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HELP FOR OUT-OF-WORK YOUTH, A MANUAL FOR A JOB PREPARATION PROGRAM IN YOUR COMMUNITY.
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Descriptors-*ADULT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, DROPOUTS, GUIDELINES, HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES, *JOB TRAINING, *OUT OF SCHOOL YOUTH, POTENTIAL DROPOUTS, PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS, PROGRAM PLANNING, *UNEMPLOYED, VOCATIONAL FOLLOWUP, *WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS, YOUTH PROGRAMS
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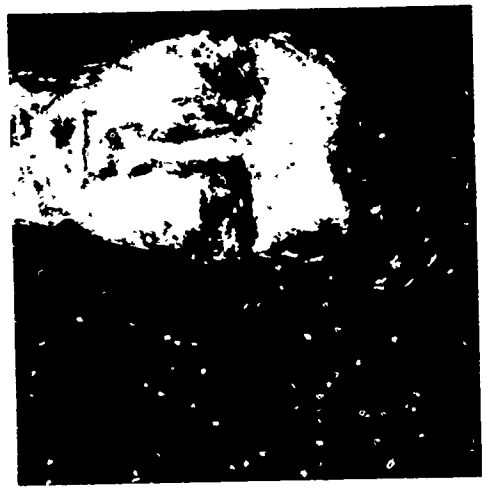
A descriptive review of three job preparation programs for out-of-work youth and guidelines for organizing similar programs in local communities are presented. The programs ranged from a large operation in Detroit to smaller individualized programs initiated by Kalamazoo, Michigan, and North Richmond, California. They were designed primarily to help youth prepare for work with the will to work and more emphasis was placed on teaching youth how to work than on the specific skills involved in a particular job. Common elements found in most programs were a job preparation course that included guidance, instruction, and work experience subsidized by the sponsoring agency, and a student followup to assure satisfactory employment. Some guidelines for the local community were. (1) Determine individual needs of the community, (2) Collect the information, (3) Decide what action should be taken, (4) Select staff for the program, (5) Prepare program guidelines, (6) Provide educational and guidance services, (7) Provide work-experience, (8) Offer placement services, (9) Conduct program followup services, and (10) Engage in research and program evaluation. The basic problems responsible for youth unemployment include automation, overall unemployment, discrimination, and inadequate educational preparation. Job preparation programs can assist many communities in solving some of their unemployment problems. (WB)



# HELP FOR OUT-OF-WORK YOUTH

NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF YOUTH

*The rapid decline in job opportunities for unskilled youth has aroused the nation to the deepening plight of the school dropout and of a growing number of high school graduates. How to provide meaningful programs that will keep our youth in school or help them find and keep jobs if they do drop out have become crucial questions.*

*In an effort to find some of the answers, the National Committee on Employment of Youth sponsored a National Workshop on Job Upgrading for Youth in Detroit in 1961. The workshop, financed by the Ford Foundation and held in cooperation with the Detroit Public Schools, gave community leaders across the country a first-hand account of the Detroit Job Upgrading Program, which had gained recognition as a broad, pioneering experiment in improving the employability of school dropouts. More than 100 persons attended the two-day workshop, including representatives of twenty-four communities that were considering or had projects for dropouts under way.*

*Following the workshop, interest in the Detroit program ran high as other communities began to put into practice the ideas discussed in Detroit, often adapting them to their own specific needs or experimenting along different lines in this largely uncharted field. The Detroit Public Schools received an increasing number of inquiries about their program, and NCEY was repeatedly asked to supply information and materials useful to community groups interested in starting similar programs of their own. In response to this demand, NCEY is publishing this manual* — HELP FOR OUT-OF-WORK YOUTH, A Manual for a Job Preparation Program in Your Community.

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# INTRODUCTION

Today nearly one million youngsters drop out of school each year before they get their high school diploma — in some cases without even starting high school. The dropout rate is close to four out of ten — as high as five out of ten in large cities and seven out of ten in congested areas.

The national rate may shrink to three out of ten by 1965, according to predictions. But with the increase in the youth population, 1,300,000 young people will still drop out of school that year. For the decade as a whole, the total is estimated at 7,500,000.

Aside from what this means in wasted talent to an economy that demands new and higher skills, the dropouts involved often face the frustration of looking in vain for any jobs once they leave school. The advance of automation and technology has sharply reduced the number of jobs open to the untrained. Jobs for beginners are now declining at a rate of 250,000 a year.

While any inquiry into the growing problem of youth unemployment will find the dropout at its core, the job problems experienced by many high school graduates have become almost equally as serious in recent years, particularly for those who have learned no marketable skills.

Most severe, however, are the problems of Negro and other minority youth, who continue to suffer from discriminatory practices in training and hiring, and of rural youth, who are moving to cities in increasing numbers, ill-prepared for urban life and urban work.

Many of the youth most affected by reduced job opportunities are relatively unemployable — they do not know how to look for a job or function on a job. Are they born failures we can do little for other than dole out public welfare funds? Far from it. Studies have shown that more than half of the dropouts have the native ability to complete high school. Many dropouts, as well as "unemployable" high school graduates, have the potential to handle college work — or jobs of relatively high levels. Others can be trained to handle work effectively along lower levels.

What can be done to help these youth? Job upgrading programs have tried to encourage youngsters to continue their formal education as well as prepare them to find and keep jobs.

"Job upgrading" may be a misleading term, since these programs seek to upgrade not jobs but the youth themselves. And the term up-

grading is not used in the usual sense involving advancement on the job. For these reasons, we will refer to them later in this manual as job preparation programs.

The programs are designed primarily to help a youth to be fit for work and to have the will to work. In fact, there usually is more emphasis on teaching a youth how to work than on specific skills involved in a job itself. In some cases, teaching a youth how to work is a way of getting him back to school to learn the skills required for the particular job that interests him.

While a variety of job upgrading programs already has appeared — and new approaches are still being devised — a common thread for most of the programs is:

- A job preparation course that includes guidance and instruction.
- Work experience subsidized by the sponsoring agency.
- A follow-up on the youth after he has completed the course and the work experience to help assure satisfactory employment.

The programs range from the large operation in Detroit and the more varied course taken by Kalamazoo to the small, individualized program initiated in North Richmond, California.

Following a descriptive review of these three programs, we offer guidelines for organizing a job preparation program in your own community. We offer no commandments, for the field is still basically experimental, and one community's youth employment problem may be quite different from that of another. Nevertheless we believe that communities will find these suggestions helpful in pinpointing the basic issues to be considered in organizing and conducting such programs.

We do not suggest that these programs have the total answer to the youth employment problem; this requires attention and diverse action at the national as well as the community level.

Overall, it must be remembered that even an ideal job preparation program cannot create jobs. Nor can it make up for a lack of equal educational opportunity. Nor can it be a substitute for reaching youth early to give them vastly improved basic education and guidance services. Nor can it meet the need for more and better training in higher-level occupational skills.

Ironically, it is largely these limiting factors — unemployment, unequal educational opportunity and inadequate education and skill training — that make job preparation programs so needed today.

# THE DETROIT STORY

The Detroit Job Upgrading Program offers instruction and guidance to youth 16 to 20 years old who have dropped out of school and want to find employment or return to school. The program, part of the Detroit Public Schools, has evolved to the point where it now includes:

- A short-term job preparation course.
- Supervised and subsidized work experience.
- Help in finding a full-time job or in returning to school.
- Six months of follow-up on the youngster after he has completed the twelve-week program.

## How it developed

The program grew out of the conviction that providing adequate training and job opportunities for the dropout was both a school and community responsibility and that ways of helping dropouts prepare for their future work roles must be found.

Shortly after World War II, Detroit was faced with an acute dropout problem — large numbers of youth who had quit school but who were unemployed. More than half of the youngsters who entered high school quit before graduation. With unemployment in the city high, 60 per cent of the dropouts were without jobs.

