

Working to End Homelessness Initiative

Advancing workforce solutions
to homelessness





National Transitional Jobs Network

The National Transitional Jobs Network (NTJN) exists to ensure that policies account for the hard-to-employ, that programs are able to effectively serve as many individuals as possible, and that best practices and technical assistance are widely shared and implemented throughout the network.

Activities include:

- Technical assistance and field building
- State and federal advocacy
- National conferences and convenings

The NTJN is a project of Heartland Alliance in Chicago, IL

Working to End Homelessness Initiative

- The National Transitional Jobs Network (NTJN) launched the Working to End Homelessness Initiative (WEH) in 2011 with support from the Butler Family Fund to:
 - Highlight the importance of employment in addressing homelessness
 - Showcase what works in workforce solutions to homelessness
 - Identify systems and policy challenges to service delivery

WEH Briefs for Providers

- **Employment Program Models for People Experiencing Homelessness** - Different approaches to program structure
- **Employment Program Components** - Considerations for modifying programming for people experiencing homelessness
- **Service Delivery Principles and Techniques** - Helping people experiencing homelessness engage in services and succeed in employment
- **Populations Experiencing Homelessness** - Diverse barriers to employment and how to address them
- **A directory of providers** in the WEH community of practice and descriptions of their program models

Why Highlight Employment Solutions to Homelessness?

Employment

+

Housing

ENDS

HOMELESSNESS



Why highlight employment solutions to homelessness?

Most people experiencing homelessness want to work.

- Individuals experiencing homelessness consistently rank paid employment alongside healthcare and housing as a primary need.
- Unfortunately they often face diverse and overlapping barriers to stable paid employment, including economic, systemic barriers, human capital, and personal barriers to employment.

Why highlight employment solutions to homelessness? (cont.)

Linking individuals and families with stable earned income is a critical tool in the fight to prevent and end homelessness and can improve personal, financial, and family stability.

- Numerous studies find that increased income is a strong predictor of a person exiting homelessness.
- Income from work improves access to food, clothing, housing, and healthcare-increasing personal, family, and community wellbeing.
- Employment also shows promise in supporting recovery from mental illness and addiction, in reducing recidivism for people leaving prison, and in reducing reliance on public benefits.



Why highlight employment solutions to homelessness? (cont.)

People experiencing homelessness have diverse needs and strengths.

- Evaluation research shows that individuals experiencing homelessness can manage or surmount obstacles, find a job, and maintain it when offered access to a menu of options for individualized employment, housing, and supportive services.

What We Learned

Programming Needs to be Tailored
to Diverse Populations and
Barriers to Employment

Barriers to Employment

- Low education and literacy
- Work history gaps
- Lack of transportation
- Family obligations
- Lack of stable address or phone
- Lack of hygiene or clothing
- Low self-esteem
- Poor health
- Physical disabilities
- Mental health issues
- Substance use issues
- Fear of losing public benefits
- Criminal records
- Weak labor markets
- Weak social skills or networks
- Discrimination

Promising program design features

- Employment programs typically include assessment, job search assistance, work readiness training, occupational training, job placement, and retention services.
- Research and experience suggest that programs can best meet individual needs by modifying these elements to ensure flexible services that support each individual's personal and developmental needs.

Promising program design features

- Promising program design features include
 - Person-centered assessment
 - Social support
 - Work readiness skills building
 - Enhanced job development
 - Intensive retention services
 - Reemployment services
 - Linkages to housing and supportive services

Employment Program Models for People Experiencing Homelessness

Different approaches to program
structure

Promising employment program models

“Attachment to work” approaches

- Transitional Jobs
- Supported Employment
- Alternative Staffing
- Customized Employment

Advancement strategies

- Contextualized Basic Adult Education
- Adult Education Bridge Programs
- Sector-based training

Transitional Jobs

“Attachment to work” approaches

- Combines time-limited, wage-paying subsidized jobs, skill development, and supportive services to transition individuals to employment
- Goals are to:
 - ✓ **Stabilize** individuals and families with earned income
 - ✓ Learn the expectations of the workplace **experientially**
 - ✓ Address **barriers** to work
 - ✓ Build a **work history** and references
 - ✓ Gain **skills** and experience to transition into unsubsidized work
- Proven to get people with significant barriers successfully working, reduce recidivism after release from prison, and reduce reliance on public assistance.



The Doe Fund, New York and Philadelphia

www.doe.org

- 9-12 months of transitional jobs to supportive housing residents.
- Participants begin in street-cleaning crews and can advance to sector opportunities in energy efficient building maintenance, pest control, and commercial driving.



