RECONNECTING THE DISCONNECTED:
LEVERAGING FEDERAL POLICY & LOCAL PRACTICE TO EXPAND EDUCATION & LABOR MARKET OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH
Center for Law & Social Policy (CLASP)

CLASP seeks to improve the lives of low-income people.

Through careful research and analysis and effective advocacy, CLASP develops and promotes new ideas, mobilizes others, and directly assists governments and advocates to put in place successful strategies that deliver results that matter to people across America. We are nonpartisan and situated at the intersection of local practice, national research, and state and federal policy, and striving to translate each world to each other.

CLASP's youth policy work aims to advance policy and practice that will dramatically improve the education, employment, and life outcomes for youth in communities of high youth distress.
• Pathways to Reconnection for Disconnected Youth
• Building the Capacity of Communities
• Supports and Strategies for Youth of Color
**CLASP Youth Agenda**

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<th>Pathways for Disconnected Youth</th>
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<td>We advocate for federal policies that meet the education and training needs of the millions of young people ages 16 to 24 who are disconnected from school and employment.</td>
<td>We work with communities to identify and highlight effective cross-system approaches that can provide opportunities for youth to complete their education, enter the labor market and improve their life outcomes.</td>
<td>We highlight the depth of the disadvantaged and disconnected youth problem for young people of color in some of the nation's most challenged communities and propose strategic solutions.</td>
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YOUTH POVERTY

- Children and youth who grow up in poverty and in low-income communities have far more negative education and employment outcomes in adulthood. A comprehensive approach is needed to support these youth to get on track to good careers and self-sufficiency.

- Children born into poverty are three times more likely to drop out of high school, or to become a teen parent.

- The longer a child lives in poverty, the worse their adult outcomes. Only 34% of persistently poor boys and 28% of persistently poor girls have consistent employment in young adulthood.

- Black boys in poor families have the worst employment outcomes in young adulthood of any sub-group. Poor black children are more likely to be poor in adulthood.
Opportunities for employment are critical to putting youth on a path to self-sufficiency.

- **Funding for Youth Employment & Training (billions)**
  - 2000: $3.00
  - 2008: $1.70
  - 2010: $0.92

- **Percent of Teens Employed**
  - White Teens aged 16 to 19
  - Latino Teens aged 16 to 19
  - Black Teens aged 16 to 19

Source: Department of Labor
High Joblessness for the Undereducated and Unskilled

Percent of High School Dropouts 16 to 24 who were employed May 2011

The number of youth who drop out of high school in distressed communities is far too high. Local school districts must take on the responsibility to recover these youth, and to guide them successfully to high school completion and post-secondary opportunities.

4-Yr High School Graduation Rates for Selected High-Poverty, High-Minority School Districts (2006)
Needed: Federally Funded Youth Recovery and Re-Engagement System

**Targeted**
- To communities of High Youth Distress
- To serve disconnected & high risk youth

**Builds Community Capacity**
- To create comprehensive delivery system
- To leverage community & public resources

**Creates Multiple Pathways**
- Blending education, training, support
- Leads to secondary and PS credentials

**Greatly Expands Work Experience**
- Subsidized work
- Internships
- OJT
- Summer jobs
- Transitional jobs
Comprehensive Community Strategy

**SYSTEM BUILDING**

- Caring adult support
- Multiple pathways integrating academic and occupational preparation
- Rich work experience and workplace connections
- Personal development leadership / Civic engagement
- Connections to systems and resources

**PROGRAM INTERVENTIONS**

- Community leadership / collective accountability
- Cross system / cross sector collaboration
- Formal connections with community development/ regional economic development
- Quality management
The Goal: Connect Youth to Multiple Pathways

**Multiple**
- Advocacy
- Guidance
- Transitional jobs
- Community-service projects
- Service Corps

**Career**
- Internships
- OJT
- Subsidized & unsubsidized jobs

**Pathways**
- Transition Support
- Retention Support
- Customized training
- Industry pipelines
- Work/Study
- Full and part-time jobs

**Entry Point**
- Integrated basic skills instruction
- Modular curricula
- Competency-based instruction
- Credit recovery
- GED plus
- Dual enrollment
- Middle college
- Bridge programs

**Key Education Partners**
- CBO Providers
- Adult Education
- Local School District
- Post secondary Institutions

**Advocacy**
- Guidance
- Support & Referrals

**Transition Support**
- Retention Support

**Good jobs**
- Good wages
- Good careers

**Community Development**

Employers

Workforce Boards

Industry Leaders

CBO Providers

Employers

Workforce Boards

Industry Leaders

Employers

Workforce Boards

Industry Leaders

Employers

Workforce Boards

Industry Leaders

Employers

Workforce Boards

Industry Leaders
How Do We Get There?

“ALL SYSTEMS and SECTORS ON BOARD”
Putting Youth Back on Track Requires

“All Funding Streams in Play”

clasp.org – RECONNECTING THE DISCONNECTED – Leveraging Federal Policy and Local Practice to Expand Education and Labor Market Opportunity for Youth
MOVING THE AGENDA

- Political landscape is currently a challenge
- Fiscal realities and push back
- Little national leadership

- What should be done?
  - Advocates need to build and strengthen relationships with members of Congress
  - Push for the reauthorization of WIA and ESEA
  - Cultivate champions in all sectors

- Communities can still strengthen their services despite these political challenges
  - Systems can still think differently about how they use current resources
  - Community based organizations and advocates can urge local WIBs to be more strategic and responsive
  - Document outcomes and effective practices
  - Systems can still begin to create partnerships to expand service, and prioritize disconnected youth populations
REFERENCES


For More Information, Contact:

**Linda Harris**, Director Youth Policy
lharris@clasp.org

**Rhonda Tsoi-A-Fatt**
Sr. Policy Analyst
rtsoiafatt@clasp.org

**Kisha Bird**
Sr. Policy Analyst
Project Director, Campaign for Youth
kbird@clasp.org

http://www.clasp.org/issues?type=youth