The Detroit Council for Youth Service, a coordinating body of schools and social agency representatives, appointed a subcommittee to study the problem. A survey disclosed that most dropouts' main interest in school was to better their chances to earn money. This pointed the way to a paid work-experience program. In 1948 the committee recommended that a special program be set up for the "social and economic rehabilitation" of school dropouts, similar to a program that the National Youth Administration had sponsored before the war, in which unemployed youth were paid while being trained — in class and on the job in community agencies. The school system agreed to supply a classroom in a senior high school and to pay the teacher's salary, while the Council accepted the task of arousing public support for the program and of finding suitable job openings for the "upgraders."

The Council soon realized that it would be necessary to develop a subsidized program for the work experience, for businessmen were not interested in sponsoring a supervised work program, even if only on an experimental basis. On the other hand, fifteen social agencies were will-

ing to provide jobs to train youths but had no funds to pay them. The McGregor Foundation of Detroit agreed to furnish a grant so that the youth could be given work experience in social agencies and be paid at a rate of sixty cents an hour, twenty hours a week. United Community Services, the local community welfare council, volunteered to find "work stations" — the training jobs the youth would hold while in the program.

In April, 1949, the first job upgrading class met in a senior high school, with an enrollment of four — out of twenty expected. A carefully selected teacher was appointed to act as the teacher-coordinator and to prepare the youth for work experience. Following are her recollections of that first class:

> *We uprooted the regular desks in the classroom and replaced them with conference tables. We added a telephone and supplied a radio and a cosmetics table for the students' use; we had bookcases and our own library. We wanted to erase the "school factory" look — and we did. The course was relaxed and informal. We served cake and pop; had parties, laughed it up. Petty cash was available for a shirt or a scarf. Pathetically, the students often needed a decent meal.*
>
> *The Detroit Junior League volunteered to help. Powers models taught the girls the elements of grooming, how to apply make-up, how to dress and walk properly. Emphasis was placed upon good manners, teamwork, promptness, basic work habits and attitudes, and the importance of completing tasks on time.*

By 1953, three job upgrading centers were in operation — and for twelve months a year instead of ten. There was a waiting list of students who wanted to enter the program. They were referred by the Attendance Department, the Welfare Department and other social agencies — and especially by friends who had been in the program.

Support was obtained from the Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs, which provided funds and created jobs within the businesses of their members to give work experience to a number of youth. A group of Negro businessmen contributed $680 to have a work station in one of their concerns so that Negro and white youth would have the experience of working for Negroes. The Mayor and the Common Council agreed to budget a sum to the Civil Service Department to set up jobs in city deparments.

Convinced of the value of the program, the Superintendent of Schools decided in 1954 to incorporate it into the school system, under the Department of Guidance and Placement. A total of $100,000 was provided in the annual budget for teachers' salaries, supplies and classroom facilities.

From 1955 to 1961 a new center was opened each year. Today

there are eleven job upgrading centers in all, in ten high schools in Detroit. They serve more than 1,000 youngsters a year, with a turnover of almost four times a year.

## Selecting the teachers

A special teacher is in charge of the program in each school. Central direction is provided by an administrator, who in turn works under the general supervision of the Director of Placement and Job Upgrading for the Detroit Public Schools.

New teachers are selected by a five-member reviewing committee that consists of a program administrator, a teacher in the program, a principal of a school that has a program center, a representative from the Council for Youth Service and a member of the schools' Personnel Department, who acts as chairman. Membership on the committee rotates.

The committee interviews teachers who apply, then draws up a list of qualified candidates who may become job upgrading teachers when a vacancy occurs or a new center is opened.

The criteria the committee uses in selecting teachers were summed up by the administrator at one of the Workshop sessions:

> *Personality and expectancy seem to be the most important factors in teacher selection. The personality of the teacher should be one that the students can easily approach and that excites imitation. A strongly academically oriented teacher, whose methods are not balanced by a guidance approach, would find this post most difficult. Also, since we are working with failures, the teacher who needs successful students may find job upgrading difficult to endure.*

A Manual of Procedure, issued by the Detroit Public Schools, acquaints the new job upgrading teacher with her assignment. In the mornings, she gives her group basic employment instruction. She devotes the afternoons to interviewing prospective students, consulting with teachers about upgraders who are enrolled in their classes, following up on students who are on training jobs or who have completed the program, conferring with parents and consulting with people in the community about problems the youth may have or about finding employment for them. In addition to all these duties, sometimes a principal may ask her to take on general school assignments, such as supervising the lunchroom or covering another class in an emergency.

Especially for the first few months, the new upgrading teacher is given close supervision by the administrator to help her understand her new role and answer problems that may arise. Other teachers in the program are also involved in the training process, since the staff meets regularly to plan the program, revise materials and share experiences.

There has been no difficulty in recruiting teachers for the program — applicants have outnumbered openings. But there has been some difficulty in keeping them in the program — not because they did not like their jobs but because they accepted positions at higher pay as guidance counselors.

## Selecting the dropouts

The job upgrading teacher interviews each candidate — and whenever possible his parents as well — before enrolling the youngster in the program. With the waiting list long, dropouts selected are those who show the most promise of staying with the program until completion. A special effort is made to give priority to youngsters whose families are receiving Aid to Dependent Children or other welfare assistance.

Although standards are kept low to include the least employable, some youngsters are excluded — those with an IQ below 50 and those who would be classified as "emotionally disturbed." Also, a general policy provides that youngsters must have been out of school for at least thirty days before they can be enrolled, under the assumption that they will then have experienced some of the problems of finding a job and will be more willing to accept the demands of the program.

Boys outnumber girls by about two to one in the program. The reason: there are more male dropouts, most of whom experience greater difficulties in finding employment than girls do.

## Educational program

Students are given instruction in such subjects as:

- Learning how to get a job
- Application blanks and their importance
- Provisions of labor laws
- Getting around the city
- Reviewing arithmetic
- Improving self-awareness
- Developing language and skills (reading, writing, speaking)
- Grooming for the job
- Learning good health practices
- Succeeding on the job

The teacher meets with the youth three hours each morning, five days a week, for twelve weeks. The class is informal, with instruction and written assignments given largely on an individual basis, according to each student's rate of progress. The subject is how to get a job and keep it, and instruction is limited to basic work skills, including reading and arithmetic. Attendance is voluntary, but youngsters are urged to call in if they have to miss a class, as good practice for the work setting.

In addition to the morning job upgrading course, many of the students, encouraged by the teacher, attend one or two regular classes

in the school in the afternoon — in typing, remedial reading, welding, etc. The job upgrading teacher arranges the schedule for them.

If a youngster does the required work in these classes for one semester and wants to return to school, the upgrading teacher may recommend him for enrollment in a regular high school program. Although there have been some exceptions, the fact that he is coming from the upgrading program makes the school more willing to accept him.

After six weeks in the upgrading program, the youngster who will not be returning to school may be placed in a part-time, subsidized training job for six weeks while he continues to attend the upgrading class in the morning. After twelve weeks, the hope is that he will then be ready to find a job. To help him get employment, the teacher refers him to the school system's own Placement Department, which has four centers throughout the city, and to the state employment service. She also encourages him to follow up help-wanted ads or to approach employers directly; and she uses her own contacts to direct him to possible jobs.

Once a youth has completed the job upgrading course — whether he has returned to school, is employed or is seeking employment — the teacher places his name on her follow-up roll to check on his progress over the next six months. If a youngster drops out of the program before the end of the twelve-week session but later wants to return, he may be enrolled again. However, limited funds for subsidies and the long waiting list have made it impossible for youngsters to stay beyond the twelve-week period.

## Work experience

Limited funds have also made it impossible to provide subsidized work experience to more than a third of the youngsters, although those in charge of the program believe that work experience is vital and should be provided for all youth and for as long a period as needed.