Chrysalis Enterprises, Los Angeles

www.ChangeLives.org

- Offers both transitional jobs in a work-crew setting, and alternative staffing placements in light industrial, hospitality, retail, warehousing, construction, janitorial and special event jobs.
- Comprehensive support services include mentoring, life-skill classes, communication services, work tools, and retention support groups.
- 400 participants served per day.



HOMELESS
GARDEN
PROJECT

Homeless Garden Project, Santa Cruz, CA

www.homelessgardenproject.org

- Organic farm with 15 housing and employment positions
- Two social enterprises: Women's Organic Flower Enterprise and Community Supported Agriculture
- Employment services include transitional jobs, on-the-job training, assessment, coaching, and lectures on life skills and occupational topics
- Participants may stay for up to 2 years

“Attachment to work” approaches

Supported Employment

- The standard evidence-based model for helping individuals with mental health issues transition to employment
- Supports rapid entry to the competitive labor market integrated with support services as soon as the participant feels ready

Alternative Staffing

“Attachment to work” approaches

- Alternative Staffing
 - Brokers temporary entry-level job placements for at-risk populations
 - Shows promise in helping individuals learn workplace skills, build confidence, and leverage temporary placements to permanent jobs



Goodwill Industries of Houston

www.goodwillgr.org

- Serves individuals experiencing homelessness, people living with AIDS, veterans, and people exiting prison.
- In 2011, 3,542 served at job connection centers; 1,102 placed at local employers.
- Employment services include life skills and job search training, job search one-on-one assistance, placement in Goodwill stores and the donation center, and participation in Goodwill's Temporary Services Program.

“Attachment to work” approaches

Customized Employment

- Helps participants begin self-employment or negotiate restructured job positions that meet their strengths and the employer’s needs
- Shows promise in helping at-risk populations including people with a physical disability carve out work that meets their needs

Advancement Strategy Examples

- Contextualized Basic Adult Education
- Adult Education Bridge Programs
- Sector-based training



Project Hope, Boston

www.prohope.org

- Serves over 1,000 participants per year, mainly low-income single mothers experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- Partnerships with local hospitals for healthcare sector training, internships and placements in patient registration, medical records, secretarial work, and general service
- Also offers emergency shelter, housing search assistance, eviction prevention, financial literacy, child care and other supportive services.



Homefront

Lawrenceville, NJ

www.homefrontnj.org

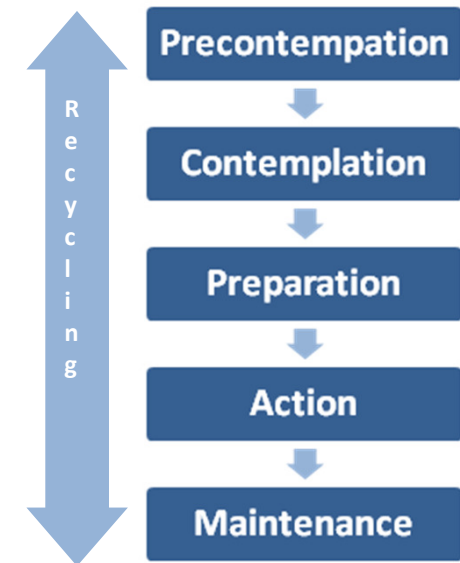
- Focus on homeless families
- Housing services for 450 people per night, 2/3 of whom are children
- 7,000 households served per year
- Employment services include ABE/GED courses, Microsoft Certification, job readiness skills training, job skills placement, and family management training.

Service Delivery Principles and Techniques

Helping people experiencing homelessness engage in services and succeed in employment

Service delivery principles and techniques

1. Work with housing and supportive service providers to ensure that participants' immediate and long-term service **needs are met** through integrated service delivery.
2. Help facilitate the **process of change** in transitioning to employment.

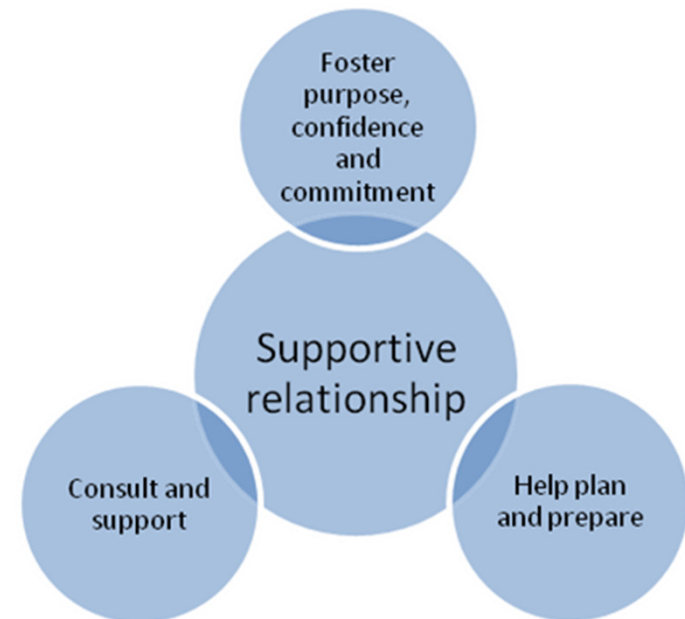


Adapted from Norcross, Krebs, & Prochaska (2010)

