deal with typical problems.

Do not hesitate to ask experts in the community to assist in the interview process if you do not currently employ staff who can identify the qualifications you need. For example, if you need to hire qualified vocational instructors but do not yet have staff with construction or teaching experience, ask an instructor from a local trade school or a member of the Carpenter's Apprenticeship training program to help you identify candidates, develop questions, and sit in on interviews to assess candidate qualifications.

Involve Young People

It is recommended that current Youthbuild participants or youth members of your planning team help interview candidates and define staff roles and qualifications. Note that youth input is generally advisory in nature, with staff making final decisions.

Curriculum

The academic program must offer interesting opportunities for program participation, in order to promote enthusiasm for learning in even the most discouraged student. In order for an academic program to be successful, it must address the students' learning abilities and their academic, emotional, social, and work-related needs.

Establishing Specific Educational Objectives

Prior to intake, it is helpful to establish specific educational objectives—specific statements about what students will be able to do upon completion of the program.

You may want to use the following questions as a guide in planning educational objectives.

Long-Term Skill Objectives

- What are our general skill objectives for the students (as workers and learners) by the end of the program?
- What qualities make a “ready worker”?
- What qualities make a “ready learner”?
- What will students be able to do?

Once you have established overall skill objectives, your teachers can develop appropriate short-term skill objectives and teaching strategies geared toward meeting these objectives.

Short-Term Skill Objectives

- What specific skills will students have at the end of a one- to two-month learning unit?
- What will students be able to do?
- How will these skills be assessed?

Teaching Strategies

- What strategies and methods will we use that will both teach and reinforce these educational objectives?

Evaluation and Documentation

- How will we determine whether educational objectives have been achieved?
- How will we document this ongoing evaluation?

You will be able to decide what is feasible based on the amount of time you have with your students, the number of students you have, the skill levels of the students, and so on. You might choose to establish as expectations only those goals that are realistic, based on the progress that can be made in one program cycle. Present your specific educational expectations to the students in the very beginning of the program, in order to set a tone of seriousness, high standards, and confidence.

Suggested Educational Expectations

- Demonstrated academic improvement in reading, writing, and math.
- Minimum attendance requirement of 90 percent.
- Mastery of monthly or bimonthly academic competency requirements.

- Mastery of monthly or bimonthly vocational/construction competency requirements.
- Successful completion of job/college readiness competencies.
- Successful completion of leadership development competencies.
- Successful completion of individual educational objectives (objectives will vary depending on student skills and program goals):
 - earn a certain number of credits,
 - achieve high school diploma,
 - pass sections of GED test,
 - pass GED test, or
 - pass apprenticeship examination.
- Successful completion of driver's permit test.
- Successful attainment of driver's license.
- Demonstration of good work habits, attitude, and leadership skills in classroom and at worksite.
- Completion of exit examinations.

Prepackaged Curricula

It is not necessary to reinvent the wheel and develop your own curriculum from scratch, when you can build off of a number of good prepackaged curricula. It is recommended that any curricular material be adapted to the needs and interests of your particular student population, and the cultural and community context that will make it relevant and meaningful. Following are several curricula which can be purchased commercially and have been found suitable and effective for use in Youthbuild programs.

Recommended Curricula for the GED

- **Contemporary Books**—Adult basic education books that cover a wide range of topics including basic skills, vocational/workplace, English as a second language (ESL), and GED preparation.

Contemporary Books
Two Prudential Plaza #1200
180 West Stetson Avenue
Chicago, IL 60601-6790
(800) 621-1918

- **New Readers Press**—Adult education material that emphasizes literacy skills and multicultural material for students preparing to pass the GED.

New Readers Press
(800) 448-8878

- **Steck-Vaughn**—Adult education material that emphasizes real-life mathematics and reading case study approaches to preparing for the GED.

Steck-Vaughn
P.O. Box 26015
Austin, TX 78755
(800) 531-5015

Suggested Prepackaged Curricula Leading to a High School Diploma

Each of the following companies has developed a prepackaged high school diploma curriculum that is approved by the United States Department of Education and the accreditation commissions—the National Home Study Councils and North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Be advised that these schools charge a tuition fee for their services. The prices vary from per course to the full GED program package.

American School
850 58th Street
Chicago, IL 60637
(313) 947-3300
(Founded in 1897)

Learning and Evaluation Center
515 Market Street
P.O. Box 616
Bloomsburg, PA 17615
(Founded in 1974)

International Correspondence School
Newport/Pacific High School
925 Oak Street
Scranton, PA 18515
(800) 541-8232
(Founded in 1890)

There is also a rapidly expanding range of computer-based curricula available for ABE/GED instruction. These include the Vocational Evaluation System and Plato© 2000 Fast Track Software.

Vocational Evaluation System (VES)

The VES is a computer system consisting of 28 independent, self-contained carrels. Although particularly interesting and relevant to those of lower socioeconomic backgrounds, the VES can be used by anyone for vocational exploration, job preparedness, and vocational evaluation. Individuals complete job-related projects that are subsequently graded for time required and errors made. Costs for each carrel range from about \$1,700 to \$4,700.

For more information, write or call:

New Concepts Corporation
2341 South Friebus Avenue
Suite #45
Tuscon, AZ 85713
(800) 828-7876
(602) 323-6645

Plato© 2000 Fast Track (TRO Corp.) Software

PLATO courseware is targeted to specific competencies and skill levels in a number of subjects. It incorporates skill development instructional strategies with real-life applications, with the goal of helping students develop critical thinking capacities and acquire relevant workplace skills. From basic skills remediation to prevocational training, the comprehensive scope of PLATO courseware is an appropriate resource to meet the needs of the target populations served by Youthbuild programs.

The PLATO system, used as an adjunct to a GED program, can cut students' preparation time for the GED significantly. It allows students to work at their own pace and is user friendly.

For more information, write or call:

TRO Learning, Inc.
Corporate Headquarters
4660 West 77th Street
Edina, MN 55435
(800) 44-PLATO
(612) 832-1000

Competency-Based Curriculum

It is recommended that the academic program be competency-based, keeping in mind that students will be working on various levels and have a wide range of needs. Short-term, easily attained benchmarks will help to keep the participants interested in learning by showing them that they are making progress on either a daily or weekly basis. These benchmarks can be outlined in a competency checklist. (Similar checklists can also be used for job development skills, career and life skills, and leadership skills.) Through these checklists, both students and teachers can track the student's progress on a regular basis.

A competency-based curriculum enables Youthbuild programs to foster teacher creativity in instruction, boost student motivation, and improve program accountability. A competency-based curriculum is structured around a core of measurable or specific student learning objectives. These objectives define the intended outcomes or end result of instruction, but not the means, the instructional method, or the materials. A competency-based curriculum thus offers teachers unlimited opportunities for innovative approaches to instruction, while holding them to a concrete set of expectations defined in terms of student outcomes.

A competency-based curriculum motivates students by giving them clear and frequent measures of their progress. By tackling and mastering a sequence for competencies, a student experiences regular and noticeable progress through the program. Students always know which objective they are working to achieve. Some competency-based GED curriculums allow students to test out of competencies they have already acquired, before instruction is offered.

In a competency-based curriculum, each student progresses at her own rate, so the curriculum will take less time for some students than for others. Because a student can have all the time she needs to master each objective, she need never fail to reach an objective.

Finally, a competency-based curriculum can help programs become more accountable to themselves and to funders. For example, a student's progress through a GED curriculum may be recorded on a single form, and the data, when regularly counted, averaged, and summarized, can yield for a given time period—e.g. monthly—the total number of competencies achieved, the average number of competencies achieved per student, and the average length of time a student takes to achieve a given competency or the average competency. For programs that also need to document the progress of students who do not complete the program, a competency-based curriculum can be especially valuable.

Interdisciplinary Theme-Based Curriculum

An interdisciplinary curriculum is one that draws on several disciplines simultaneously, rather than teaching subjects in discrete blocks. It can be designed as a collaborative effort between the academic, leadership development, job readiness, college preparation, and hands-on work experience components of the program.

Many students learn skills best within meaningful contexts. Students have real questions about their lives, their societies, their neighborhoods, their futures; these questions can inform all classroom learning. When teachers plan the curriculum, they can choose themes of study that focus discrete skill learning on topics that are interesting to students, relevant to their life experiences, and broad enough to encompass information related to all of the components. Examples of themes include work and working, the local community, family and parenting, and housing.

After identifying specific competencies as learning objectives, teachers can discuss how they can be fostered in the various subject areas, through the exploration of a theme.

Individual Learning Plans

An individual learning plan, also known as an individual education plan, is used by the teacher to provide the following for each student:

- a record of present academic level in reading and mathematics,
- short-term classroom objectives needed by the student to achieve proficiency in reading and mathematics,
- academic assessment to determine if the student has mastered these objectives, and

- documentation of assessment results.

Developing Individual Learning Plans

After teachers have done a combination of standardized and individual testing in reading, writing, and math, they will have a fairly detailed picture of each student's skills and areas of need. Using competency checklists as a guide, teachers can identify the specific skills that individuals need to work on. An individual learning plan enables teachers to outline the specific activities they would like each student to do during the course of the unit. Time should be incorporated into the daily schedule for students to work alone, or with assistance from teachers and tutors, on the assignments outlined.

Plan Individual Learning in a Group Context

Individual learning activities can correspond to the overall goals of the group, but at the level appropriate for the student. For example, suppose the whole group has been practicing recognizing details in their reading, by working in groups to list the details about a character in a story they have just read. During independent learning time, students can supplement this learning at their own pace: beginning readers are assigned to a chapter in an adult literacy reader of their choice that focuses on searching for detail, while GED students might work on this skill in specially selected sections of the “Interpreting Literature and the Arts” chapter of the GED workbook.

Student Involvement in the Development of Learning Plans

Students can be involved in planning their individual learning plans. Students may be told the results of various initial assessments and may speak with the teacher about the skills they need to develop. It is helpful for students to be aware of both the skills on the competency checklists and the requirements for successful program completion.

Assessment

Purpose of Assessment

Assessment is the process of gathering information about student learning, in order to make decisions about further actions. Assessment tools can be used for a variety of purposes—for instance, to help us

- measure what students are learning as well as how well they are learning;
- understand how students learn;
- understand student interests and personal histories;
- help students to understand their own learning;
- evaluate the effectiveness of learning activities, curriculum materials, and overall program objectives; and
- summarize and document student learning.

Assessment is an integral part of a dynamic, “living” curriculum.

Initial Assessment

It is helpful to conduct an initial in-depth assessment of the students' needs, learning strengths, and weaknesses. The curriculum should be built around the information gathered in this assessment, using students' current academic levels as a starting point.

The first assessment should take place during initial intake. At this point, standardized tests may be used, because they are efficient and give rough grade equivalent scores.

After a grade equivalence level has been established, teachers should plan to schedule a time, preferably during orientation, to meet with students individually to listen to them read and interview them about their academic histories and experiences with learning.

Ongoing, Individualized Assessment

A participant's academic level can be determined in a variety of ways throughout the program cycle. Some standardized testing is useful initially, but all of a student's knowledge will not be discernible from these tests. Participants should be given opportunities to demonstrate their skills in a variety of ways: to write about things they are interested in, to speak about their interests informally with a teacher and in groups, and to demonstrate their knowledge in activities. Participants may also assess themselves, which will help them understand and think critically about who they are and what they know.

Program Assessment

Assessing the education component itself can help ensure that the program meets the needs of trainees. Staff can develop their own assessment process following the steps below.

Determine the Purpose of the Evaluation

Decide for whom you are doing the evaluation. Are you doing it for yourselves, as a staff, so that you can honestly determine your strengths and weaknesses and better achieve your ends? Are you doing it for present and future funders, who will need quantitative results to determine your eligibility for funding? Are you doing it for the board of directors, so that they can help you improve? Are you evaluating the program in such a way that you can satisfy the demands of all three?