With a few exceptions, the part-time training jobs last for six weeks. If a youngster is physically or mentally handicapped (IQ of 50 to 70), he may be referred to the State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and receive thirteen weeks of on-the-job training. In these cases, the department subsidizes the employment, but usually the employer makes some contribution and the rehabilitation unit pays only the equivalent of what the youth's training would cost. If additional training beyond the thirteen weeks is required, the employer's contribution may be more than under the original agreement. After the training period, the trainee may be retained on the job as a permanent employee.

Training jobs financed under the job upgrading program are set up in city departments, social agencies and private business concerns. The Civil Service Department obtains the jobs in the city departments; the Council for Youth Service obtains the other work stations.

Funds to pay the youth come largely from the McGregor Fund, the City of Detroit, and the Detroit Rotary Foundation Fund. The Civil Service Department is responsible for disbursing funds to the employers in the various city departments, while the Detroit Council for Youth Service is responsible for reimbursing private employers and social agencies. The youth receive wages for their services in the same way as other employees. Wages vary from sixty cents an hour in social agencies and city departments to seventy-five cents an hour in private industry.

Work-experience assignments run the gamut of unskilled jobs — clerical helper, maintenance helper, counter girl, sales and stock helper, etc.* The jobs do not displace regular employees but aid them in their work and serve as a training ground for the youth involved.

The usual procedure in setting up such training jobs is to arrange for one supervisor and one job for one youth in the hope that this may later open up other job possibilities in the same agency for other youth. A weekly review of work assignments is made to add new jobs and eliminate others that do not seem suitable. A listing of current work stations is compiled regularly and distributed to job upgrading teachers.

Supervisors are interviewed in advance to find out whether they have the sympathy and patience for working successfully with the dropout. The supervisor fills out a weekly training report, which evaluates the job performance of each of his trainees. The report enables the upgrading teacher to check the youth's progress and determine what further support he may need. The teachers and supervisors also maintain direct contact to resolve problems that arise in the student's work experience.

The work experience gives the youth money in their pockets, a first-hand knowledge of the work setting and, for some, entry into a full-time job with the same employer.

## Summary

Many individual success stories have emerged from the Detroit Job Upgrading Program. And many associated with the program believe it has made contributions beyond helping youth find jobs or return to school: some youngsters gained a new self-confidence from the chance to succeed at something for the first time in their lives; others have changed their attitude toward school and education.

The fact that so many youth are waiting to get into the program — an average monthly waiting list of 391 in the last year — and that many of them are referred by their friends who have already participated in the program indicates that the youth believe it has something to offer. But no definitive statement about overall effectiveness can be made be-

* List of agencies and types of jobs provided appears in the appendix.

cause there has never been a formal evaluation of the program — one of its greatest needs.

During its early years, a higher percentage of young people found employment on completion of the program. This has been attributed to better employment opportunities in Detroit at the time and the fact that the program was smaller and more flexible, being able to offer continued service to individual youth until they did find jobs. As a result of the transition to a mass program, services have since become more formal and less individualized. A recent tightening in the employment situation and the fact that the youth no longer get continued service until they find work have made it hard for many to get full-time jobs.

Notwithstanding the program's main difficulties in practice, the Detroit Public Schools should be credited with assuming responsibility for helping dropouts long before many other communities even realized that a dangerous problem existed. And, as the following descriptions of the programs in Kalamazoo and North Richmond indicate, the Detroit program has provided guidelines for other communities seeking to meet the needs of their own unemployed, out-of-school youth.

# THE KALAMAZOO STORY

A willingness to experiment with different approaches has characterized the program for dropouts in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The result is a varied program that offers:

- A job preparation program for out-of-school youth.
- A work-education plan for potential dropouts.
- A remedial reading service.
- A pre-vocational training center for least-able dropouts (planned).

The services were set up by Youth Opportunities Unlimited, Inc., which had its origin as a job upgrading program. The organization, known as YOU, grew out of the thinking of two community groups — the Council of Social Agencies and a citizens study committee — that had independently been considering ways of providing work training for different types of unemployed youth. When, in 1960, a local citizen approached them about financing a work-training effort, the two groups, having participated in the Detroit workshop, merged their thinking and decided to start a job upgrading program. Funds to operate a program for about five years were made available to a local association of juvenile-court judges — Children's Charter — to administer the program. A director, experienced in the vocational rehabilitation of the mentally handi-

capped, was hired to develop and conduct it. Within a year, the director had added two other activities — a work-experience program linked with the schools for potential dropouts and a remedial reading service.

The final step in establishing YOU came with the decision to separate it from Children's Charter and incorporate it as an independent non-profit organization. An additional grant of $16,000 enabled YOU to acquire its own headquarters in a house bought for this purpose.

## How YOU operates

Youth are referred by the schools, the state employment service and other social agencies. They also go to YOU on their own, having heard about the program from their friends or from local publicity.

Except for those referred specifically to the cooperative program known as the Work-Education Plan, all of the youth are seen by the director. He first decides whether YOU can help them or whether they need the services of some other agency to which he may refer them. He next decides the type of YOU activity or combination of activities that would be most suitable for them: whether they are young enough to return to school and can be encouraged to do so under the Work-Education Plan; or whether they are too old or too disinterested to return to high school but would be willing to enroll in the job preparation course or perhaps profit from individual vocational counseling or individual reading help provided by a remedial reading specialist.*

## Job preparation program

If the decision is to assign the youth to the job upgrading, or preparation, program, his name is placed on a waiting list until a group of about eight is formed. The sessions are conducted by the director, who meets with the group in the morning two to three times a week for about ninety minutes. The course of study is similar to the Detroit program. The youth remain in these sessions until they are ready for work experience — usually about three weeks. Once they are in training jobs, they report to the YOU office periodically to discuss their progress.

Although Kalamazoo, like Detroit, offers a subsidized, supervised work experience, there are some differences: training jobs are only in social and governmental agencies and non-profit organizations, and youth may stay on these jobs for as long as six months if there is real value in prolonging their training, although the average work experience is about twelve to sixteen weeks. YOU subsidizes all of the training wage at sixty cents an hour for about twenty hours a week. The agency also

* The remedial reading specialist, in addition to helping these youth, has recently undertaken a special experimental project with potential dropouts in the local junior high school to determine the extent to which a group remedial reading and guidance program may encourage youngsters to remain in school longer.

assumes overall responsibility for the youth — seeing that they have adequate supervision and making up their payroll. Once they have completed their on-the-job training and are ready for regular employment, YOU contacts the local office of the state employment service to give the information needed to place the youth in appropriate full-time jobs.

## Work-education plan

Youth enrolled in this program are referred to YOU mainly by counselors from any secondary school in Kalamazoo County. When a youth comes to the counselor saying that he wants to leave school, the counselor encourages him to remain by offering him a part-time school program and a part-time work experience provided by YOU through its system of training jobs.

The educational program is the responsibility of the individual school. A youth may be enrolled in any course during the mornings, depending on his own interests and the counselor's advice. In some schools, but not all, youth receive credit for their afternoon work experience. They may stay in the program for as long as two years.

The work experience is the responsibility of YOU. The coordinator, who is the assistant director of YOU, assumes the same role for these youth as the director assumes for youth in the job preparation program. Since this is a cooperative enterprise with the schools, one-third of the coordinator's salary is paid by the County Board of Education. Under the program, jobs are provided in various business concerns as well as in social and public agencies. YOU will subsidize part of the job wage, up to forty cents an hour, with the employer paying the remainder. In some cases the employer pays all.

By February, 1963, twenty-two youth were enrolled in this program, which began in September, 1962. They came from eleven schools.