Service delivery principles and techniques

3. Help facilitate the **process of change** in transitioning to employment through supportive staff-participant relationships with:

- **motivational interviewing**
- **flexible employment plans**
- **multiple chances to try again**



Service delivery principles and techniques

4. Offer or leverage a **range of employment service options** that meet people's interests, readiness to change, credentialing needs, and other unique life situations.
5. Recognize the relationship between homelessness and trauma, and provide **trauma-informed care**.
6. Consider enhanced options to acquire **work readiness skills** such as one-on-one job coaching, ongoing readiness training, specialized life skills courses, and coursework coupled with real work experience.

Service delivery principles and techniques

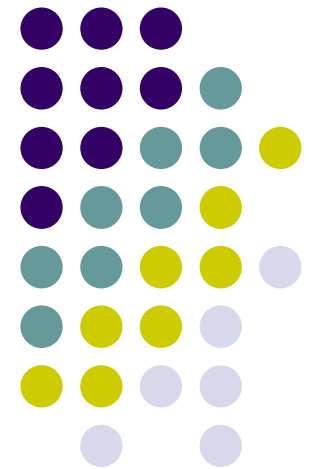
7. Develop a **toolkit of service strategies** for common population-based barriers and needs such as childcare, workplace accommodations, and legal assistance.
8. Consider the best **program model** and **job development strategy** that fits the needs and strengths of the program participants, and helps them advance in the labor market.

Employment in Action

Case Example:

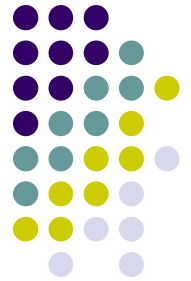
Central City Concern

Portland, Oregon

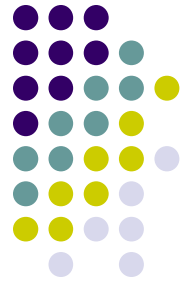


Comprehensive solutions to ending
homelessness and achieving self-sufficiency

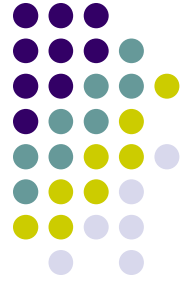
Comprehensive solutions to ending homelessness and achieving self-sufficiency



Homelessness is a “diseases of losses”; friends, family, health, housing, income, self-esteem and hope. Employment can be assistive in regaining all!



CCC Employment Access Center

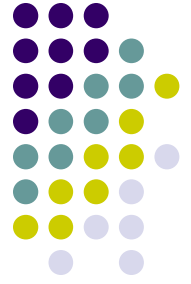


- Serving over **3,600** customers in over **49,000** visits in FY 2010-11
- Computer lab and **14** employment classes weekly
- **988** individuals served through employment case managed programs with **460** securing employment through **386** employers
- Average hourly wage **\$13.46**



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Ave.

Supported Employment (IPS) Principles



Principles:

- Competitive employment is the goal
- Eligibility based on consumer choice
- Rapid job search
- Service Integration
- Long term support

Application of IPS: individuals experiencing homelessness & SU

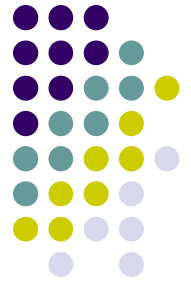


An inner city Washington D.C. study followed 152 clients (83% African American) in which 49% had alcohol use disorders and 39% had cocaine use disorders.

Employment outcomes between these participants and those w/o addiction issues were comparable.

(Sengupta, A, Drake, R. & McHugo, G., Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal, 1998, Volume 22, #1).

Application of IPS for those with criminal backgrounds



One study followed sample of those with and without criminal histories. Offenses included assault, forgery, drug offenses, arson and rape.