Determine the Format of Your Evaluation

Consider doing an evaluation that has both qualitative and quantitative elements. Keep accurate records so that you can give solid statistical information, but be prepared to support the facts with explanations. (For example, state that you graduated x number of students, but be prepared to explain why, what worked, what did not, and how you plan to improve next year.)

Programs may collect data to answer questions such as the following.

- How effective was the teaching and training? What additional skills do our instructors need?

- How closely did we stick to the model? How appropriate was it for our students? What were the problems and how can they be fixed?
- Did we recruit the right students? Were we able to meet their needs? How can we improve recruitment?
- Did we establish reasonable, achievable objectives? Did students learn what we wanted them to learn? If not, why not?
- Did we develop a comprehensive curriculum that encompassed skill objectives in a relevant and meaningful way? What was good about the curriculum? What needs to be changed?
- Was the classroom design conducive to discipline and learning? Was the worksite design conducive to discipline and learning? Did we have a manageable, simple, consistent schedule? How can it be improved?
- How effective were our academic assessment tools? Do we have an accurate sense of student achievement?

Evaluate Throughout the Program Year

Gather information for your end-of-year evaluation throughout the program year. On a regular basis, assign staff to collecting data on, e.g., attendance, retention, termination, grade level improvement, and acquisition of GEDs or diplomas. Establish regular meetings with all staff to review data so that shortcomings can be acknowledged and addressed before they become crises.

Involve All Staff

It is recommended that all staff be involved in bimonthly evaluation sessions. Staff can be asked to review the program from the perspective of their own component as well as others, and can address program-wide concerns. In addition, staff should be involved in evaluating the program at the end of the year.

Involve Students

It is recommended that students, too, be asked to do both written and verbal evaluations of the program on a regular basis. Have alternating representatives of the student body sit in on bimonthly evaluation sessions; have all students complete end-of-the-year questionnaires. Use student self-evaluations as part of your determination of progress.

Graduation

While graduation requirements vary a great deal between local Youthbuild programs, it is important to establish your program's graduation requirements and make them clear to trainees up front. Youthbuild students typically achieve their academic goals in varying lengths of time. Some trainees may successfully pass the GED test several months before the program cycle ends. Others may make significant progress but not pass the tests before the program cycle is completed. In any case, it is important to recognize the achieve-

ment of all students who have made academic progress, fulfilled the graduation requirements, and completed the program.

It is recommended that a graduation ceremony be included at the end of each program cycle. During such an event, certificates of completion and achievement can be awarded, and outstanding performance in a variety of aspects of the program can be recognized. A Youthbuild graduation ceremony often serves as the first time in a young person's life when she is recognized in front of peers, friends, and family for completing something positive. The value of such recognition cannot be overestimated.

Chapter Six

The Construction Component

The construction process is a way of carrying out the mission of youth development through a practicum of discipline and hard work. It establishes a sense of pride and ownership through rehabilitation or construction of buildings in the community. Controlling the construction process brings economic power. Youthbuild may use that power to forge relationships that benefit young people in the community.

Construction gives young people a practical environment in which they can apply the academic skills of math, English, reading, and writing. Participants learn basic standards of employer expectations, preparing them for the realities of the work world. The construction process nurtures the entrepreneurial spirit essential to any economically viable community.

Hiring and Training the Construction Staff

The construction component of the program requires an adequate level of staffing to ensure both a quality construction job and quality training for the participants. All members of the site staff should demonstrate sound construction knowledge, experience working with youth, and an understanding of program goals.

What Staff Should Be Hired?

The following positions are critical to the success of the program.

Site Trainers

Site trainers work side by side with participants, guiding them through daily work tasks. They demonstrate and explain correct work practices, and supervise each participant in the safe and proper execution of all tasks. Site trainers must ensure that everyone has full opportunity to learn procedures by doing. At the same time, they must guarantee that no participant is allowed to perform tasks in a manner that might compromise safety or satisfactory results.

To fill this position, look for a special kind of person—an individual with sound construction ability, a genuine interest in helping young people to learn, and the maturity and work habits of a role model. An effective site trainer must be patient, energetic, and adaptable, a person who can treat participants with objectivity, inspire their involvement, and mete out praise and criticism in a fair and constructive manner. We recommend that a program seek journeyman-level tradespeople.

Site Supervisor

This person reports to, works closely with, and shares many of the construction manager's responsibilities. Whereas the construction manager is typically office-oriented, the site supervisor works in the field.

The site supervisor must have several years' experience in similar construction work and in field supervision. This individual is responsible for ensuring that all installations are executed according to plans, specifications, and acceptable standards of practice. The site supervisor is directly responsible for maintaining materials and equipment inventories, ensuring adherence to appropriate safety and site security measures, coordinating daily work assignments, supervising site staff, and keeping the construction manager informed, by verbal and written reports, of construction progress and developments.

The site supervisor is responsible for organizing daily work, with a special attention to the participants' training needs. In this regard, the individual must not only organize and supervise the work site to maximize production, but must also do so in a way that maximizes training opportunities in the process. The site supervisor must be willing and able to set the tone of a teaching environment on the site, to be an active teacher, to mediate problems and conflicts, and to monitor and report on participant progress.

Construction Manager

Unless your project is very small, you will probably require a construction manager. Aside from handling the many administrative aspects of your project, the construction manager carries the overall responsibility for the construction work, the on-site participant training, and for coordinating with the rest of your program staff.

This is a key position. It must be filled by a competent manager with sound knowledge of the construction trades, as well as solid leadership skills.

How Large Should the Staff Be?

The size of the staff will depend on both the size and schedule of your project and the number of participants. A sufficient ratio is one that can reasonably guarantee adequate supervision and personalized attention in all circumstances. It is recommended that a ratio of one site trainer for no more than six or seven participants be achieved.

How to Find Qualified Candidates?

Site staff must be multitasking. Finding candidates with the right mix of construction skills, training experience, and commitment to youth development, within the salary limitations of the nonprofit sector, can be very challenging. One good source of candidates is retired union carpenters. Another potential source is vocational school faculty. But whatever the source, take the time to find out just how deeply skilled they are in their craft, how well you think they will handle a Youthbuild training environment, and how committed they are to your organization's mission.

Staff Training

Even the most experienced staff can become frustrated by the special demands of this program. Staff training is consequently very important. These initiatives can take many forms, including ongoing staff discussions on training methods and goals; seminars and workshops on special topics; and one-on-one, situation-specific discussions around issues as they arise.

Working with Subcontractors

At every Youthbuild work site, portions of the construction work are let out to subcontractors. Although the program is committed to a building rehabilitated by participants, it is sometimes more advisable (for future tenants as well as for the trainees) for trainees to be able to witness expert tradespeople perform certain work. In many locales, electrical, plumbing, and heating work must be done by licensed tradespeople.

Every effort should be made to have the subcontractor involve the participants in the work by observing and assisting. The degree to which this can be arranged will usually depend on the particular subcontractor and on the stipulations included in the bid package or contract.

Training the program's participants cannot be expected to be a major priority of the subcontractor. However, often the "sub" will be happy to get involved, with the added benefit of no-cost labor. It is wise to take the time to craft bid packages and contracts which incorporate training, internships, and even placement as considerations for hiring subs.

Before assigning participants to subs, it is important to establish some parameters:

- Make sure the subs understand the program and its goals. Don't allow anyone to undermine the priority placed by the program on safety, developing good habits, and behaving professionally.
- Ensure that working with subcontractors is a meaningful experience for the participant and not an exploitative one.
- Subcontractors should provide the same high level of supervision as program staff. This is necessary for both participant safety and learning.

Establishing, Adhering to, and Reviewing Construction Schedules

Construction Scheduling

Developing and maintaining a clearly organized and realistic schedule for program construction activities will vastly improve your organization's ability to manage a project. Among other benefits, the construction schedule will enable you to

- develop cash flow projections;
- identify completion dates for specific tasks;
- indicate when additional staff should be hired or work be let out to subcontractors to expedite job progress;
- identify necessary lead times to order non-stock material, prepare bid documents, and initiate building utility tests and applications;
- establish intermediate goals to help motivate staff and participants and provide a sense of accomplishment when goals are met; and
- provide the sponsor with early warning that additional time and/or funding will be required to complete project work.

The Critical Path Method

There are many different scheduling techniques of varying complexity and utility. The Critical Path Method of construction scheduling is a worthwhile way to coordinate the work of the Youthbuild crews with other requirements of the project.

Establish Milestones

Identifying individual work tasks and milestones is a critical aspect of your schedule. Setting attainable short-term, intermediate, and long-term goals will help motivate staff and trainees.

Be Detailed

Remember that the construction schedule also has other purposes—including tracking in-house and subcontractor progress. A detailed schedule helps ensure that no task slips through the cracks. It will remind staff to order materials for the next phase of the project, or to submit payment requisitions in time to guarantee a steady funding stream.

Update the Schedule

A current schedule is a sure indication to funders that you have a firm handle on job progress, including all of your contractual and budgetary commitments.

Review the Schedule with Participants Regularly

The construction schedule is a valuable teaching mechanism. Reviewing the schedule with participants will help put their work in the context of the entire job.

Scheduling and Pricing Participant Work

Developing and maintaining realistic and adequately detailed estimates is generally required by funders. Estimates become the basis for the sponsor's preparation of periodic monthly requisitions for construction costs. The expediency of the funder's approval is in large part contingent on the clarity and accuracy with which this document is prepared.

Of equal importance, the process of developing the estimate offers the sponsor an opportunity to analyze the project in detail before construction begins. It also helps the construction manager with scheduling and ordering materials.

Common Misconceptions in Project Estimating

Sponsors often mistakenly believe that their chances of being awarded a grant are enhanced by presenting overly optimistic estimates of anticipated construction costs. In fact, most agencies recognize the high cost of residential rehabilitation and will only immediately reject those proposals that far exceed the historical costs of projects of similar scale and type. Nevertheless, there may well be acceptable justification for higher than normal projections of construction costs.

Many sponsors prepare estimates under the assumption that significant savings will be realized in construction costs by using in-house staff and low-wage program partici-

pants on site. It has actually been our experience that these anticipated savings are generally negated by the relative inefficiency in site production due to programmatic objectives and realities. Sponsors are therefore advised to develop initial estimates as though the work would be performed by commercial contractors.

Following are some points to keep in mind as you prepare schedules and cost estimates for participants.

Expect Everything to Take Longer and Cost More

When asked the secret of his success as a builder, a well-known developer once said, “I double the construction estimates and triple the time estimates, and if the project still works, I’ve got a winner!” Needless to say, the complexity of weaving Youthbuild crews into a construction project could easily add time and expense to your project. Generally, Youthbuild takes twice as long as standard construction on a given project.

Balance the Demands of the Production Schedule Against the Learning Needs of Participants

Ideally, the training and construction aspects of Youthbuild projects meld so that effective training and quality low-income housing can be created simultaneously. In reality, this is a major challenge. The inexperience of participants can compromise the quality and efficiency of the construction, while the imperatives of the construction process can test the patience and perseverance necessary for effective training.

Some construction trainers feel that the Youthbuild site should strive to keep real-world construction timetables and deadlines as a way to maintain a realistic training environment (as well as to keep carrying costs low). Others prefer to elongate the production schedule to compensate for the training needs of the participants.

Remember to Schedule the Work in Relation to the Work of Subcontractors

Don’t schedule a training session on putting in a doorway if the masonry subcontractor is planning on putting in stairs on the same day.

Estimate Costs of Materials

When estimating materials for the training part of the project, assume that there will be a significant amount of waste as the participants learn to cut and install.

Estimate Time Costs

In the balancing act of addressing your training needs and meeting your schedule and budget, a critical factor will be how much time you allocate to each aspect of the project. Remember that extra time usually means greater expense, including supervision, insurance, construction interest, security, utilities, and other carrying costs of the project.