## Pre-vocational training center

The director is considering a third program to help youth gain employment — a pre-vocational training center, similar to a workshop, which would provide a general offering for the least able out-of-school, out-of-work youth. The idea here is to give a more closely supervised experience from which youth could move into on-the-job training, advanced training for specific skills, or full-time employment. The director describes it this way:

> *I would like to set up a pre-vocational center for approximately sixty to eighty delinquent and out-of-school youth in the sixteen- and seventeen-year-old bracket. We would divide the groups, and each group would get a half-day work experience in the workshop using subcontracts for employment and the*

*other half-day would be for educational purposes. This could include: job-upgrading instruction, group counseling, individual counseling, field trips, guest speakers, attendance in regular school classes, remedial reading or any other appropriate thing. We could accept almost any sixteen- or seventeen-year-old youth and plan a tailor-made program for him, and could keep him as long as necessary.*

For the production workshop, YOU would obtain the subcontracts for jobs that are normally not performed, such as repairing soda cases or salvage work, so that these youth would not displace regular workers.

## Summary

YOU has not been operating long enough to evaluate its effectiveness conclusively. During its first year, when it offered only the job preparation program, it served 151 youth, eighteen of whom were still on their training jobs in December, 1962; fifty-one were awaiting placement by the state employment service and forty-six were marked "closed" — either back in school, in the armed forces, or employed. Since the Work-Education Plan began only in September, the only statistics to indicate its results are that twenty-two youth are enrolled and on training jobs.

One markedly positive factor stands out: YOU has been unusually willing to experiment with different approaches, failing at one, then trying another, to reach the goal of helping youth become employed.

# THE NORTH RICHMOND STORY

The Job Upgrading Project in North Richmond, California, presents an interesting contrast to the programs in Detroit and Kalamazoo. Although its basic goal is the same — to prepare jobless youth for employment — the project started with a "reaching out" approach to recruit dropouts and high school graduates who were far less motivated than those aided in the Detroit and Kalamazoo programs. The boys did not seek help in North Richmond; the project staff sought them out — in their homes, pool halls, candy stores, wherever they hung out. And once enrolled, they were followed up to see that they stayed in the program no matter how difficult it was to work with them and no matter how little interest they showed.

This course of action reflected the efforts of Neighborhood House to explore all possible avenues for serving the needs of North Richmond, an impoverished community of 5,000 Negroes across the bay from San

Francisco. Neighborhood House, set up in 1951 by the American Friends Service Committee, developed the job preparation project along with other programs to help North Richmond's youth. Services include:

- Job preparation for unemployed male youth.
- Contract custodial service — a training and work-experience program for janitorial and building-maintenance work.
- Training sessions to help youngsters pass civil service, army-entrance and driver's license examinations.
- A remedial reading study group.
- Placement help — through a counselor for the California State Employment Service, who is stationed at Neighborhood House.

## Program development

A survey conducted by Neighborhood House in 1959 found that the schools were making no special effort to prevent youth from leaving school or to help them become employed. According to the survey, those who needed special help did not get it, the attitude being that "if you can't take it, out you go." As a result, many youngsters in North Richmond were leaving school, poor in behavior, attendance and academic skills. The scarcity of unskilled jobs, coupled with discrimination, made it almost impossible for them to find work. The survey revealed that even youth who were able to complete school were unemployed.

Faced with these facts, the staff at Neighborhood House decided to try developing a program of its own. The survey was used as the basis for obtaining money from the Rosenberg Foundation and the Lucie Stern Fund in San Francisco to start a job upgrading program.

The project officially got under way in March, 1960, with a social worker staffing the program. An advisory committee of representatives of the school system, state employment service, Richmond Chamber of Commerce, unions and Neighborhood House's board of directors was set up to provide planning, coordination, evaluation and community support.

To recruit youngsters, the staff member first obtained a list of the dropouts from the school system, then visited all the likely places where they congregated to encourage them to join. At first, he worked intensively with six to nine boys. Later, the group expanded to twenty-four.

The group, known initially as the Early Birds, met at Neighborhood House in the morning and looked for work in the afternoon. Eventually, the Early Bird sessions became formalized into Tuesday and Thursday "bull sessions" that lasted an hour and a half to two hours. Discussions centered on how to get a job and keep it, the problems and attitudes that prevent one from working, and the kinds of jobs that are most rewarding. Frequently, to get the boys to these sessions, the staff member

had to go to their homes and get them out of bed. The promise of coffee and doughnuts served as an added inducement.

Although supervised work stations and full-time jobs were scarce, a few of the boys were more skilled and were able to find permanent employment fairly rapidly with local business concerns, and particularly with public institutions where civil service operated. One boy was accepted into an apprenticeship program and still another was encouraged to take the entrance examination to enroll in a local junior college.

With the success of the Early Birds, a second job preparation group was formed, this time in a school setting. By then, fifty-eight boys were in the total program and an additional staff member was hired in October, 1961, with funds from a $10,000 Ford Foundation grant.

The instructional program was later reinforced when Neighborhood House organized training sessions to help youngsters pass civil service and army examinations. Other new elements included the employment of a sociologist to develop a design for research on the job preparation project and of a psychologist to conduct studies of the youth and to represent the program before various community organizations. Perhaps most significant of all, a special project was started to offer a selected group of unemployed youth a training program for janitorial and maintenance work as part of a contract custodial service, set up through a $20,000 grant from the Rosenberg Foundation. By early 1962, sixty-one boys had been in the job preparation project on a regular basis.

## Job preparation program

Individual and group counseling and training sessions attempt to develop an interest among the youth in working and in getting ahead. At the same time, the youth are taught the basic skills needed for applying for and keeping a job. Informal sessions are conducted at Neighborhood House for one group and at a continuation school for a second group — usually twice a week. A field trip is held on a third weekday.

The class at the continuation school, numbering about twelve to fifteen youngsters and open to any male student living in North Richmond, is not integrated with the school program. But it does take advantage of the school's resources, including testing and counseling. An important by-product has been the development of a better understanding on the part of the school's faculty of the problems these youth face.

The sessions of the two groups follow the content of the Early Bird meetings, using materials adapted from the Detroit job upgrading program. Movies also are used, and local employers and professional people are invited to speak to the youngsters. Unlike the Detroit program, there is no set time period as to how long the boys continue in these sessions. It depends on the particular needs of the particular youth.

The program's two staff members, besides giving guidance, counseling and instruction, help the boys obtain supervised part-time work and meet with their employers to check up on their progress. They also work with the schools and other groups to win support for the project.

Much of the guidance is centered on helping the youth understand themselves more clearly — their place in their community and their problems as Negroes. As a staff member reported:

> *They were too satisfied in using this* [*discrimination*] *as an escape mechanism. It was of course necessary that we recognize that discrimination does exist. We tried to show that precisely because of that fact, Negroes had to work harder and be better prepared than the average. . . . We tried to show what other minority groups had done to extricate themselves — the Japanese, for instance. More successful was the bringing of Negro and white speakers into our group meetings. . . . We utilized audio-visual materials and field trips to help the boys develop racial pride and to expand their horizons.*

The staff stresses communication with the youth on a "feeling level" by displaying confidence in them and acceptance of them. Minor assignments or goals at which they can succeed — such as filling out applications and obtaining social security cards — help build self-confidence. "For many of the boys," a staff member says, "this is the start of self-confidence and the first task in which they have succeeded in years."

## Supervised work

"Although many changes can take place through counseling — changes in clothing, haircuts, speech and attitudes — there is no real substitute for actual work experience." This belief is behind Neighborhood House's aggressive efforts to obtain "work stations" for the youth.

Local employers are urged to hire the youngsters on a part-time basis for six weeks to three months, in the hope that some will be retained on a permanent basis. Employers are asked to provide firm yet understanding supervision and to submit a written evaluation of the boys' progress that could be used in counseling sessions. Neighborhood House offers to reimburse the employers up to $20 a week during the training period. A few have refused this remuneration, but in most cases the settlement house is paying the full cost of the boys' wages.

The staff believes that the work experience more than justifies the expenditure because it provides a practical application for the job counseling process. On these training jobs the youngsters are confronted with many of the problems they will face on regular jobs. They discuss these problems individually or in a group with the project staff member. For example, some youngsters realized as a result of their work experi-

ence that their inability to read properly was severely affecting their job performance; they asked for help to improve their reading. Their request led to a reading study group manned by a volunteer specialist.