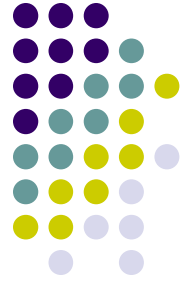
Those with criminal backgrounds:

- a) were less likely to work in retail and more likely to work in construction/labor, janitorial/maintenance, or food services**
- b) reported higher satisfaction with SE services,**
- c) had employers who were more satisfied with their performance than those of clients with no prior criminal background**

Neither group differed in terms of wages earned or hours worked per week or probability of reaching a successful closure.

(Tschopp, M., Perkins, D., Hart-Katuin, C., Born, D.L., Holt, S.L., Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 2007, 26, pps. 175-187.)

CCC Supported Employment



Individuals choosing recovery from addictions, receiving outpatient treatment and alcohol and drug free transitional housing.

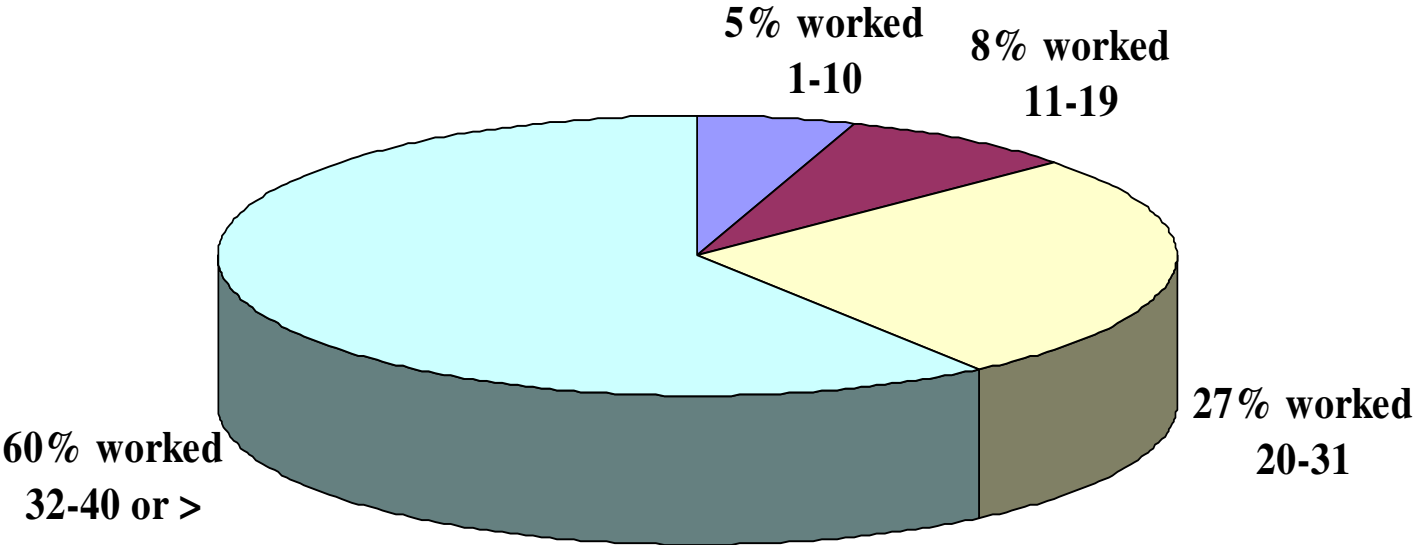
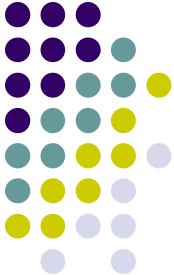
- 70% with felony convictions
- Estimated 95% uninsured
- Estimated 40% with co-occurring mental health disorders