Safety and Security on the Site

Construction sites can be dangerous places. In the interest of safety, it is the responsibility of everyone on the site to ensure that the work site is as clean and efficient as pos-

sible. Also, everyone should know basic first aid. Staff should conduct safety training and teach and adhere to federal and state Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards.

Construction Site Rules

The following basic site safety rules are practiced in the construction field and should be practiced on the site.

- Everyone, including visitors, must wear hard hats—no exceptions.
- Safety equipment should be of high quality. Dust masks and proper work boots are not luxuries.
- Smoking is not allowed on the site.
- Alcohol and drugs, as well as people under the influence of alcohol and drugs, are not allowed on the site.
- To prevent accidents, the site must be kept well-lit and neat.
- Participants should be under adequate supervision at all times.
- Thorough training in the use of tools must precede their use. Power tools can be very dangerous if not properly used and supervised.
- All tools should be in good repair.
- Throwing any item, however small, out of any window is prohibited.
- Horseplay on the site is prohibited.

Give copies of these rules to all participants and post a sign reminding people of these rules where appropriate.

Security

All equipment should be stored under lock and key in a safe location away from the construction site if at all possible. Only equipment that is used day to day should be left at the site during off-hours, and then only if under lock and key in a secure location within the building.

Organizing the Site

The manner in which the job site is organized and managed is fundamental to the success of both the building project and training effort. Keep as your goal a professionally-run job site, one that will enhance your program's reputation and develop construction workers who are prepared to enter the professional world.

Keep It Clean

A cluttered work environment promotes cluttered thinking and haphazard teaching. Insist that tools be returned immediately after their use, that dropped nails and screws be picked up, that materials be stacked properly, and that work stop 15 minutes early each day to ensure that the floors are swept and that everything is put in its proper place. Participants should be assigned responsibility for their particular work areas and for the equipment in their use. This responsibility should be monitored diligently by site staff.

Maintain a Consistent Daily Work Schedule

The daily work schedule should be clear and consistent and should replicate a normal construction trade work schedule as closely as possible. Participants should sign in and note their time of arrival. (See the sample timesheet on the following page.) Allow time for exchanging anecdotes before assigning work or making announcements.

Latecomers and stragglers should not be overlooked; they do themselves and the rest of the group a disservice and should receive whatever consequence the program policy and the particular circumstance demand, be it a stern warning, docking of pay, counseling, or suspension.

Note: Do not assign menial and unappealing jobs, such as clean-up and moving of materials, as punishment. These jobs ought to be shared by everyone as part of their common training experience.

Make Clear Work Assignments

Participants should be told clearly what their tasks will be for the day, both individually and as a group. They should know which supervisor and coworkers they will be working alongside, whether to expect interruption to unload a scheduled delivery of materials, and so on. It is useful to set a realistic target for the amount of work to be accomplished each day.

Take the following factors into consideration.

- Which participants work best together? (And which participants need to learn to work together?)
- Which participants need practice in a particular area of work?
- What is the rapport between particular participants and supervisors?
- Should you group slower or more reluctant students with one or two of the more advanced students or should you group students who work at a similar pace?

Maintain a Work-Oriented Atmosphere

Complaints, personal problems, and anecdotes should be saved for breaks, lunch time, and non-work hours, except when a supervisor feels that a situation warrants immediate attention. There is always time for appropriate humor and good cheer, but clowning and horseplay cannot be tolerated during work hours.

Set Intermediate Goals

Over the course of the project, trainees will be more enthusiastic and purposeful about their work if they see it within a definable context. It will be easier for them to apply themselves for the seemingly endless work of laying subfloors, for example, if they are regularly reminded that they will eventually be able to move on to the next (and by this time more appealing) stage of framing.

Weekly Timesheet

Instructor _____ Jobsite _____ Classroom _____ Location _____ Code _____

Date	Hours					Daily Comments					Daily Tardiness								
	M	T	W	T	F	Total	M	T	W	T	F	Total	M	T	W	T	F	Total	
Trainee																			

Total Present: _____ Program Manager: _____
 Total Absent: _____ Staff's Signature: _____

- Comments Codes:
- 4—Outstanding (On Task)
 - 3—Satisfactory (Making Progress)
 - 2—Fair (Not Performing to Ability)
 - 1—Poor (No Effort or Desire)
- Tardiness Codes:
- 1—Morning Lateness (7:30 Worksite or 8:30 Classroom)
 - 2—Late from Morning Break
 - 3—Late from Lunch Break
 - 4—Late from Afternoon Break

Other Comments: _____

Closing Shop

Allow enough time to clean up properly and return equipment to its proper storage location. To boost participant morale, acknowledge and praise the day's accomplishments. End the work day with a brief announcement of the plans for the next day (or week) and remind everyone to be at work on time. Participants should sign out when they leave.

Keep a Daily Log

It is recommended that the site supervisor keep track of the major events of each day. Daily records should document attendance, work performed, problems that emerged relating to the construction or to the trainees, special accomplishments, and new tasks or procedures begun on the site.

Keep Back-Up Work Available

Sometimes things don't work out the way we plan. Materials arrive late, subcontractors don't show up, equipment breaks down, and so on. Think ahead. Don't get caught without a back-up project for participants.

Tools and Equipment

There are two kinds of tools and equipment: inventory tools for individual trainee use and tools for common use.

Individual Use

Participants should be allocated a basic set of hand tools and equipment for their personal use. This set will expand as additional tools are required. For example, participants will not need tin snips until the project moves into metal stud framing.

Participants should be held responsible for their personal tools and equipment, just as they would be on any construction job. They can be provided with a safe place to store their tools overnight and on weekends, or trusted to take their tools home with them at the end of the day. However, they must be held accountable for any tools that they lose or damage through neglect. In addition, participants who arrive at work without their equipment should not be allowed to work on the site.

Participants should be taught that their tools and equipment are extensions of themselves as construction workers. Without using and caring for them properly, they cannot do their work properly. The respect shown for their tools and equipment should be recognized as a reflection of the respect they show for themselves and their future careers.

In some cases, program tools and equipment that are purchased with program funds technically belong to the program's funding agency. Tools assigned to participants for personal use should be returned if they leave the program before graduation. Participants who complete the program in good standing, however, can be allowed to take their tools along to their job placement if your funding source allows.

Suggested Tools and Equipment for Participants

- Work Boots
- Work Gloves
- Goggles
- Hard Hat
- Leather Tool belt
- 20-Ounce Rip-Claw Hammer
- 25' Tape Measure
- Retractable Utility Knife
- Combination Square
- Metal Snips
- Chalk Line
- Four-in-One Screwdriver
- Carpenter's Pencils

Suggested Tools and Equipment for Site (Items and Quantities will Vary)

- Portable Generator
- 7 ¼" Circular Saws (3)
- 10" Circular Saw
- Screw Guns (6)
- Electric Drills (3)
- Reciprocating Saw
- Rotary Hammer Drill
- Chain Saw
- Jig Saw
- Power Miter Box
- Portable Heaters
- Extension Cords
- First Aid Kit
- Fire Extinguisher
- Steel Lock Box
- Stepladders
- Wheelbarrows
- Shovels, Brooms
- Crowbars, Picks
- 4' Spirit Levels
- Framing Squares
- Rope, Hose
- Miscellaneous Hand Tools (e.g. Chisels, Trowels, Wrenches)

Tool and Material Inventory

Keep a running inventory of all equipment for common use on the site. All such equipment should be conspicuously labeled. You may find it helpful to use an equipment sign-out sheet when materials are taken. At the end of each day, it should be someone's specific responsibility to ensure that each tool has been returned to its proper storage location and is in good working condition.

A form like the following can be used to keep track of trainee and Youthbuild tools and equipment that are stored by the program and distributed to trainees on a daily basis.

duty construction. Construction trainees do not need top-of-the-line equipment. They do, however, need equipment that will survive the wear and tear of the project.

Do not skimp on equipment by devising makeshift methods for performing a job. Doing so compromises learning proper use and care of conventional tools. When costs are prohibitive, equipment needed for only a short-term job can be rented.

While it is important to introduce newer, more mechanized industry tools and methods (especially when this will expedite construction progress), this should not be done at the expense of learning conventional methods and tools that are still widely used. For example, participants should not use a pneumatic nailer before learning the proper techniques of hammering nails by hand.

Defining Competencies and Setting Learning Objectives

The importance of producing a top-notch building is more than just a response to the need for solid, dependable housing. Quality workmanship and production is an end in itself. It is inextricably connected to the teaching of proper procedures and work habits and is part of the promotion of pride and accomplishment. Furthermore, it is the finished building that will stand in the community as a monument to the program and its builders long after graduation day.

One fundamental objective of the Youthbuild program is “job readiness.” Graduates should be prepared to enter the construction field at an apprentice level equipped with the personal “tools” to succeed and progress from there. Therefore, you must evaluate and determine specifically and realistically what skills you expect to teach during the course of the training cycle.

This curriculum will be determined by the nature of the building project, the learning capabilities of the participant group, the nature of local job opportunities, and the agency’s particular resources and philosophy.

Basic Skills

The following are some basic skills that all participants should improve or acquire within the program cycle:

- preparedness (coming to work in proper dress, with tools, awake and ready to function well);
- basic understanding of and respect for site safety requirements and work regulations;
- attendance and punctuality;
- acceptance of supervision and ability to follow instructions;
- progress in development of specific trade skills (e.g., rough carpentry, finish carpentry, masonry, painting, drywall hanging, taping and compounding, demolition and excavation, joist replacement);

- progress in the skilled use of both manual and power tools (e.g., drywall (screw) guns, a variety of circular saws and sanders, jackhammer or chipping hammer, carpenter’s level and hammer, chalk line, corner bead tool, tin snips);
- blueprint reading;
- cost estimating;
- chairing and participating in site meetings;
- learning to complete assigned tasks;
- cooperation with coworkers and project staff; and
- learning trade vocabulary.

Basic Construction Competencies

Participants should master basic manual skills, proper tool use and identification, construction terminology and vocabulary, methods of installation, and material use and identification.

They should also develop construction trade sensibilities, including how to organize and undertake particular tasks, logical and efficient sequencing of work, acceptable standards of work quality, comprehension of basic structural mechanics, and job site problem solving and troubleshooting.

They must learn and understand the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of employment in the field of construction, develop sound work habits and attitudes, and learn how to cope with conflicts and misunderstandings without jeopardizing their employment.

Measuring and Communicating Individual and Group Progress

Each sponsor must establish minimal skill levels. Regular assessment will identify which participants need additional practice time or assistance. Consistent assessment practices and recognition of achievement can help motivate students to do well.

In evaluating progress, be aware of when a participant can only do a job or use a tool under close supervision, and when he can perform the same work independently. The key goal is to empower participants to work on their own in order to secure their future earning power in the field.

Trainees should also be measured on their progress in meeting individual goals. This can be done in individualized conferences.

Crew Management and Motivation

Working with a group of participants can be either a delightful or onerous experience, depending on how well you run your program. Young people will observe you closely and note inconsistencies and inequalities. Always remember that just as you are evaluating participants, they are evaluating you.

Be Consistent

- Are rules enforced in a timely, fair, thorough manner?
- Are staff allowed excessive privileges and the benefit of the doubt while participants are denied the same?
- Do you follow through on commitments by you and by the program as a whole?
- Does the site staff say one thing while the classroom staff says another?

Set the Right Tone

The tone of the work site will be set and maintained by the site supervisor. The site supervisor must strike a balance between teaching, demonstrating, joining in, stepping back, and correcting.

All staff should work to develop unity, respect, and appreciation for the program as a whole. Stress that the project is bigger than any single individual.