On the average, each youth works ten to twelve hours a week at his work station, earning a minimum wage of $1.25 an hour. Supervised training jobs have been set up in restaurants, a grocery store, a construction company, a rehabilitation center, a sheltered workshop and a painting-contracting concern, among others.

The work experience does not prove to be successful in all instances. For example, a rehabilitation center in San Francisco wanted to employ ten boys before and during the Christmas season. The Neighborhood House staff doubted whether so large a group would function well in one work setting and whether there would be enough supervision for them. Their fears were justified. The boys were too unruly to handle and were summarily dismissed during the second week. In group sessions at Neighborhood House, the staff member discussed with the boys the reasons they had been fired, and the boys had to concede that they could not use "being a Negro" as the excuse.

## Contract custodial service

The difficulty in getting work stations, particularly for the more disruptive boys, led to the establishment of Supreme Services, Inc., in the spring of 1962. This contract custodial service handles janitorial and maintenance work for private employers under contract.

Before becoming part of an actual working crew, boys in this program attend a six-week training course of three sessions a week, with each session lasting an hour and a half. After completing this course, they are ready for employment as a team. Each boy is paid on a sliding scale, starting at $1.50 an hour after two weeks in the program if the youth has shown a satisfactory work-training record, and going as high as $2.40 an hour — the union wage rate — after six months of satisfactory work. A manager helps train and supervise them.

The first crew of six to eight boys was rounded up from among those who had been in the job upgrading project for several months but had not been able to find work. A second crew has now been organized.

An effort is made to gear the program toward youth who are not yet ready for regular employment and who need a more closely supervised work experience. However, to keep the quality of the service at a high level, some youth who do not require close supervision are included.

## Full-time employment

In addition to the boys in the custodial service, 25 per cent of the youth in the job preparation program are now working full-time in

regular private employment. They are being employed in chemical factories, by a used-car dealer, in a car-washing establishment, with printing firms, restaurants and in the civil service — still the best source of employment; a veterans' hospital in Palo Alto has employed seven of the boys as hospital aides. The youngsters, who mainly do unskilled work, are being employed most often as painters and laborers.

The jobs have been obtained largely through the efforts of Neighborhood House, but the California State Employment Service is now taking a more active role. Since September, 1962, a counselor from the employment service has been at Neighborhood House every weekday afternoon to try to place the youngsters in part-time and full-time jobs. The boys, of course, have benefited from this direct channel to finding employment; but the counselor himself has gained from the experience of getting to know the youngsters and the problems they present, which require a special approach in placement.

## Summary

Statistics compiled at the beginning of 1962 on the sixty-one boys served by the program on a regular basis revealed that:

- 74 per cent had been known to the Probation Department.
- 65 per cent came from families in which the parents were unemployed or on welfare.
- 85 to 90 per cent came from families in which the parents had migrated from the Deep South.
- Twenty-two were fathers — although not all were married — and all but one of their children were receiving welfare assistance.

The boys' ages ranged from sixteen to twenty-three, but most were nineteen and twenty.* Some were high school graduates; a few had only an elementary school education, but the majority had been eleventh and twelfth-grade dropouts. Few had any work experience whatever before entering the project, and they had poor skills to offer. Most of the boys in the program read at the fifth or sixth-grade level.

After one year in the program, the vast majority had at least taken a first step forward. The survey revealed:

16 working full-time
15 attending school (5 at junior colleges)
3 employed at Easter Seal Sheltered Workshop
7 in the armed forces
8 working part-time
9 unemployed and not in school
3 in jail

As these findings indicate, not every case has been successful. The

* The average age is now eighteen.

statistics reveal nine boys unemployed and three in jail. Although the staff has made every effort to help them — a psychiatrist was consulted about improving techniques for working with the most difficult youth — some have been too disruptive and too disturbed to be reached effectively.

But the individual advancement achieved by most of the youth in the job preparation program indicates the effectiveness of Neighborhood House's approach. There are still other indications of success, as highlighted in this report by the agency's staff:

> *From our own observations and the reports of court judges and the Probation Department, we know there is both a decline in the incidence of juvenile crime and a change in the nature of the crimes in North Richmond. There is a marked change in the attitudes and expectations of the boys with regard to the possibilities of employment even within the tight labor market that exists. There is a change, too, with regard to their responsibility to their jobs and employers. Those upgraders who first started to pull themselves up by their bootstraps were looked down on by the other boys. Now it is respectable for one to hold a job in the peer culture.*

One youngster, whose career was launched by the project, testified before a committee of the California Assembly, dramatizing the value of the program and the problems Negro youth in North Richmond have faced in finding jobs. Another boy, along with the staff member, attended the Governor's Conference of Youth in Long Beach, California, in the fall of 1961. The staff member reported that "although the young man had little to say at the conference, it was this trip, he admits, that made him recognize the possibility of a Negro living outside of North Richmond, and that a job obtained with the help of Neighborhood House is a means of moving up — and out."

Neighborhood House also reported additional benefits to the community in reducing welfare costs for dependent children of boys in the program. Referring to the twenty-one boys who were fathers, the agency said: "Not one child whose father is employed full-time is receiving any welfare aid in spite of the fact that all but one received welfare assistance before their fathers found employment." According to Neighborhood House, "If one considers the cost of maintaining these families on relief for even a short period of time, then the rehabilitative efforts [of the job preparation project] are well worth the cost of the program in terms of dollars and cents."

Neighborhood House is continuing to modify its program as needs become apparent. For example, it is planning to put into operation a training course for gardeners that would be conducted along lines similar to the contract custodial service.

The settlement house also is trying to set down on paper the various techniques it has used to help hard-to-place youth prepare for and find employment, in the belief that groups in other communities may adapt them for their own use. As now envisioned, the job preparation program will encompass five phases:

*Motivation* — reaching out to youth and, through guidance and counseling, directing their interests toward future employment.

*Socialization and Work Personality* — helping youth to understand their personal problems, vocational goals and the basic demands of the world of work.

*Work Habits and Experience* — putting counseling and instruction into practice through various types of work experience.

*Training and Employment* — helping the more able youth to acquire additional training elsewhere, helping those who are ready for work to find jobs, and following up on all youth in the program.

*Full Work Adjustment* — encouraging youth who have gained employment to take advantage of opportunities for promotion and training and to continue their ties with Neighborhood House by acting as big brothers to the younger boys just starting to explore the work world.

Neighborhood House estimates that such a program would cost about $150,000 a year. This is no small sum to spend on some 100 boys, but it is still far lower than the amount that might otherwise be spent to keep them on welfare — at a high cost in human dignity. By offering this program, Neighborhood House believes that it is putting into practical terms the philosophy behind social work — of helping those who are least able to help themselves.

# GUIDELINES FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

From Detroit and Kalamazoo to North Richmond, we have seen that each community, finding youth out of school and out of work, recognized the need to help youngsters in the transition from school to work. But each program differed somewhat in dealing with the requirements of different youth.

Detroit began with a total focus on the high school dropout, offering mainly job preparation courses plus on-the-job part-time experience — both for short-term periods. It further limited the program to youth most willing to work. Kalamazoo and North Richmond extended their programs to help youngsters before they drop out and saw the need to serve high school graduates as well as dropouts.

Both Kalamazoo and North Richmond, because of the needs of their youth and a lack of training jobs, devised new techniques for work experience — Kalamazoo's proposed pre-vocational training center and North Richmond's already operating Supreme Services, Inc. Also, the two communities have dealt with far fewer youth than Detroit, emphasizing more individualized and intensive service. And North Richmond has taken the added step of reaching out to defeated youngsters who are not seeking help.

