Educational and Career Success
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WHAT TYPE OF SUCCESS INSPIRES, MOTIVATES, AND DRIVES TODAY'S YOUTH?

Education and career success programs are an excellent way to help youth prepare for their future by focusing on developing skills in areas such as employment preparation, job seeking, independent living, financial self-sufficiency, and workplace productivity. These programs generally seek to improve academic performance as well as to increase school attendance, engagement, or completion. These programs often include mentorships, job skills training, and academic and career goal setting.

Research has found that dropping out of high school and becoming a teen parent go hand in hand. By helping youth stay in school, we can help them avoid roadblocks to success, like early parenthood. Help boost educational and career success as part of your pregnancy prevention program.[1]

WHAT WE KNOW

- Although programs focused on career success might seem more applicable to older youth, research has found that targeting educational and career programs to teens under the age of 18 can be particularly effective in improving their success.[2]

- Programs can improve employment outcomes by providing basic job skills for high-demand jobs, such as word processing.[3]

- Teens with special needs, including those with individualized education plans, are eligible to receive transition planning which can help reduce their risk for poor outcomes, such as incarceration and unemployment.[3]

- Mentoring programs through communities, schools, or faith-based organizations, can help match vulnerable youth to caring, responsible adults who can provide educational and career guidance.[3]

TIPS FOR INTEGRATING EDUCATIONAL AND CAREER SUCCESS INTO YOUR PROGRAM

- **Partner with Your Community**
    - Identify local businesses and programs, such as dropout prevention programs, and develop partnerships to incorporate the opportunities offered into curriculum-based program.[3]

- Expose youth to a wide variety of academic and career paths through field trips to surrounding businesses and colleges.[4]

- Recruit volunteer guest speakers from local businesses and colleges to talk with youth about academic and career opportunities.

- Connect with businesses and organizations in the community where youth can volunteer or work part-time to learn and develop valuable job skills for achieving successful career outcomes.

- Look for opportunities to recognize businesses and leaders who work with and support adolescents in academic and career development activities.

- Encourage the development of workplace social skills by challenging youth to enhance their professional skills through simulated job interviews with supportive mentors.[5]

- **Provide Academic Support**

  - Consider providing students with time and assistance to complete homework during your pregnancy prevention program.[6]

  - Incorporate a mentoring component into the curriculum-based program or recruit supportive adults to provide onsite tutoring to participants to assist with homework.[3]

  - Introduce and incorporate innovative technology into your program. Free Web-based resources are available for students to enhance their education in areas such as math, finance, and history.[5]

SPECIFIC RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

- **The What Works Clearinghouse** (http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc) has identified more than 15 programs that focus on preventing young people from dropping out of school. These programs tend to last a year or more and frequently include mentoring and tutoring components. Some of these programs (e.g., Job Corp, JOBSTART, New Chance, and Career Academics) focus on job training skills as well.

- **Upward Bound** (http://www2.ed.gov/programs/trioupbound/index.html) is a program designed to prepare participants for college. It consists of traditional academic instruction and includes tutoring, mentoring, cultural enrichment, work study, and counseling.

- **National Guard Youth Challenge Program (NGCYP)** (https://www.jointservicessupport.org/NGYCP/) is a program delivered to youth ages 16 to 18 who are not attending high school as a result of dropping out or being expelled. The program has three phases that focus on promoting positive youth development through topics such as job skills, academic excellence, leadership, citizenship, and community service. Youth are paired with a mentor of their choosing in the final year and phase of the program.

- **Career Beginnings** (http://www.childtrends.org/?programs=career-beginnings) is a 2-year program for high school students. It includes mentoring, curriculum and workshops designed to provide academic support, and a workforce development component that takes place in the summer after 11th grade.

- **Student Success Skills (SSS)** (http://studentsuccessskills.com/) is a program for elementary, middle, and high school students that involves weekly sessions with trained school counselors and focuses on developing students' skills to improve school success, including cognitive, social, and self-management skills.

- **GradNation** (http://www.gradnation.org/) is part of the America's Promise Alliance dedicated to creating "conditions for success" for all youth. There are numerous resources and programs aimed at youth opportunities (e.g., community summits, community networks, youth leadership opportunities).

ONLINE RESOURCES

- College Planning and Preparation: https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/

- Going to College: http://www.financialaidtoolkit.ed.gov/tk/

- U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences, What Works Clearinghouse: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/

- Dropout Prevention: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Topic.aspx?sid=3

- Khan Academy: http://www.khanacademy.org/

- Afterschool Alliance, Research Briefs: http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/researchIssueBriefs.cfm

- America's Promise Alliance: http://www.americaspromise.org/about

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

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