SE Program Outcomes Study- 2010

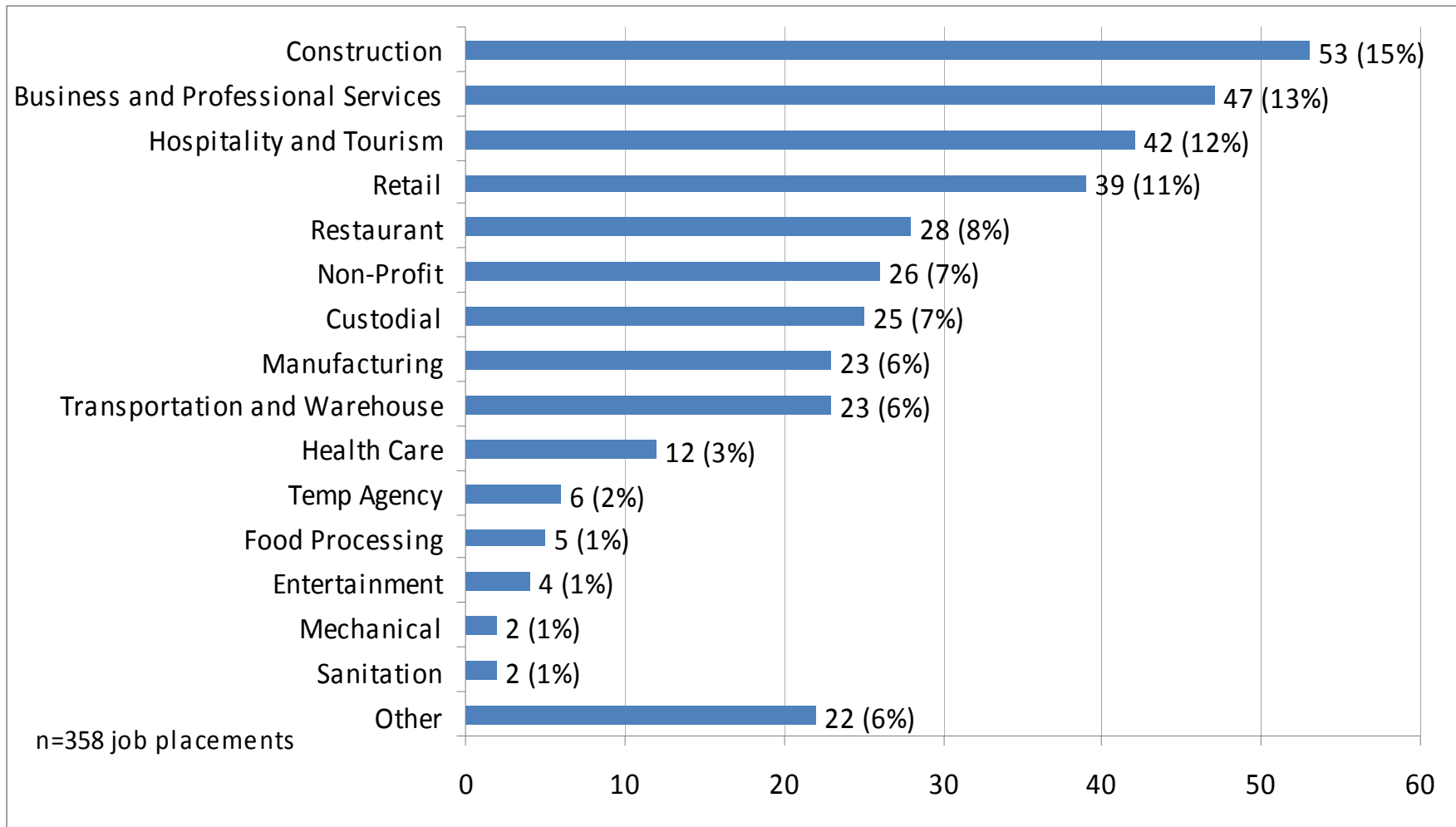
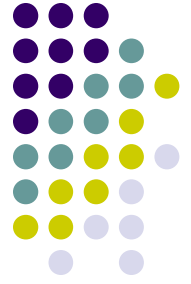


- 319 Enrolled in SE Programs
 - ❖ 8% Veterans
 - ❖ 69% with Criminal Record
- 216 Placed in Employment in 315 jobs
 - ❖ 6 % Veterans
 - ❖ 67% with Criminal Records
- Average wage \$10.05 per hours

HOURS WORKED PER WEEK BY % PLACED

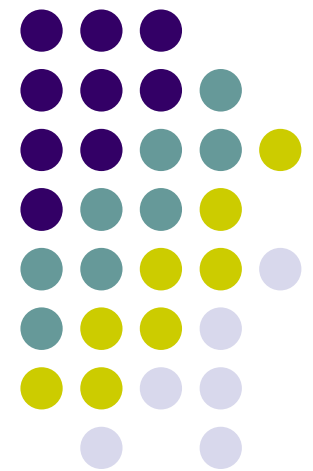


Placement by Sector





Graduation at City Hall



Where to go from here



Potential Funding Sources

- CDBG
- SNAP E&T
- TANF
- SAMHSA
- DOL Veteran's Initiatives
- Private \$



Potential Partners

- Existing employment programs
 - Help them tailor programs for your population
- Vendors
 - Explore fee for service opportunities
- Housing providers
 - Help them create job training opportunities in front desk, janitorial, etc.

Service Integration

Ensure an integrated team effort among housing, employment, health and supportive service providers

- Encourage ongoing relationship building among staff across programs and state or federal agencies
- Cross-train staff across relevant programs
- Foster holistic services through shared caseloads
- Co-locate services for coordination and ease of access

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ntjn@heartlandalliance.org

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