While Detroit's large program must limit guidance and job-training experience, Kalamazoo and North Richmond have extended the length of service to each youth, providing no absolute cut-off point and in some cases allowing youngsters to remain in programs for more than a year. All three communities, however, recognize that it is desirable to set some variable time limit — keyed to each youth's needs — to avoid overdependence on the program and to encourage the youngsters to seek regular employment.

Overall, the pattern seems to be a move toward more fully developed, integrated and intensive job preparation programs, offering a broad range of service, from job readiness to job satisfaction.

Detroit defined the basic elements: education and guidance on job preparation, supervised and subsidized work experience, help in finding full-time employment or in returning to school, plus follow-up. Kalamazoo and North Richmond elaborated on them and used them as the foundation for their more varied service, which provides in effect a job help center for youth who cannot succeed without special efforts on their behalf.

## Applying what we've learned

Probably no community will be without some youngsters who are out of school and unable to find jobs — both high school graduates and dropouts. Probably no community will be without its share of youth so defeated that they have given up looking for any kind of work. But each community has its individual differences and what works well in North Richmond, for example, may not be effective in Newark, New Jersey. The youth employment problem in any community cannot be narrowly defined. The prime causes are complex and may touch on a wide area of issues, such as economic growth, basic education, discrimination and the amount of coordination of existing community services for youth.

Thus no one approach or technique will solve the problem. Each community must study its own problem and attempt to unearth and attack the basic causes as well as provide intermediary help to deal with the immediate employment problems of local youth. The experiences of the three programs in this manual have provided much of the frame-

work from which we have developed the following guidelines on what each community should look for, the factors that must be considered, the possible approaches that could be taken and the services that could be offered in preparing unemployed youth for suitable jobs.

## The individual needs of your community

What can be done in your community will depend on the extent and nature of your youth employment problem, its causes and the available and potential resources for meeting it. You will need to know:

*The Employment Situation* — What is the total unemployment rate? For adults? For youth? What types of jobs are now available and what are the job possibilities for the future? What educational and age qualifications do employers demand? Are there other factors affecting available opportunities — such as discrimination, labor union practices, accessibility of industrial plants to potential employees?

*Youth Situation* — How many young people are now unemployed and looking for work? How many are also out of school and jobless but are not seeking work? How many of these are high school dropouts, graduates? What are their characteristics — level of reading, arithmetic ability, IQ, socio-economic background, level and nature of completed education, including specific occupational skills? How many have indicated special difficulties, through contacts with the police, courts, residential institutions, clinics, settlement houses, public welfare? To what extent are the youth aware of local avenues of help in seeking and finding employment? To what extent are their job expectations in line with their present capacities? And, in the final analysis, what are the main obstacles to their employment?

*Available Community Programs and Services* — What kinds of resources are now available to help out-of-school and in-school youth? Vocational guidance, counseling and testing? Job placement? Remedial educational help? Casework and psychological services? Job preparation training, occupational training, on-the-job training, apprenticeship programs, technical training, special work-experience projects?

How adequate are these resources for the number of youth needing them? Are there restrictions on service — fees, special criteria of selection? Are services known and accessible to youth? How many public and private agencies are offering these services? To what extent, if any, are they duplicating their efforts? Is there an effective channel of coordination and communication among the agencies?

*Financial Situation* — What are the available resources for financing new or expanded youth services in your community? Existing public and private local agency resources — particularly the schools and public employment service? Local private contributors and foundations? Busi-

ness, civic and labor organizations? State and federal government resources — Manpower Development and Training Act, Area Redevelopment Act, National Institute of Mental Health, National Defense Education Act, President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency, special state legislation?

## Gathering the information

We are not suggesting that you need specific data on all of these questions or that a precise study be undertaken. What is needed is information on the general picture. Attaining this should not take long. It may not be possible — and not really necessary — to get exact figures on the number of dropouts and unemployed youth; but it is usually possible to get a good approximation — and that is all you need to determine your approach. Specifics may be obtained later on.

In every community there are people working closely with youth who can provide much of the information. These will be representatives from your local schools (particularly guidance and attendance departments and work-permit offices), state employment service, state labor department, chamber of commerce and other business organizations, labor unions, apprenticeship councils, council of social agencies, vocational guidance agencies, service clubs and civic groups and youth-serving agencies.

A good first step might be to hold a meeting of representatives of these organizations to determine what data has already been prepared, the research that has been done and where other information can be obtained. You probably will also want to visit some of these representatives individually to get their separate vantage points on what has been done and what is needed.

It would also be helpful to talk with some of the youngsters themselves, as did the Detroit Council of Youth Services before setting up the Job Upgrading Program. The Council stationed a representative in the work-permit office of the school attendance department to interview students who were leaving school to learn why they were doing so and what help they needed to find employment.

Although a qualified professional should be in charge of compiling and analyzing the material, most of the actual information-gathering leg work may be handled by volunteers. This approach worked well in two radically different cities — Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and New York. In Harrisburg, as a preliminary to starting a program to help dropouts, the local chapter of the American Association of University Women compiled general data on the nature of the local dropout problem. In New York City, for many years the Women's City Club has investigated problems and services for local youth and most recently completed an

evaluation of the problems and needs of vocational education. It is important, however, that if volunteers are used, they be given close supervision as well as advance training on the specific information needed and how to go about getting it.

## Deciding what to do

What you learn from your inquiry will affect the approach you decide to take. For example, if yours is an economically depressed community, it may not be possible to set up broad work-experience or on-the-job training programs, even though many of your youth need them, since even the lowest skilled and part-time opportunities are taken up by adult heads-of-households. The key approaches here might have to be on bringing in new industries and training facilities to provide workers for them, or possibly to train and help youth prepare for work in other communities. Or, if yours is an upper-income neighborhood geared toward helping the college-bound, and the youngsters most in trouble are just not academically inclined but otherwise employable, it might be preferable to establish trade and technical training facilities to equip them for available jobs rather than provide new work-experience programs. Or, if yours is a community rich in agency resources and services, the chief problem may be that no effective system of coordination has been set up to insure that youth most in need are being reached.

In most cases, your community will be neither so economically depressed that little can be done to find jobs for youth nor so rich in resources that only coordination of services is required. Your community probably falls somewhere in between: it has a youth employment problem; it offers some services but needs more; it has some financial resources but not enough to do everything you would like. Thus you need to determine why your youth are unemployed, how you can help them be employed, and then set priorities.

How much can you afford to do? It costs Detroit about $144,000 a year for some 1,000 job upgrading participants.* The city figures that a typical participant costs the program $159, which is less than the per-capita cost for a high school student during the same period. Kalamazoo's YOU is operating on a yearly budget of about $50,000 to provide service for about 150 youth annually, including job-guidance sessions, individual vocational counseling, remedial reading and subsidized work experience for in-school and out-of-school youth. North Richmond's Neighborhood House estimates its budgetary needs at $95,000 a year to enable a five-man staff to provide a more intensive program for about 100 boys; $45,000 more is proposed for research.

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* Budget items appear in the appendix.

In all cases the programs we have discussed started small and grew larger later. To be sure, the expansion took different routes. The direction of growth in Detroit was in helping larger numbers of high school dropouts but not in expanding the actual services. In North Richmond, the direction was in intensifying, broadening and adding new services as needs became apparent, not in trying to expand greatly the number of youth served. Detroit established specific limitations on the kinds of youth eligible. North Richmond set no criteria on eligibility, attempting instead to give individual help to the different kinds of youth out of school and out of work.

Whatever form the expansion takes, the programs must always be related to the needs of the youth and the obstacles they face in finding employment. If literacy is the main problem, for example, a remedial reading program would be of far greater value than a training program that stresses job skills.

Unless you have some assurance of major financial support, you will probably have to start with a small program and expand later. At the very outset it is extremely important that you first define your goals specifically, to know which youth you want to help and how, to know how you plan to reach these goals. At the same time, keep your plans flexible so that they can be modified or enlarged if you find you are not meeting your goals.