Set Good Examples

Does the staff act in a fully responsible, professional way? If a staff person is arriving late to work, harassing a participant, or leaving work site tasks half finished, you have a problem that requires immediate response. The site staff should strive to be good role models, as workers and as concerned citizens.

Offer Leadership-Building Opportunities

The quality of training is enhanced if you can provide leadership-building opportunities for participants. This can be done in both the planning and implementation stages of the job. For example, you might

- give an overview of the whole construction process to the young people on a planning committee or to the new trainees in the program, explaining the larger development picture and who will be served by the project;
- have the young people sit in on contract negotiations;
- involve trainees in planning for better working conditions and improved teamwork on the job site;
- encourage trainees to figure out solutions to construction problems as they arise;
- create official jobs for trainees to serve in leadership roles on the job site, such as security chief, tool manager, site set-up supervisor, tour guide.

Coordinate Construction with the Academic and Vocational Components

Vocational, academic, and life skills are inextricably related. To the degree possible, skills taught in the classroom should be reinforced on the site, and vice versa.

For example, it is recommended that staff time be set aside for the construction staff to meet with teachers and counselors to review progress and any issues of individual train-

ees. Four to eight hours per week of vocational lessons in a classroom or shop setting during the academic portion of your program should be coordinated with the work actually taking place on the job site. For example,

- during the planning stages of a segment of work, have students estimate the time and materials needed for completion as a math assignment;
- after explaining the estimating and bid process, have trainees work on doing take-offs on various parts of the project, also as a math assignment;
- have trainees keep journals of progress and observations on the job site as a regular writing assignment.

Support the Total Program

The classroom and counseling components contribute to the total employment training effort. Without full coordination and mutual support, the potential for integrated growth within this program will deteriorate.

Communicate with Counseling and Classroom Staff

Be sure that communication with classroom and counseling staff is a direct and visible aspect of your program. Regular staff meetings including all staff are essential.

Supervise Participants' Work Closely

Most participants are eager to learn. If participants are not learning steadily, they will become disenchanted with you and the program. Make sure that you organize the site to maximize opportunities to interact with staff. Provide continuous feedback verbally (in individualized, weekly mini-conferences) and in written monthly evaluations.

Encourage, Motivate, and Set Targets

Short-term (daily or weekly) production goals provide useful challenges to participants: "Show me how many sheets of plywood you can get nailed down today," or "Let's see if you can get eight more sheets of plywood nailed down by lunch time". They can also instill an understanding of production necessities: "We've got to get this stack of plywood sub flooring nailed in place before the load of framing lumber arrives on Wednesday!"

Think of ways to provide a meaningful, enjoyable, and challenging experience. Do not adopt measures that will compromise site safety. It is simply irresponsible to allow a participant to use a power tool before teaching its proper use, or to perform a task with improvised equipment, to work under open floors without a hard hat, to remove a safety cord because "it's getting in the way," to work with radios blaring or while wearing a Walkman, and so on.

It is equally irresponsible to allow a participant to feel satisfied with substandard workmanship that would be unacceptable in the marketplace. It is far more beneficial to the participant (and to the future residents of the building) to insist that work be redone—even at the expense of project schedule and budget—than to allow the participant to believe that a piece of work is adequate when it is not.

Participatory learning helps participants learn to think creatively.

Consider using the following techniques to foster a sense of ownership and leadership.

- Invite political and community leaders or a class from a local school to the site, and ask two participants to lead the tour of the operation. Make sure these participants are aware of some of the key data (what will rents be once the apartments are completed, who can live here, when will it be finished), and give them the opportunity to take some credit for the job. Activities like these have the added advantage of developing community and political support.
- If your program has a policy committee, work them into the construction schedule. Allow policy committee delegates appropriate flexibility to get to after-work meetings on time. You might refer issues that arise on site to the policy committee for recommendations. At weekly site meetings, encourage a delegate to report to the other participants and staff regarding decisions made and issues still under discussion.
- Program T-shirts or uniforms help build program identity and site professionalism.
- Ask participants to chair site meetings.
- Keep the participants informed of long-term plans, short-term objectives, and any contemplated major changes in plans or personnel.
- Ask for feedback.

Construction Site Issues

No matter how well the groundwork has been laid, even after you have hired a great staff, integrated the participants into the work, created an excellent scope of work, brought supplies and tools to the site on time, and gotten people paid in a timely manner, things can still go wrong.

Despite your best efforts, there will almost certainly be allegations of theft, a participant who is not performing well, or a capable staff person who is slacking off noticeably. Someone will appear to be on drugs, someone will whisper about another being a crackhead. There may be a fist fight or worse. Threats of vandalism or assault may be uttered against the project or the staff.

Relationships between participants could develop and interfere with productivity on the worksite. Some participants will complain about receiving low pay “for doing big-time construction work.” They may organize a mini-walkout over a particularly contentious issue, or just to get a break from a hot July sun or a February freeze. After paychecks are distributed, the site might clear out for several hours, even if work had been scheduled to resume at the normal time.

Each of these potential situations, and the many others that will arise unique to your site, can have a deleterious effect on the quality of your training program and on your production schedule. But if you run a tight ship, follow through on commitments, and manage to maintain a stance that is both firm and fair, you can avoid many of these pitfalls.

The master rule is to be aware of the currents and undercurrents among the staff and participants. To accomplish this, the staff must be open and responsive to each participant. This will not eliminate troubles, but it will help you to react to them more promptly and effectively. Here are some guidelines to follow when the going gets rough.

- Don't ignore any irregularity, and deal with it directly. Often a private word with an individual can quietly scuttle a problem before it reaches great proportions or becomes very visible. If it has already exceeded that level, make your response known to others at the site.
- Your choice of style can lessen the likelihood of a negative reaction to your presence and policies, and build staff and participant respect for your leadership. Maintain an even keel. Be professional. Never assault people verbally or criticize them publicly. Sarcasm is counterproductive. When you confront someone regarding her performance, balance your comment with some assurance that progress is being made, or an expression of your confidence in the person's ability to do better. Avoid swearing and inflammatory phrases. Keep your response in proportion. Do not exaggerate the potential negative impact that might result from a specific rule violation.
- Be involved at all times, not just when there are problems. Working with staff and participants on good days will build a base of respect that will help solve problems as they develop. Walk the site and know the issues that people are complaining about or appreciating. Take breaks with the participants and staff whenever possible.
- Be aware that it is not unusual for female trainees in particular to be more reserved on the construction site. Seek out their concerns and questions if they are not forthcoming.
- When you resort to disciplinary action, consider these options, in order of escalating severity. No matter what you do, be certain that your actions are fair, consistent, and appropriate. You may want to consult with your staff before making a decision.
 - Talk informally with the person or group, and get an agreement to address the problem.
 - Put the issue on the weekly meeting agenda to get input from participants and staff regarding the best way to resolve the issue.
 - Single out the person involved and clock the individual out for the day without pay. Site supervisors usually have unilateral authority to clock out trainees who are not performing, provided they report to the construction manager promptly. Place a brief written explanation in the trainee's file. Sometimes it is appropriate to allow the person to continue to work on a voluntary basis for the rest of the day.
 - Take away a desired privilege.
 - For more severe offenses, or if a pattern of violations has emerged, suspension may be required. This should entail a written memo, a term of suspension (usually two days to two weeks), and a brief conference to explain the issues. Long suspensions are probably not helpful, since they drive the trainee away from the program. If a problem cannot be disciplined by short suspensions, termination may be in order.

- Termination is not to be advocated lightly, since it represents failure on the part of both the program and the trainee, but it is sometimes warranted. There are times when it can be a positive step for the program, since it removes a problem and demonstrates to the remaining participants that the program is serious about each person's responsibilities, and about providing a positive context for the group. If you must terminate a participant, a clear and convincing written record must document and justify the action.

One last specific piece of advice: use the term "participant" or "crew member" or "student." Participants are not workers, per se, but individuals who are learning trades and being paid a modest support wage along the way.

Chapter Seven

Job Development and Post-Graduate Program

The leading indicator of Youthbuild program success is job placement, but the real measure of success is long-term employment and career growth for graduates. The trainees need a range of educational, job related, interpersonal, and self-supporting skills in order to achieve self sufficiency. Most programs do all they can to ensure their graduates the greatest possibility for obtaining success.

It is important to establish a baseline understanding regarding the skills of trainees when they begin the program. The baseline is needed not to set limits on trainees, but to allow you to help them set challenging but realistic goals for their next step after Youthbuild and beyond.

The level of training possible in your program partly depends on the starting point of your trainees, but it also depends on the effectiveness of the program's training components. To place your trainees in viable jobs upon completion of the program and afford them the greatest opportunity for success, provide solid job training and good job opportunities upon completion. Pre-employment training, job and educational prospecting, interpersonal development, matching jobs leads with qualified candidates, identifying support systems and job placement follow-up are all critical to your strategy for placing young people and having them maintain and grow in their jobs, careers, and personal development.

Pre-Employment Training

Pre-employment training is the beginning of the job placement process. It provides trainees with job counseling, practical skills, and methods for obtaining and retaining employment. It exposes them to employers' expectations and proper work ethics. It may be a formal part of the classroom training curriculum, but it could also be a large part of the construction training component.

The significant elements of a pre-employment training curriculum are

- introduction to the world of work,
- job counseling,
- interviewing,
- application and résumé writing,
- job search techniques, and
- job retention techniques.

Many young people have never held a demanding job. If they are to be prepared for the rigors of long-term employment, they need to be taught what it takes to make it in today's marketplace.

The young people also have to be prepared for the potential hierarchical attitudes and disrespect that they may face. This is at least a two-level process: controlling oneself in the face of perceived disrespect and knowing what systems are available to avoid or deal with harassment. Role playing, group discussion, written information, and speakers are all an important part of the trainees readiness.

Job Prospecting

Prospecting for jobs and calling on employers is a critical element of job development. When you consider the strengths and weaknesses of the young people to be placed and the fact that marketable skills, a solid work history and reliable transportation are prerequisites for employment, the task of job prospecting becomes one of great magnitude. To the greatest extent possible, employment should offer sensitive management as well as further training and advancement possibilities, job security, and additional benefits.

It is recommended that job leads be developed primarily by the director of the program, but also by board members, the construction staff, and a job developer. The Youthbuild executives' search for commitments from business managers and owners to reserve appropriate construction-related jobs for graduates can doubly benefit the program. Even if jobs are not immediately reserved, these relationships can lead to opportunities for collaboration that can eventually lead to graduate employment.

The Executive Role

The director, construction manager, advisory board, and board of directors are all directly involved in job prospecting and development. They can use the contacts they have developed in the community to market the program, gain the interest of employers, and get commitments for job opportunities. With the director leading and coordinating the effort, the construction manager can utilize his contacts for jobs in the construction industry. Advisory and board members, through networking in their professional and social affiliations, and through contact with potential employers, can obtain commitments for jobs from company executives and business owners.

The ability to develop jobs from the top down is vitally important. Doing so helps insure that the young person is given a real opportunity to succeed. If the business owner or vice president in charge of personnel commits jobs and instructs employees to help make it work, the business has to some extent "bought into the program," creating an atmosphere conducive to success. In post-placement follow-up, the Youthbuild follow-up person works directly with someone within the business who is interested in the welfare of the young person. Through a team effort, the potential for success is maximized.

The Role of the Job Developer

The job developer often serves as the primary person who does formal pre-employment training. It is her responsibility to coordinate the effort to provide trainees with requisite job acquisition and maintenance skills. In working with the academic, construction, and leadership trainers, the job developer tracks the trainee's academic skills and leadership progress as they relate to potential job placement.

The job developer also generates job leads and funnels leads from the director and other executives to graduates. Her knowledge of the skills and abilities of each trainee and the job opportunities that are available makes her uniquely positioned to place graduates based on all available information. For a list of the tasks involved in this function, see Counselor/Job Developer job description on page 18.