In financing the program, you should be careful to arrange for long-range aid from community sources that will provide funds year in and year out. Grants for a specific "experimental" period are helpful at the outset, but these may not be repeated in later years.

## Who should operate the program?

It is certainly not always necessary or advisable that the agency that first takes leadership in exploring the community's youth employment problem be the one that actually operates the needed program. In Detroit, for example, the Council for Youth Service took the first step and is now involved as co-sponsor, but the actual program is being operated by the Detroit Public Schools. In North Richmond, Neighborhood House initiated the action and undertook operation of the program. But in each case both the initiating and operating agencies were recognized as having knowledge and experience in the problems of youth.

If your community already has an agency qualified and equipped to operate the required program, that is obviously your most natural and practical choice. Or perhaps the job might be done by a combination of the organizations involved in your fact-finding survey: the schools, employment service, business, labor, youth-serving or civic groups, churches, community college or youth commission. If it is a combination

of agencies, you will need some kind of structure for policymaking, planning and coordination. Where existing agencies are unable or unwilling to operate a program, it may be necessary to set up a new agency.

Whichever agency — or agencies — you choose to operate your job preparation program, it must develop and maintain channels of communication throughout the community. Continuous and close working relationships with other groups will be necessary to help recruit youth into the program, provide them with the fullest possible services, obtain funds for the program, insure that other agencies will supplement the services you offer, and keep up with changing developments in the total community.

To establish community-wide cooperation and coordination, it may well prove helpful to set up a formal committee — an advisory committee as in North Richmond, a board of directors as in Kalamazoo or a coordinating council as in Detroit — to bring together the various concerned groups in your community. If the program is to serve a particular neighborhood, then it should also have the support and involvement of local people living or working in that neighborhood.

Also needed will be liaison procedures with the agencies that will refer youth to your program and possibly provide additional services.

## Staffing your program

One person must assume overall direction, preferably a professional experienced in working with non-college-bound youth and having a background in education, social work, vocational guidance, sociology or psychology. Most important is that he have a flexible approach and be willing to try new and experimental methods. Either he or another person of similar background should be in charge of screening all young applicants into programs and services you or another agency provide.

If you plan to offer formal services in education, guidance and counseling, you will need qualified professionals to run them. In selected cases, it may be possible to use volunteers for such activities as tutoring, field trips and study halls. These volunteers should, of course, be supervised by your professional director and recognize the limits of their services so that they will not overstep their area of competence.

For work-experience programs, you will need staff capable of dealing with employers and unions and knowing what job supervision entails.

## Program guidelines

Although you will be offering mainly general and intermediary services, your program can have far-reaching meaning by:

- providing varied and flexible help in keeping with a youngster's individual level of motivation and achievement and allowing him to

move — forward, backward or sideways — through different services or a combination of services at his own pace;

- referring youngsters to services you do not offer — technical or vocational training, casework or psychotherapy, or a scholarship-financed college education;
- following up on youth after they leave your program and keeping the door open for further help at any time; and
- acting as a community catalyst to improve general education, vocational training and employer attitudes toward hiring youth.

Following are suggested types of services that might be included in your job preparation program:

## Education and guidance services

*Job Preparation Guidance Sessions* — for the youngster with no understanding of the job market and no marketable skills, as set up in Detroit, Kalamazoo and North Richmond. Focus is on each individual youth's needs, going at his own rate of progress in learning the fundamentals of job hunting and good work attitudes.

*Exploratory Workshops* — another way of helping youngsters to understand more about the realities of work. This technique, most effective perhaps for the least motivated youth, was tried in New York City under the Mobilization for Youth project. The workshop, considered part of the educational process, offers youngsters simple tasks, under adult supervision, in an atmosphere similar to a work setting. Tasks may be used as a peg for group discussions on work habits and attitudes.

*Individual and Group Vocational Counseling* — to provide career exploration and motivation for youngsters uncertain of future plans but having potential for continuing education and training and moving into skilled occupations. Trained counselors are needed. For group programs, there should be some attempt to team together youngsters of similar interests and backgrounds to build up a group identity and spirit. Tied in with the counseling could be visits to industry, colleges and training institutes, lectures, movies, etc. Volunteers could certainly be used here, including, if possible, parents of the youth themselves.

*Remedial Help in Basic Educational Skills* — For the youngster somewhat retarded in reading and other basic skills, tutoring and study-hall services, manned by volunteers, can be most helpful. But the youngster with severe difficulties that handicap him on almost any type of job must have a qualified remedial specialist and, in some cases, a therapist as well.

*Working With the Family* — As much and as soon as possible, it is important to get understanding and support from the families of the young people in your program. In North Richmond, for example, the

staff not only worked with the parents but also set up informal guidance sessions with the wives and girlfriends of the youth they were serving, to help them understand the problems these youth were facing and to give advice on marriage, child rearing, home management and the like.

## Work-experience programs

Two basic types — individual on-the-job training and group projects — may be used as a way of overcoming the lack of regular job opportunities by teaching basic job requirements and giving youth some experience that they can sell to employers when seeking employment.

*Individual On-the-Job Experience* — for the youngster already motivated to work but with little or no previous job experience. The job preparation agency finds temporary work stations — in social agencies, city departments or private concerns — with employers who are willing to give close and sympathetic supervision to the youth and report to the agency on their progress. The agency has a crucial role in sharing responsibility for supervision and in helping the youngster to benefit as much as possible from the experience. Whether the program is run by a school or a social agency, it is important that youngsters meet together regularly under staff supervision to share and review what they have learned on the job, to discuss problems that may have arisen with their employer or fellow employees, to relate their experiences to the education and guidance services they have been receiving and to bolster their group spirit and sense of achievement.

*Group Work Projects* — for the youngster not ready to work on his own, who needs a long period of job preparation and more careful supervision and motivation than the usual employer can provide; and to fill the gaps in available regular job opportunities for youth. An example of this type of project is Neighborhood House's Supreme Services, Inc., which solicits janitorial and maintenance work to be performed by the youngsters as a group. A number of the boys involved have since moved into regular jobs as custodians; they are continuing their ties with Neighborhood House, which tries to help them advance into more skilled jobs. Another example is a Mobilization for Youth project in which youngsters, in teams under the supervision of a skilled mason, learn to build and paint floors and walls. They recently transformed a cellar into a music school for the Henry Street Settlement.

*The Question of Wages* — Should youth be paid for these kinds of experiences? By whom and how much? For the youth being served by the Detroit, Kalamazoo and North Richmond programs, money in the pocket makes a big difference, not only in helping them to buy essentials they may very well not have but also in encouraging them to continue in the programs. In each case, those in charge of these programs found it

necessary to subsidize the work experience in whole or in part as an incentive to employers to take on the youth and provide close supervision.

How much to pay is a more difficult question. Whenever it is financially possible, we believe the ideal arrangement would be to give youth the prevailing wage for the work they perform. However, there also is justification in a lower wage as an incentive to employers to provide training. But this must not be followed to a point where youngsters are given wages so low for the particular work done that a question of unfair competition or exploitation arises. Both Neighborhood House and Mobilization for Youth have a sliding scale under which the youth earns less than the prevailing wage in the beginning but receives more as he becomes more proficient.

## Placement

If you are taking responsibility for job preparation, then you must also assume some responsibility for seeing that the youth you have trained find employment. Whether your program or some outside agency handles the job-finding service, placement is a "must." If you set up a formal placement service, a responsible, qualified person will be needed to direct the right youth to the right job. Although it may be very helpful to have a volunteer committee responsible for exploring and opening up new job opportunities, the professional, who has contacts with employers and knows the demands of business, should direct their activities.

Apart from having employer contacts and previous experience in placement work, the placement director must have some awareness of the problems and needs of the youth with whom he will be dealing. He cannot be rigid about applying the standard placement techniques to these youth, who may need a special approach. They may not do well on standard aptitude tests; they may not have the appearance, speech or behavior that would recommend them to most employers; yet they may still be able to perform well on a job. The placement director will have to recognize the potential that lies behind the appearance of such youth. He must be willing to make a special effort to "sell" these youth to an employer and to encourage the youth themselves to modify their behavior and appearance to meet the employers' needs.

In Detroit and Kalamazoo, there is no placement specialist attached directly to the job preparation program. Instead, cooperative arrangements have been worked out with the state employment service and, in the case of Detroit, with the schools' own placement department. But the experience in North Richmond indicates that having a person connected with the state employment service stationed at your agency can be quite rewarding. Having a placement official on hand provides more direct contact with the youth and a more intensive effort at finding jobs

for them. There also will be a constant feedback of information from the placement center to the job preparation program on what is expected from a youth and how he can best fit into the work world. At the same time, the placement officer will obtain more specific information on what these youth require in the way of specialized placement.

Placement must not be considered a one-shot matter. Follow-up in counseling and in finding new jobs for the same youngster will often be necessary. And possibly the greatest service you can perform will be to alert your community to the need to create new and more work opportunities for youth and to eliminate discrimination in hiring.

## Follow-up services

Whether a youngster has found a permanent job, has returned to school or is still looking for work, follow-up is vital. Too often, his "adjustment" may only be temporary and, after a few months in school or on a job, he may once again become a dropout. Youth who need job preparation programs also usually need a period of support before they can stand alone in the job world. Their own sense of security may be weak. And, as unskilled workers, they may face constant job shifts.

It must be remembered, too, that job preparation and placement represent only the first step in assuring the satisfactory employment of youth; the next step is to assure more permanent employment for them and to upgrade their level of skill. These youth may not know how to accomplish this. They may learn only the frustration of moving from one unskilled job to another and of seeing that even these opportunities are dwindling. They need to be offered other alternatives — more job preparation or skill training for those who can benefit by it — so that they can move from entry jobs into employment that matches their ability.

All youngsters should be encouraged to return for interviews. A staff member should follow up on those who return of their own accord and those who do not. Frequency of staff contacts with the youth will depend on the nature of each youngster's problem.

## Research and evaluation

The concept of research and evaluation is intrinsic to an effective job preparation program. To make sure you meet the needs of your community and its youth, your program must have a built-in research and evaluation system to know how close the program is in practice to the goals you have set. You must be able to determine which youth you have been able to help and which you haven't and why, so that you can plan any corrective action, possibly an entirely different approach.

It is quite possible to let a program roll along without making any attempt to evaluate its effectiveness. But it is a danger you must avoid

at all cost. The program may look good and it may give some youngsters something to do with their time for a while, but it may also be wholly ineffective for the youth involved. Research and evaluation are the only means of making sure you are helping the youngsters and not merely keeping a program running.

## The basic problems

Having offered these guidelines on how you can help the out-of-work youth in your community, we must stress that no job preparation program alone can curb the underlying causes of our nation's mounting youth employment problem. The basic problems include automation, overall unemployment, discrimination and inadequate education, training, guidance and counseling.

All communities are affected by these problems, but not to the same degree. Where a community is not stifled by unemployment and has a fairly adequate system for education and training, a job preparation program may be the most necessary and effective measure it can take to resolve its own youth employment problem. Such a program will offer an intermediary service, which rarely exists, for those youth who fail to take advantage of what the community does offer and who get lost in the transition from school to work. Where a community's problems are more severe, more basic steps — calling for improved employment and educational opportunities for the community as a whole — may take priority.

A job preparation program is predicated on the assumption that there must be at least some hope of future employment for the youth who are being given this special service. Where no such hope exists, until the community is able to expand its opportunities, immediate help may have to take the form of preparing youth for a move to an area where the employment outlook is better. This is what is now beginning to happen in many rural communities.

But short of such severe economic depression, even a community with poor employment prospects, as North Richmond has indicated, can profit from an effective job preparation program. Some youth might be helped who otherwise would remain in the ranks of the unemployed; some dent might be made in restrictive practices that unfairly limit employment opportunities for many youth; some new job opportunities might be provided as a result of special subsidized projects.

Perhaps even more important, by instituting a job preparation program, a community may in the process be better able to pinpoint the scope and implications of its youth employment problem and will have laid the foundation for community-wide action to attack some of the fundamental issues brought to light by this program.

# APPENDIX

## WORK-EXPERIENCE STATIONS

### Detroit Job Upgrading Program

#### CITY OF DETROIT

City-County Building — clerical
Motor Transportation — stock, clerical, mechanic's helper
Printing Division — paper supplies, shipping, bindery
Hospitals — pharmacy, food stocks, X-ray, clerical, ward helper, food service
Parks and Recreation — stock, clerical
Museums — maintenance, restoration, clerical
Youth Commission Office — clerical

#### SOCIAL AGENCIES

Boys' Clubs — maintenance
YMCA — food service, maid service, clerical, maintenance
YWCA — food service, mail service, clerical, maintenance
Community and Neighborhood Agencies — nursery, food service, clerical, maintenance
Humane Society — custodial helper, veterinary's helper
Children's Aid Society — stock, clerical
Boy Scouts of America — clerical
Detroit League for the Handicapped — food service, maintenance, clerical
Detroit Hearing Center — clerical

#### PRIVATE EMPLOYERS

Florist helper experience
Stock rooms (mechanical equipment)
Mailing rooms
Clerical stations
Food service opportunities
Stationery and office supplies

## COST OF PROGRAMS

### Kalamazoo (YOU) Program

| | |
|---|---|
| Salaries and wages | $ 24,500 |
| Administrative | 4,000 |
| Office & building maintenance | 2,700 |
| Student activities & service (includes student wages) | 19,500 |
| **TOTAL COST (ESTIMATE)** | $ 50,700 |

### North Richmond Program

| | Job Upgrading | Supreme Custodian |
|---|---|---|
| Professional salaries | $15,000 | $5,000 |
| Clerical salaries | 2,400 | 500 |
| Payroll expense | 1,392 | 440 |
| Office & printing | 480 | 200 |
| Mileage | 600 | |
| Auto expense | | 2,000 |
| Telephone | 360 | 150 |
| Rent | | 500 |
| Insurance | | 200 |
| Conferences | 240 | |
| Club supplies | 480 | 400 |
| Work stations | 1,800 | |
| **TOTAL COST ('62)** | $22,752 | $9,390 |

### Detroit Job Upgrading Program

#### INSTRUCTIONAL

| | |
|---|---|
| Teacher salaries (11 months) | $ 91,905 |
| Instructional supplies | 1,906 |
| Telephones (centers only) | 1,302 |
| Total | $ 95,113 |

#### ADMINISTRATIVE

| | |
|---|---|
| Administrative salary | $ 9,350 |
| Clerical salaries | 6,609 |
| Administrative supplies | 495 |
| Total | $ 16,454 |

#### TRANSPORTATION

| | |
|---|---|
| Students (tickets & transfers) | $ 6,350 |
| Teachers (auto allowance) | 1,393 |
| Total | $ 7,743 |

#### WORK EXPERIENCE

| | |
|---|---|
| Funds paid to students | $ 24,408 |
| Insurance (workmen's compensation) | 244 |
| Postage | 35 |
| Emergency fund (students) | 105 |
| Social functions | 139 |
| Total | $ 24,931 |
| **TOTAL COST OF PROGRAM** | $144,241 |

(Above report for fiscal year 1960-61 does not attempt to pro-rate operating expenses such as heat, light and depreciation of physical equipment.)

You are invited to call on the National Committee on Employment of Youth for assistance in surveying your own community's youth employment problems and in setting up or strengthening programs to deal with them. NCEY sends youth employment specialists to communities throughout the nation as part of its community consultation service. It also maintains the nation's largest clearing house of information on youth employment problems and programs, publishes pamphlets and manuals on the subject and issues a quarterly magazine, *American Child,* and a bimonthly "how-to-do-it" newsletter, *Youth and Work.*