If the job developer is designated as the person to do post-graduation follow up, she has the task of maintaining frequent, regular contact with the graduate and the company or business contact. The purpose of this contact is to get information on the employment status of the graduate and to get the employer's and the young person's perspectives on how things are going. The job developer may well have to intervene if there are misunderstandings or conflicts. The sooner intervention takes place, the more likely the chance of averting the young person quitting or being dismissed. Placement follow-up is vital to job retention. The young person needs someone to provide encouragement, support, and help in overcoming obstacles that will arise as she attempts to launch her career. Follow-up also provides the basis for tracking the growth and status of graduates and developing enduring relationships with employers.

Job Opportunities

It is important that employers understand the skills and experience level of Youthbuild graduates. Employers can expect entry-level skills, good work habits, a good attitude, a desire to learn, and young people who will not be a liability to their concern. Developing rapport with potential employers and getting them interested in your program will help smooth the way for your graduates to enter a job situation that is sensitive to their growth and personal needs.

Good job opportunities are like gold. They become the lifeblood of a program and provide great inspiration and motivation to current and future trainees. Good performance by one graduate can lead to a number of job opportunities for others.

Construction Opportunities

Most programs find that roughly half of their graduates are interested in pursuing construction and construction-related jobs, with the rest interested in continuing education or other types of work. It is important to have a good understanding of and contacts within the construction industry in your area. Placements that are generally available include carpentry, drywall, painting, demolition, masonry, and building maintenance.

Union Apprenticeships

The objective to get as many young people into union apprenticeships is a good one. Union training is the best and most complete training provided in the construc-

tion industry. Apprenticeships are available in particular trades where a young person would learn and work toward being a journey person.

Most union work is commercial and thus pays well. In order to get into a union apprenticeship program certain requirements must be met. Most trades require a high school diploma or GED. For mechanical (electrical, plumbing, HVAC) and some other trades, it is necessary to take an aptitude test and score high enough to be included in an apprentice class. Tests are offered and announced at various times during the year through a variety of job referral agencies prior to the test. Other trades (carpentry, painting, and ironwork) do not require a test but do require a letter of intent to hire signed by an employer within 90 days of registration with the union. An apprentice will earn a starting wage of between 30 to 60 percent of a journey person wage. Mechanical and other testing trades are more difficult to get into than non-testing trades. Information concerning testing can be obtained by calling the local union for the particular trade. Some cities have tutoring programs for testing trades. Lists of union contractors for non-test trades and a letter of intent to hire can be obtained by registering at the local union for the particular trade.

Contacts with local AFL-CIO officers and union business agents and their familiarity with your program can increase the possibility of graduates being hired by union contractors. Calling them with a request for hiring one or more of their journey people is a good entrée into a possible union connection with your program. Relationships with major contractors can also provide sources for placement with their subcontractors.

Non-Union Construction

Since most residential construction is non-union, construction jobs in this area are generally more easily accessible. Non-union contractors doing work in your community should be amenable to helping you get young people placed with their subcontractors. There is pressure, as well as a legal requirement, on some to hire people from the neighborhoods where they are doing rehabilitation or new construction. Many have complained that they could not find neighborhood residents who were skilled enough or job-ready. Youthbuild graduates are a ready answer to the problem. Most non-union contractors do their own training. There are some associations that provide apprentice-type training for the non-union sector. This is an area to be investigated through a local contractor or non-union trade association.

Other Construction Opportunities

Opportunities may be found in infrastructure work (roads, bridges, mass transit), factory-built housing, and housing authorities where construction is contracted out (usually to union contractors) and maintenance is done in-house.

In addition, all Youthbuild sites should be aware of Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, which requires that any entity receiving HUD funds for construction activities provide employment opportunities to local residents. Such organizations must, to the greatest extent feasible, provide training and employment opportunities to low-income, unemployed residents in the community in which the

HUD funds are being expended. Youthbuild trainees are a priority group for jobs generated under these circumstances. This legislation can provide leverage for securing jobs from public housing authorities or other HUD-funded housing developers.

Construction-Related Opportunities

Construction-related jobs can be found at hardware and construction supply houses; in the form of maintenance jobs at apartment buildings, colleges and universities, office buildings, hospitals, utility companies and factories; and at architectural and engineering firms.

Construction-related jobs can be found in a number of sectors, including building maintenance, industries that serve the construction field, and local or regional specialty niches. Building maintenance opportunities may be found in such places as large institutions (hospitals, public buildings, office buildings); apartment buildings and large residential complexes; and with utility companies. Industries that serve the construction field include hardware stores, lumberyards, architectural, and engineering firms. Local or regional specialty niches may include asbestos and lead paint removal, weatherization, or factory-built housing.

Local Growth Sectors

Recent business start-ups or development, relocations, or expansions may create local job openings that offer young people entry-level positions and opportunity for advancement. Since not all of your graduates will be placed in construction or construction-related jobs, it is a good idea to have a variety of positions available to them according to their interest. The following are some areas to investigate.

Medical Services

The medical industry is growing. Jobs at hospitals, health maintenance organizations, emergency medical facilities, personal nursing services, and nursing homes can provide those interested in this field a number of job opportunities.

Entrepreneurial

Some of your graduates may have the drive and ability to start their own businesses or be self-employed. Their construction training gives them abilities to do basic construction repair and maintenance. There is plenty of work to do in their neighborhoods, for friends and family members. By doing quality work at prices her customers can afford, a young person can build a good “handyman” business base through word of mouth and minor advertising. Other work such as landscaping and house painting can be used as a self-employment base without large start-up costs. Those who want to start a business or be self-employed should follow their interests, as that is where they will be most persistent.

Part of your follow-up program can assist in the development and operation of businesses for graduates. Help in the development of their ideas, providing information and sources of funding for seed capital and technical assistance, help in writing a business plan, ideas and methods of marketing, and providing bookkeeping and ac-

counting systems or programs will all assist the young person in getting started. If your follow-up program can not assist, make sure the graduates are directed to the proper service organization.

Social Services

You will probably have at least a few young people who, after going through your program, will want to help other young people in a way similar to the way they have been helped. The community linkages you have with social service agencies may provide you with entry-level jobs for those interested. City and county recreation programs also may offer a source of jobs in this area.

Manufacturing

Of course, manufacturing jobs are no longer as plentiful as they were from the '40s into the '70s. Still, there may be opportunities in your area where factories have relocated or have restructured to accommodate the world economy. Smaller manufacturing companies found in most communities will often hire one or two of your graduates.

Environmental

Jobs have been created as a result of the many environmental issues that have arisen over the past few decades. Lead paint and asbestos abatement and water and ground pollution cleanup provide jobs for those trained to do such work. Training programs are many times connected to your local public health agency or state environment department, which can give information as to how those programs can be accessed.

Educational Opportunities

Although GED and high school diplomas are an important part of job placement, some form of additional education is encouraged. Some of your graduates will be interested in additional skills training or higher education upon graduation from the program. They may need assistance in creating educational plans which advance their career goals. Counseling trainees in post-program options seems to work best when it exposes them to all the training and educational opportunities available to them in your local area. Counselors from colleges and universities and recruiters from trade schools can be invited in on days when all your trainees are together to present and explain their programs. Like employers, institutes of higher education should understand the limitations and benefits of accepting graduates. Grants or loans may be available for graduates to get further education. Many Youthbuild programs have obtained part-time education scholarships for their graduates through their state Commissions on National and Community Service (AmeriCorps) or through YouthBuild USA. These serve as extra support and incentives for continuing education.

Internships

One short-term educational opportunity that a program may develop for its trainees is the internship. Internships provide on-the-job training for young people who,

after six to nine months in the program, are placed with private contractors, city agencies or businesses as subsidized trainees. The program pays the intern's salary so there is no risk to the employer. The intern is still considered a full-time Youthbuild trainee, continuing his academic requirement. This is a great opportunity for the young person to test his job skills in the private sector and be exposed to the type of work he may be interested in doing in the future. Close assessment by the job developer will help in shoring up the weaknesses and highlighting the strengths of the trainee.

Internships can work well with developers and contractors who are trying to place neighborhood residents with subcontractors. It gives them an opportunity to provide the subcontractor a trainee at no cost. If the young person does well during the internship period, he has a good chance of being hired by the subcontractor.

Trade Schools

Trade schools provide specific training in construction and non-construction trades. Although a GED or high school diploma are usually required, the training can be more tactile than in other institutes of higher learning. In any event, the training from these schools improve the graduate's employment prospects.

Community Colleges

Community colleges usually offer a variety of programs for community residents who want to further their education but cannot meet the requirements of a four-year college or university. Some programs have agreements with their local community college to help enroll any graduate interested in attending. They also may help with post-program GED services for those who do not receive theirs by the end of the training cycle. The community college can be an excellent step toward continuing on to a college or university.

Colleges and Universities

For those of your graduates who have excelled in the program, entrance into a college or university may be a viable option to further their education. Visits to campuses, arranged through school councils and fraternal organizations, give the prospective student a chance to see and hear what it will take for her to complete a college education. Identify support services of various kinds. If possible, identify a person who agrees to act as a mentor for Youthbuild graduates. The same way a manager's or owner's commitment to the program improves the graduates' chances of job retention, a dean's or counselor's commitment can improve the graduates' chances of degree completion. Bonner scholarships are available at 22 residential colleges throughout the U.S., targeted at students who have performed community service and will continue to commit ten hours a week in college to community service.

Volunteerism

One of the more important tasks your program may choose is encouraging and getting young people involved in volunteer work. Volunteer work benefits trainees by offering them leadership development, community service, personal development, a means to new specific skills, a pre-employment opportunity, job references, and networking. It is important that the community service begun during the program is recognized as both

assisting the community and a possible job benefit. Encourage your staff to have presentations and group discussion around these kind of opportunities.

Graduates Program

The purpose of a Youthbuild graduates program is to provide structure and opportunities for graduates of a Youthbuild program so that they may continue to grow, learn, stay employed, pursue their goals, develop their leadership capabilities, influence their community, and enjoy the kind of positive peer group relationships they experienced during the program. If developed well, it can help to sustain a core of ever-more-skilled young leaders. It is also meant to be a path toward involvement with other youth leaders through opportunities to work together on issues important to them, forging supportive relationships and leadership activities.

If your program is successful in creating a supportive and nourishing environment, some graduates may need to lean on it periodically to renew their strength; some will simply return to continue the positive relationship they formed during the program. If no plans have been made, the young people's visits can be disruptive to your regular program. A graduates program gives them the opportunity to participate, on a voluntary basis, and to provide assistance when they need it. The alumni may also be involved in the decision making and leadership of the program.

Most importantly, the graduates program allows Youthbuild a chance to encourage, support and track the long-term success of its graduates.

Five Components of a Graduates Program

The Youthbuild graduates program can be structured around five key areas:

- continuing education,
- job and career counseling,
- support services,
- leadership development, and
- social life.

The local Youthbuild staff coordinates these components. Optimally, one full-time staff member is dedicated solely to the functions of the graduates program.

Education

A graduates program may seek to assist the graduates in completing their GEDs, if applicable, and reaching other educational goals such as placement in college or technical school. For GED completion, a graduates program can schedule and assist with regular tutoring sessions, cooperative classes, drop-in study sessions, and the like. Individual and group support is extended at the local site for GED attainment. Higher education information, counseling, and guidance are provided. Community resources, college-based assistance for financial aid, and special academic preparation services

are found at schools that graduates want to attend, and those schools are also familiarized with the Youthbuild program. Hopefully, when the young people go to school, a support system is then available.

Job and Career Counseling

Youthbuild graduates often need continuing assistance in obtaining and keeping a job and figuring out a career for themselves. This assistance can include job support groups for dealing with the difficulties young people may meet on the job, career counseling, individual or group counseling about how to keep a job or obtain a new job, maintenance of job listings or data base, continuing assistance with résumé writing and interviewing skills, and ongoing job placement assistance. All of these can be done in conjunction with the counselor or job placement staff person.

Support Services

Attention to the personal and emotional lives of the young people can enrich a graduates program. Graduates often need a chance to check in with a counselor or get some advice or encouragement from their peers, especially when the going gets rough or real-life problems become heavy. A variety of support services can be offered, including but not limited to

- regular peer support groups for parents (including single parents), people struggling with an addiction, and others in difficult situations;
- individual counseling on emotional issues;
- referrals to helpful outside agencies or people; and
- mentorships for the graduates.

Leadership Development

Leadership possibilities are wide open for young people to continue to take responsibility to make things go right. These opportunities are often the incentive for following through on their other responsibilities. Opportunities might include

- continuing as a member of the program's community service group;
- getting involved in other community service programs;
- doing community organizing around a pressing issue;
- becoming skilled facilitators in workshops, which are then offered to schools and community groups;
- networking with other local youth and young adult leadership organizations to build alliances and work on joint projects;
- being "ambassadors" to other organizations (for example, youth, community service, and housing programs);
- speaking on behalf of the program; and
- making media appearances.

These activities allow the graduates to continue their commitment to building their community through the Youthbuild program.

Social Life

A positive social environment can be an important aid in helping young adults continue building a new social group and avoid the snares of a negative lifestyle. Their jobs being new, graduates can find themselves in very lonely positions. They need to have regular fun events with familiar people who are going through similar experiences. Drug- and alcohol-free events could be planned. Bowling, dances, roller skating, beach parties, barbecues, group attendance at concerts, talent shows, and fundraisers are just a few ideas.

Each of these five components may provide incentives or opportunities to participate in and grow in other areas. For example, if a graduate is involved in continuing GED preparation, and is coming to some of the social events, it's likely she will get interested in some of the leadership activities. If young people are coming to a support group, they are more likely to set higher goals for themselves in work and education.

Staffing

A graduates program needs people to teach, counsel, and coordinate it. The focused full-time attention of paid professional staff is essential. It will take real effort to develop a graduates program into something creative, interesting, caring, and helpful enough to keep the graduates involved. To date, YouthBuild USA has tracked three local Youthbuilds' graduates programs. YouthBuild Boston launched its graduates program in October 1992. They hired two graduates from past years to assist, and a full-time coordinator. YouthBuild St. Louis and YouthBuild Tallahassee began in the spring of 1993, and also hired graduates to help coordinate the program. Several key lessons have emerged.

If at all possible, the energies of at least one person need to be devoted to the development of a graduates program. This staff person will need counseling skills to support the young people and administrative organizational skills to be able to manage all aspects of the graduates program. Experience has shown that if graduates have prior familiarity with the graduates program staff, they are much more likely to work with it. One new graduates program director found the graduates suspicious of his intentions because they had not had prior experiences with him. Consequently, he focused attention on the current cycle's trainees in order to insure that they would know, trust, and be familiar with the graduates program and its benefits ahead of time.

It is important to implement a tracking system on the educational and career progress of the graduates. These records can be used in several ways. They can encourage the current trainees and other graduates in their pursuits, serve as a database of options for graduates, and provide feedback to the program on its strengths and weaknesses. They can also provide valuable data to potential funders of your graduates program. It is important to have a mechanism to keep data on outcomes and results of programs.

It is highly desirable to hire a qualified graduate as an intern or additional staff member for a graduates program. Internships utilize the graduates' relationships with one another and give graduates a training opportunity in nonprofit youth service work. Seeing past trainees moving to these positions inspires hope and confidence to the new trainees. Some qualifications you may want an intern to possess include

- being a dependable and respected role model among peers in the program;
- possessing a strong background in youth leadership development;
- exhibiting problem-solving skills;
- possessing knowledge of issues facing young people;
- being able to communicate well;
- a high school diploma or GED; and
- experience with your program's leadership opportunities.

Each graduates program, of course, comes up with its own specific qualifications.

Once qualified young people are available, the scope of the internship position need not be limited to one aspect of the graduates program. Interns can and have helped with every aspect of the graduates program, and with many aspects of the regular Youthbuild program. Administrative assistance, fundraising, construction supervision, tutoring for GED completion, and acting as mentors are just some of the jobs that interns have tackled. Often, the interns' experiences are especially helpful.

One graduates program allowed an intern to handle GED completion for both graduates and trainees. The intern looked at GED completion as a series of steps: filling out forms, paying a fee, study and tutorials, and test-taking. He slightly rearranged the normal site procedures so that everyone had a chance to do each of these steps in a group with support, rather than floundering alone. He made the tutorials into a fun group activity. By the end of the program cycle, 90 percent of the 30 graduating trainees had attained their GEDs, greatly improving on their previous completion rates.

The graduates program director needs to be attentive to the interns under her supervision. As in any other staff position, interns need specific goals, challenges, and support. Our experience has shown that the interns are eager to fulfill their duties. They may not be prepared for some of the difficulties of working with their peers. Absenteeism, low participation, and disrespect from peers may all be problems. The interns will need a support system as they grow into their roles.

Accountability and Governance

The local Youthbuild program is fully responsible for funding and staffing its graduates program. Funding for this can be built into all of the local sites' funding plans. All Youthbuild funding sources can be considered as possible graduates program funders. Often those funding sources that are already familiar with the Youthbuild program are eager to continue funding the progress of the graduates.

A graduates program, like the training program, may have a policy committee that acts as a central governing body. As long as the graduates program remains small—under ten people, for example—all the members can participate in governance. As its membership increases, representatives may be elected. The graduates program director or coordinator would meet regularly with the graduates policy committee.

Chapter Eight

Administration and Management

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the administrative, management, legal, and accounting requirements of operating a Youthbuild program

HUD Administrative Requirements

Included in your package of materials from HUD is a set of forms and detailed instructions on filling them out. The two reports, entitled Youthbuild Program Reports, have different purposes. The Semi-Annual Progress Report is due every six months and is designed to provide HUD with information on your program's progress and on your accomplishments during the specific report period. The Performance Evaluation Report (Final report) is due at the end of the 12-month grant period for Planning grantees and at the end of the 30-month grant period for Implementation grantees. The Performance Evaluation Report will allow HUD to assess the overall success of each grantee's program and report to Congress on the achievements of the Youthbuild Program.

Reporting Schedule for FY '93 Grantees

The June 1995 edition of the *Cutting Edge*, the newsletter of the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Economic Development, announced an important change in the reporting schedule for FY '93 grantees.

In response to a presidential directive to cut by half the amount of reporting that government grantees must do, the Youthbuild program has revised its reporting requirements to require semi-annual instead of quarterly reports.

Note: Failure to submit Semi-Annual Progress Reports by the deadline could result in a suspension of further grant funds until the report is received.

Planning Grants

In terms of reporting, Planning grantees will need to submit Youthbuild Program Reports, parts 1–4.

Youthbuild Program Reports, Part 1, The Semi-Annual Progress Report, requires a 10-page description in concise narrative form providing the following information:

- A. progress made during the reporting period;
- B. activities accomplished, including important events and milestones;
- C. the total amount of Youthbuild funds spent during the planning period for planning activities;
- D. changes proposed to your program design (please note, however, any major changes require prior HUD approval);

- E. impediments encountered during the reporting period and solutions adopted to overcome them, as well as any delays in progress of grant activities because of these activities; and
- F. unusual activities, features, and accomplishments of this grant that would be helpful for other Youthbuild grantees.

In the Youthbuild Program Reports, Part 2, the Performance Evaluation Summary, the information requested is similar to that requested in the semi-annual progress report. However, instead of a progress report, you must provide information about actual progress made in those areas. For example, where the semi-annual report asks for progress made during the period, the final report asks for progress for the entire period. One important difference is that the final report for Planning Grants asks you to describe whether or not a Youthbuild Implementation Program is feasible for your target area. If you think it is, the final report asks you to summarize your proposed program and your intentions to proceed.

To the final report you should attach Part 3, the Planning Application Budget, and Part 4, the Planning Actual Costs form.

Implementation Grants

Youthbuild Program Reports, Part 5, The Semi-Annual Progress Report, is the document to be used by Implementation grantees to report on progress. The report asks for ten or fewer pages of complete and concise narrative summaries of the following items:

- A. progress made during the reporting period in meeting Youthbuild program goals and objectives;
- B. activities accomplished during the reporting period, including important events and milestones;
- C. the total amount of Youthbuild funds spent during the reporting period for implementation activities;
- D. proposed changes, if any, in program design (note that for major changes or cost adjustments of more than ten percent of any Youthbuild budget line item, you must request approval from HUD);
- E. impediments encountered during the reporting period and solutions adopted to overcome them, as well as any delays in progress of grant activities because of those impediments;
- F. unusual activities, accomplishments, and features of the grant or experiences that would be helpful for other Youthbuild grantees.

To this report you must attach Part 6, Implementation Statistical Summary. Part 6 asks for information about the participants, including

- number selected, number who drop out, and number who graduate;
- race and ethnicity of active participants;

- gender of active participants; and
- information on the units of housing.

The Final Report for Implementation Grants asks for the following information.

- Part 7, the Performance Evaluation Summary, asks for a summary of accomplishments in meeting program goals and objectives, accomplishments in meeting participant attendance and retention level goals, achievements in meeting post-secondary educational objectives, impediments encountered and unusual activities, accomplishments, and features of the grant.
- Part 8, the Implementation Statistical Summary, asks for the numbers of participants and graduates, race/ethnicity of graduates, gender of graduates, and units of housing completed.
- Part 9, the Implementation Application Budget, asks you to enter your approved budget. If budget items have not changed from your original application, you may submit a copy of Exhibit 4B1 from that application.
- Part 10, Implementation Actual Costs, has you enter the amounts actually spent for your Implementation Program. (Note: Include only those items for which a cash payment was made. Do not include the value of any in-kind contributions.)
- Part 11, Implementation Sources of Funds, asks for actual amounts of funds, other than Youthbuild, that were contributed to the Youthbuild program.

In addition to the above, you will find Implementation Program Worksheets in your package. Program worksheets are for Implementation grantees only. Use of these worksheets for Implementation grantees is mandatory, and will help grantees complete their Performance Evaluation Report Summaries, although these worksheets are not to be submitted to HUD. They are to be kept in the grantee's records for at least three years after completion of the grant. There are three separate worksheets that must be filled out:

- Part 12, Housing Property Worksheet, reports on all housing completed by Youthbuild participants during the grant period.
- Part 13, Housing Resident Worksheet, reports on residents that move into housing constructed or rehabilitated by Youthbuild participants.
- Part 14, Participant Tracking Worksheet, reports on each Youthbuild participant.

The suggestions, guidelines, and topics mentioned are by no means intended to be an exhaustive list of issues that may be encountered in operating a Youthbuild program. Experience has demonstrated that operating a Youthbuild program is a multidimensional and challenging endeavor. It requires input from staff, participants, and outside resources to achieve acceptable results. Please seek advice from all available sources.

Paying the Participants

This section will outline HUD's requirements and current policies regarding wages and labor standards in Youthbuild programs. You may want to consult an attorney or an accountant for specialized or local advice. It is important to know the impact of your state laws.

NOFA Requirements

The Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) incorporates Sections 142, 143, and 167 of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). Section 167, the nondiscrimination provision, is not directly relevant here. Section 142 requires that participants be paid at least federal, state, or local minimum wage, whichever is higher, for the work that they do on site; or the prevailing wage for the position within that same company. Youthbuild funds can be used to increase payments above minimum wage. Youthbuild funds also can be used to pay prevailing wages for the participants where prevailing wages are required by the housing program that funds your construction costs.

Training wages or stipends will not make participants ineligible for other subsistence programs—they are not considered income in determining eligibility for any federal program except Social Security. The wage or stipend should be a reasonable allowance for subsistence while the participants are in the program.

Section 143 requires that working conditions for participants meet OSHA and other federal and state health and safety standards. To the extent that state or federal workers' compensation laws apply, benefits must be available for injuries. Even if the workers' compensation law does not apply, HUD and JTPA require programs to provide insurance coverage for participants.

Some Youthbuild applicants have expressed a valid concern about the cost of workers' compensation insurance. Existing programs have found some ways to reduce it. One program categorizes trainees as half-time employees (at the lowest construction rate) for on-site time, and half-time secretarial help for in-school time. To provide consistent coverage throughout the program, on-site and in-school wages are averaged and a flat rate paid weekly. Another program got the state compensation board to set a special lower rate for trainees. The strategy that you select will depend upon your ability to work within the parameters set by your state's workers' compensation law.

Prevailing Wage Requirements

Trainees are exempt from prevailing wage requirements where on non-PHA or IHA projects only HUD-Youthbuild money is used for housing. If other funds are used for housing costs or the project is under the PHA or IHA, the regulations for that program will determine whether prevailing wages must be paid or not. For the construction project, all laborers and mechanics who are not Youthbuild participants must be paid prevailing wage if HUD-Youthbuild money is used for housing costs and they are doing construction work. If other federal money is used for housing, or if trainees work on a public housing or Indian housing project under the Housing Act of 1937, labor standards apply to the extent required by the other program.

Fair Labor Standards

Issues such as the numbers of hours participants may “work,” the use of child labor, adequate stipends, or the requirements for paid time leave are covered by federal and state fair labor standards laws. It is important that you check your state laws. Generally, the federal Fair Labor Standards Act would not apply unless the program engages in interstate commerce and the trainees are considered employees.

In a nonbinding advisory, the Department of Labor has set forth the following criteria for exemption from wage and hour laws as a job training program.

- 1) The program must be similar to that offered in a vocational school.
- 2) It must be for the benefit of the trainees or students.
- 3) The trainees must work under the close supervision of regular employees, rather than displacing them.
- 4) The employer may derive no immediate benefit from the trainees’ activities.
- 5) The trainees cannot be automatically entitled to a job at end of the program.
- 6) It should be clear that the trainees are not being paid wages for time spent in training.

The Youthbuild model satisfies these criteria. The programs emphasize education, skills training and leadership development rather than the provision of services for payment; trainees don’t compete in the work force with regular employees; the training lasts for a limited period with no guarantee of a job at the end; and the compensation given is for subsistence, rather than an hourly wage for work done. To the extent that you choose a different program design, try to remain faithful to these key concepts. However, compliance with these concepts does not automatically waive the wage and hour laws; the Department of Labor must certify specific programs as exempt. It is best to take guidance from HUD, which will consult with the Department of Labor regarding what laws apply beyond the specific provisions written into the Youthbuild legislation.

Wage Versus Stipend

Over the past several years, Youthbuild programs have used one of two patterns of wage and stipend:

- Programs have paid minimum wage or more for the work on the site, often starting at \$5.00 an hour and including a pattern of merit raises that gradually allow a participant to earn up to \$6.50 an hour; and they have paid a stipend for time in school, ranging from \$50 a week to \$75 a week. The theory behind this pattern is that participants get paid wages for what they produce on the construction site, because their work has value to others; but they do not get paid wages for the time they spend in school investing in their own future. They are, in fact, benefiting from a valuable scholarship for this part of the program.
- Programs have averaged the wage and stipend pattern across site and school, so that the income per hour from work and school is the same. In this pattern trainees have started with an average stipend of \$225 every two weeks. The reason for averaging

wages and stipends in this way is that attendance was sometimes lower in school due to the lower compensation, and the programs wanted to communicate that school and work were of equal value and importance. In this pattern, the overall compensation has been called a stipend.

Within the Youthbuild legislation, we believe that if you choose the second option, then minimum wage may need to be paid across the board due to the application of Section 142 of the JTPA law; this may increase your costs, and you do need to make sure that your overall cost per person, taking your entire budget into consideration, is not unreasonable. However, having higher levels of compensation may also make your program easier to manage, since a higher rate of pay makes it easier for the young people to survive for a year in Youthbuild. So far HUD has said it will allow programs to pay minimum wage across the board.

We do not have sufficient information regarding the relative effects of these two policies to make a programmatic recommendation; either approach seems workable. However, we do strongly recommend that whichever basic pattern of payment is chosen, two types of incentive are included: first, provision for wage increases at least every two months, based on an assessment of the participant's overall performance, of at least 15 cents an hour; second, provision for a bonus of at least \$25 per two-week pay period for perfect attendance. This combination of incentives has been shown to have a definite positive effect on attendance and performance.

Insurance

Insurance is an important but little understood part of running a nonprofit organization. Because insurance is a complex field, and because operating a Youthbuild program complicates it even further, it is essential that you work with a reputable insurance broker who is familiar with nonprofit insurance. Here are some key points to keep in mind.

- Insurance is regulated on a state-by-state basis. What applies to North Dakota may not apply to South Dakota, let alone New York or New Mexico.
- Insurance has become so complex that insurance brokers have to specialize in order to stay knowledgeable about the best products and to stay competitive. You should not be working with a broker who specializes in autos, life insurance, or homeowner policies. You need a broker who is familiar with the needs of nonprofit organizations such as schools and community development corporations.
- Different insurance brokers have access to different insurance markets. There is every reason to approach more than one broker simultaneously with your insurance needs to see who can get the best policy at the best price. To be fair, let the brokers know they are competing for your business.
- Don't let price be the only deciding factor in choosing a policy. Look at the insurance company, its record in handling claims, its Best rating (Best Rating Service measures insurance companies' financial health—a Best rating of A- or better is usually accepted by most funders, although some excellent companies have Best ratings below A-), the quality of the service provided by the broker offering the policy, the level of coverage, and the deductible.

Types of Coverage

There are three types of coverage you should consider. Depending on your state's regulations and your funders' requirements, some coverage is required while others are voluntary.

- **Employee**—covering claims made by employees for losses occurring while they were working. Depending on the state, participants receiving a stipend are often considered in the same class as employees for the purpose of insurance.
- **Property**—covering property or equipment owned or leased by the organization against damage or loss due to fire, theft, and other perils.
- **Liability**—covering “trip and falls” and other similar claims made by non-employees at your office or site, or actions of staff or board which result in a claim, lawsuit, or other loss.

The following is a description of the typical types of insurance coverage you can buy.

Employee Coverage

Workers' Compensation. This coverage is a state-mandated coverage for all employees of any for-profit or nonprofit firm. It responds to on-the-job or job-related injuries. Each state and each company will consider students receiving stipends differently, so it is important when purchasing this coverage that you check to see how this exposure will be looked at. Workers' compensation is rated on payroll and classified according to type of work performed. The stipend for your participants and the rates for different tradespeople on the job site should be carefully calculated with your insurance agent, so you budget correctly. (For example, painters have a very different rate than plumbers, who are very different than carpenters, who are very different than laborers.) Each state publishes a different rate based on their experience, so you should “shop the rate book” for the cheapest, most appropriate rate and classification. Construction trainees are usually high in cost so you may want to substitute another classification that is justifiable. This policy will be audited at the end of the policy term.

Most states have “safety groups” available, sometimes known as qualified loss management programs. These programs offer higher discounts and dividends and should be looked into. Some safety groups claim workers' compensation savings of as much as 40 percent if you can qualify to join and meet their requirements (for OSHA training, for example).

Disability Coverage. Six states (New York, New Jersey, California, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and Rhode Island) require disability coverage for employees. It affords a limited monthly benefit while an employee cannot work because of an illness or injuries unrelated to work. Once again, your insurance agent should be able to inform you about the requirements of this coverage, as it relates to trainees receiving stipends in your state.

Property (a.k.a. Fire) Insurance

This coverage protects your office contents or building (or both) against fire and additional perils. There is basic and special coverage. Special is the broadest type of

coverage and the form that affords you coverage for theft. The average policy deductible is \$500. You should insure for at least 80 percent of the replacement cost of your office contents and building.

You should also consider purchasing extra expense coverage which would give you start-up costs in case you need to relocate due to an insured incident (e.g. fire).

The property insurance form that is purchased by the owner while a building is under construction is called Builder's Risk.

Equipment or Tool Floater. This coverage insures equipment, tools and materials against loss due to fire, theft, or other causes. If you purchase this coverage it is suggested that you insure only your most costly pieces, or all equipment but with a \$1,000 deductible. This will avoid numerous small claims, and still give you protection for a larger loss.

Electronic Data Processing. Covers the cost of restoring lost data due to breakdown of computer equipment.

Liability Insurance

Comprehensive General Liability (CGL). This coverage responds to lawsuits that would be brought against your organization. It will protect your office exposure and the exposure of your business. Because nonprofits are unique in their needs, you should look for this coverage in a nonprofit market. Most commonly it will be rated based on number of students, but may be rated on the square footage of your office or your payroll.

Owner's and Contractor's Protective (OCP) coverage can be purchased as an add-on to the CGL policy to protect against lawsuits brought against the owner while the building is under construction.

Professional Liability. This coverage primarily responds to suits brought against the organization for "bad advice." However, within professional liability you can purchase coverage for improper sexual contact. When dealing with youth, this coverage should be considered.

Automobile Liability and Physical Damage. This coverage will cover vehicles owned or leased by the organization.

Non-Owned Auto and Hire Car Coverage. This coverage will cover staff-owned vehicles or rental vehicles hired by the organization and used during the course of work.

Directors and Officers Liability. This coverage will cover the board of directors against damage from claims resulting from negligent or wrongful acts performed by board members in the course of their duties.

Employee Dishonesty Bond. This coverage will reimburse an employer for losses resulting from dishonest acts of employees. It should cover at least one month's worth of funding revenues.

Note: In order to recover in the event of a loss, the organization must press charges.

Ways to Reduce Insurance Costs

There are a variety of ways to reduce your insurance costs. Remember that insurance is a gamble by the insurance company that you will not suffer losses. The more you can do to convince the insurance agent and the insurance company that they will not suffer a loss, the lower the premium or the more complete the coverage you will get. Here are some steps you can take to reduce your insurance costs.

Reduce the Risk of Losses

- Participate in a “safety group” such as a qualified loss management program to reduce workers’ compensation rates.
- Maintain a safe and secure construction site.
- Secure all required permits; follow OSHA regulations; issue guidelines for behavior of all staff, especially counseling staff; and follow Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Maintain a daily log at the site and prepare written incident reports whenever appropriate. A well-run organization in compliance with the law and with written back-up will generate a low claims history, which will result in lower premiums over time.

Avoid Unnecessary or Double Coverage

- Shop the workers’ compensation rate book for the lowest-rated appropriate description of the trainees. Describing trainees as students, not as construction workers, will usually generate a lower rate. If your insurance agent insists on applying a construction rate, apply for a split rate since trainees are only spending half their time on the construction site. There is a process to file an appeal with the workers’ compensation board, which your insurance agent should be able to help with.
- Secure insurance certificates for liability and workers’ compensation from all contractors and subcontractors working for you. Make sure the policies are current, that the coverage is equal to or greater than your own, that you are named in the certificate as an additional insured, and that you will receive written notice in the event of cancellation or non-renewal.
- If you are not the owner or general contractor of the Youthbuild site, find out about the coverage that the owner and general contractor are carrying. Your liability or property risks may be covered under their liability or property policies.
- Check with your insurance broker and attorney about the laws of your state regarding professional liability and directors and officers liability. Some state laws limit liability for nonprofit organizations so that special insurance may not be necessary.
- Consider increasing your deductible as a way of decreasing your premium cost.

Shop Around

Once you have an idea of your insurance needs, consult with two or three brokers to get the best price and the best policy. Be sure to compare policies, so that you are getting prices on comparable coverage.

Fiscal System

This is a brief outline of areas that should be considered in setting up a fiscal system.

Internal Controls

Develop policy and procedures for internal controls around receipt and deposit of income or funds, and signatures. Some general guidelines follow.

- **Separation of duties.** A coordinated system of checks and balances in which responsibilities are divided among different employees. No one person should have sole control of a series of functions that would allow theft or improper use of funds to go unnoticed.
- **Board and staff accountability.** Senior management and board members must each understand their management and governance roles and responsibilities regarding financial management. This includes clear definitions of responsibility, and clear lines of authority as well.
- **Recordkeeping and information systems.** Maintaining accurate financial and program data, with appropriate supporting documentation and authorization, is essential for internal accounting control. From this data, the organization can produce timely, understandable, relevant and credible financial reports.
- **Audit trail.** An internal control system provides an audit trail, a means by which a transaction can be followed from either end of the accounting system—from the original source document to the final record and back. During an audit an accountant uses the audit trail as a testing mechanism to evaluate the reliability of the accounting records.
- **Policies and procedures.** Written operating policies for the organization as a whole (such as personnel policies, evaluation, grievance process, etc.), and written accounting procedures for executing financial transactions, should be reviewed on an annual basis.
- **Evaluation mechanisms.** Periodically, the organization should evaluate not only its programs, but its internal control systems.

A checklist such as the one at the end of this chapter may be helpful.

Setting up Books

A professional accountant should be enlisted to set up your financial books. It is also highly recommended that programs identify an auditor or certified public accountant (CPA) who would be willing to serve on board and give pro-bono advice on setting up your books and chart of accounts. This person may also chair the financial committee of the board.

Selecting an Auditor

To select your auditor, put the position out to bid, because the range for costs can be enormous. If the auditor is a company, find out their experience with nonprofits and who within the company would be working with you. Get a copy of that person's résumé and the résumés of the partners; interview them, including board members in the interview process. Ask for and check references from organizations similar to yours.

Filing System for Financial Records

Set up a filing system for vendors' invoices, and separate corporate from noncorporate vendors. Noncorporate vendors can be paid less than \$600 and the organization does not have to file a 1099.

Identify all state and federal forms required to be filed by nonprofit. For example, have the accountant or bookkeeper complete and file 990, federal income form.

One-Write System

Consider using a one-write system for disbursements and receipts; your bookkeeper might initially want to use a manual system before going to a computerized system. Consider contracting out for payroll or bookkeeping services, or if your program is in the planning phase and few checks are going to be written, the secretarial staff or director might keep the books and use the one-write system. Once your program is fully staffed and operational, this function should be handled by a bookkeeper.

Payroll

If you have five or more employees, or expect to have that many employees within a certain fiscal period, consider using a payroll service. If you have under five employees, make sure the person handling the books has experience in doing state and federal tax withholdings.

Warning: It is critical that you pay your federal and state withholding taxes on time. Failure to do so can result in serious financial problems and legal liability. If you decide to use a payroll service, compare payroll services and costs; ask other community organizations about their experience with a particular service. Compare costs for direct deposit, tax filing, signatures/stamp and seal, and tracking employees by administration, program, or training.

Job Costing System for Construction Projects

There are many systems available for costing out construction projects. The organization that is responsible for the housing development component of your Youthbuild program should have such a system in place, which enables them to estimate costs and track actual spending against the original estimates. Because Youthbuild is a training program and also a construction project, there are costs to be taken into account that a standard construction project does not have to consider. The primary additional costs are overhead and the extra time needed to do training on the job site. When pricing a job, it is useful to

distinguish between those costs that would be incurred if you were only a construction company, and those that relate to training.

Cash Flow and Other Projections

To support budget management and sound fiscal planning, the director should develop budget, revenue, and cash flow projections, and have them reviewed and approved by the board of directors. Internal controls are procedures and records designed to promote an effective and efficiently run organization by safeguarding its assets, ensuring the reliability of financial records, and encouraging adherence to management policies and funder requirements. Internal controls are designed to improve the quality of information and reduce the possibility of error, fraud, and mismanagement.

You can use the Internal Controls Checklist that follows as one step in determining whether your internal controls are adequate to safeguard your assets and ensure the reliability of your financial reports.

Taxation Issues

Youthbuild programs are required to withhold FICA from wages, stipends, and living allowances, including non-cash benefits.

Federal income tax need not be withheld if participants file a withholding certificate (attesting that they owed no tax the previous year and expect to owe none for the current year). This does not mean that participants are exempt from filing tax returns.

Internal Controls Checklist

	Yes	No	Not Sure	N/A	Action
Cash Receipts					
1) Are checks endorsed “For Deposit Only” immediately upon receipt?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
2) Are pre-numbered deposit slips used to record all monies received?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
3) Is a daily list of all cash and checks prepared immediately upon receipt?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
4) Is a Cash Receipts Journal prepared monthly that records the date of deposit, deposit slip number, amount of deposit, and name of payor with a columnar categorizing of revenue according to the Chart of Accounts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
5) Are duplicate deposit slips retained for comparison to the initial list of receipts and the cash receipts journal?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
6) Is the person responsible for cash receipts not the same person who reconciles the monthly bank statement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
7) Are all cash and checks deposited in a Federally insured bank on a timely basis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
8) If restricted funds are deposited in the same bank account with other monies, are restricted revenues clearly identified in the Cash Receipts Journal?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
9) Is all cash received, counted and verified by two employees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

	Yes	No	Not Sure	N/A	Action
10) When events involve admission fees, does the agency issue pre-numbered tickets with a record of tickets printed, issued, used and unused, which is then compared to receipts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
11) Is a copy of the list of all receipts forwarded to the person responsible for accounts receivable and/or client and contributor records to ensure that all monies received have been properly credited to their accounts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
12) Does the organization send acknowledgements to contributors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
13) Are all disbursements, except those from petty cash, made by pre-numbered checks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
14) Are voided checks preserved and filed after appropriate mutilation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
15) Is there a written prohibition against drawing checks payable to "Cash"?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
16) Is there a written prohibition against signing checks in advance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
17) Is a cash disbursement voucher prepared for each invoice or request for reimbursement that details the date of check, check number, payee, amount of check, description of expense account (and restricted fund) to be charged with authorization signature, and accompanying receipts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
18) Are all expenditures approved in advance by authorized persons?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
19) Are signed checks mailed promptly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

	Yes	No	Not Sure	N/A	Action
20) Does the checksigner review the cash disbursement voucher for the proper approved authorization and supporting documentation of expenses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
21) Are invoices marked "Paid" with the date and amount of the check?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
22) Are requests for reimbursement and other invoices checked for mathematical accuracy and reasonableness before approval?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
23) Is a cash disbursement journal prepared monthly that details the date of check, check number, payee, amount of check, and columnar description of expense account (and restricted fund) to be charged?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
24) Is check-signing authority vested in persons at appropriately high levels in the organization?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
25) Is the number of authorized signatures limited to the minimum practical number?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
26) Do larger checks require two signatures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
27) Are pre-signed checks prohibited?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
28) Are bank statements and canceled checks received and reconciled by a person independent of the authorization and check-signing function?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
29) Are unpaid invoices maintained in an unpaid invoice file?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
30) Is a list of unpaid invoices regularly prepared and periodically reviewed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

	Yes	No	Not Sure	N/A	Action
31) Are invoices from unfamiliar or unusual vendors reviewed and approved for payment by authorized personnel who are independent of the invoice processing function?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
32) If the organization keeps an accounts payable register, are payments promptly recorded in the register to avoid double payments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
33) If purchase orders are used, are all purchase transactions made with pre-numbered purchase orders?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
34) Are advance payments to vendors and employees recorded as receivables and controlled in a manner which assures that they will be offset against invoices or expense vouchers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
35) Are employees required to submit expense reports for all travel-related expenses on a timely basis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Restricted Funds					
36) Are restricted funds recorded in a way that accounts for and reports on those restricted funds?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
37) Are expenditures from restricted funds substantiated by adequate information indicating the nature of the restriction, and verified by the appropriate authorities, after comparison to see that the expense meets the conditions of the restriction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
38) Does the agency follow the policy of not borrowing from restricted funds?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
39) If there is any such borrowing, has it been determined that it is not in violation of donor restrictions or local laws?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

	Yes	No	Not Sure	N/A	Action
40) In the case of grants, are accounts periodically monitored for unexpended funds, and are they promptly returned to the awarding party if necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Petty Cash					
41) Is an imprest petty cash fund maintained for payment of small, incidental expenses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
42) Is there a limit to the amount that can be reimbursed by the petty cash fund?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
43) Is supporting documentation required for all petty cash disbursements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
44) Is a petty cash voucher filled out with supporting documentation, name of person being reimbursed, and proper authorization?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
45) Is access to petty cash limited to one person who is the fund custodian?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
46) Are unannounced counts of petty cash made by someone within the agency other than the fund custodian?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Payroll					
47) Are detailed timesheets required documenting employee hours, including overtime?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
48) Are time sheets signed by the employee's immediate supervisor authorizing payment for work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

	Yes	No	Not Sure	N/A	Action
49) Are employment records maintained for each employee that detail wage rates, benefits, taxes withheld each pay period, and any changes in employment status?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
50) Are payroll-related taxes (federal income tax, state income tax, employee and employer share of social security, and other taxes) withheld and paid to federal and state agencies on a timely basis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
51) Do the executive director and the treasurer review all the payroll tax returns?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
52) Do written policies and procedures exist for accounting for vacations, holidays, sick leave, and other benefits?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
53) Is a list of all payroll checks written, with appropriate withheld taxes, maintained either through the cash disbursement journal or a separate payroll register?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
54) Is a separate payroll bank account maintained?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
Donated Materials					
55) Are donated services and equipment recorded as revenue, with the appropriate offsetting expense?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
56) Is the valuation recorded at the fair market value, or appraised value?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
57) Is there proper recordkeeping and documentation for recording donated materials in the accounting system?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

	Yes	No	Not Sure	N/A	Action
Fixed Assets					
58) Are land, buildings, furniture and equipment recorded in a fixed asset ledger (inventory record)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
59) Are inventory records maintained which list inventory item, serial number, location, date of acquisition, cost or (if donated), fair market value, useful life, depreciation/year and accumulated depreciation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
60) Are the inventory records reconciled with the general ledger on a yearly basis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
61) Is a physical inventory periodically taken by persons independent of the custodian function?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
62) Is the receipt, transfer, and withdrawal of inventory items promptly recorded in the inventory records?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
63) Are furniture and equipment worth over a certain amount (usually \$500 or \$1,000) listed in the accounting records as assets, unless funder requirements permit such items to be expensed when purchased?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
64) Is a chart of accounts used?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
65) Are accounting records up to date, and monthly financial reports prepared on a timely basis (timely being defined as 10 days to three weeks maximum?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
66) Does the board of directors approve the annual agency budget?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

	Yes	No	Not Sure	N/A	Action
67) Are the following financial reports made available to the executive director and the board on a regular basis (at least quarterly):					
• Balance sheet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
• Statement of Revenue and Expense and Changes in Fund Balance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
• Cash Budget and Comparison to Actual?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
• Comparison of Budgeted to Actual Revenue and Expenses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
68) Is there an accounting procedures manual that is reviewed and revised annually?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
69) Does the bookkeeper take an annual vacation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
70) Have all appropriate federal (e.g. Form 990 or 990EZ, and Schedule A), state and local information returns been filed on time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Additional Notes and Action Items

Conclusion

The suggestions, guidelines, and topics mentioned are by no means intended to be an exhaustive list of issues that may be encountered in operating a Youthbuild program. Experience has demonstrated that operating a Youthbuild program is a multidimensional and challenging endeavor. It requires input from staff, participants, and outside resources to achieve acceptable results. Please seek advice from all available sources. YouthBuild USA is available to assist.

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