

NYS PROMISE
Program Fidelity Report
Executive summary



Reporting Period: November 4, 2017 to April 18, 2018



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Executive Summary

The NYS PROMISE Program Fidelity Report aims to synthesize and document the program implementation process and the subsequent outcomes achieved by PROMISE enrolled youth as they transition to adulthood, as well as those realized by family members.. This report leverages multiple data sources to reflect on project-wide learning and enable further technical assistance and strategic planning for high quality program implementation. The NYS PROMISE initiative examines implementation fidelity across the domains of adherence, exposure, engagement, quality of delivery and program differentiation.

The following summarizes findings from data analysis and research activities taking place in the period from November 4, 2017 to April 18, 2018.

Youth and Parent Demographics

- As of April 18, 2018, 1,927 participants remained in the program; the average age of enrolled youth on that date was 18 years.
- Nearly half of enrolled youth were African American (45%), one fifth were Hispanic (20%), and 8% white. The project has observed regional variations; in particular, New York City (NYC) had a higher proportion of racial/ethnic minorities than the other regions.
- 27% of enrolled youth had significant disabilities, based on their functional limitations, living situation and possibility of needing extra services. This percentage was up from the previously reported 19% in winter 2016. A higher percentage of the Intervention Group (IG) were classified as having significant disability compared to those in the Control Group (CG), 29% and 26%, respectively.
- The most frequent Social Security Administration (SSA) disability classifications among enrolled youth were developmental disabilities (26%), autistic disorders (18%) and intellectual disability (15%).
- The average household income was approximately \$19,289 for the CG and \$21,013 for the IG, which represented increases of \$268 and \$974, respectively since winter 2018. The share of IG families with income under \$20,000 fell from 54% in winter 2018 to 51.4%. The higher income among IG families is consistent with the finding of higher rates of employment among IG parents.
- The most commonly accessed benefit was Medicaid (81% of IG and CG), which is up since the winter 2018 report value of 59%. Looking at all participating households, the average number of benefits received per household is higher since the winter 2018 report for both IG (2.2 vs 1.6) and CG (1.9 vs 1.5). Notably, the difference in the total number of benefits between the control and intervention group is again statistically significant, it was insignificant at the 5% level in the last report.

Adherence

The New York Employment Services System (NYESS) tracks information on youth and families, makes referrals for program services, and makes payment for those services.

- Across the state, 99% of youth currently enrolled in the program had completed an initial meeting. Due to the limited time available to promote adherence, we recommend case managers and family coaches prioritize providing services to IG youth and families who are actively engaged in services over continuing intensive follow-up for those youth and families who have not completed the initial meeting.
- Missing data from the YTF-A continues with 9% of IG missing some elements. Completion of other essential data from other tabs in NYESS was markedly lower. We recommend future technical assistance and training focus on identifying and highlighting the essential data required for monitoring program performance and engaging in future program analysis.
- Overall, 95% of parent tabs were updated for the IG. The data entry for this section of NYESS was exceptionally high among the IG.

Exposure

- Among IG participants, 90% were referred for at least one service. The most common referrals, excluding the initial intake service, were CBWA (59%), CPP Individual (50%), and BWI Family (22%).
- A central component of PROMISE was the delivery of employment services. IG referral into CUTE was 13%, SCWE 8%, and JDV+PWE 16%, with these numbers in the Winter 2018 reporting being 8%, 7%, and 14%.
- Across the state, 83% of IG started at least one service, which is up 5 percentage points from the last report. Focusing on employment services, we see that the percent of IG with initiated CUTE services doubled to 10%, SCWE rose to 6%, and JDV+PWE increased to 13%. While those numbers need to improve in the final year, we also see that 71% of IG (up from 62% last report) started one of the pre-employment services, CBWA (50%) and CPP Individual (45%). The overall increase in the exposure to pre-employment services is driven by the growth in CPP Individual from 26% to 45%.
- 69% of IG completed at least one service, which is up from 56%. The most commonly completed service is CBWA at 31%. There was sizeable variation in the completion rates across regions. WNY has addressed some of the missing data issues with marking completed services as their share of IG with a completed service increased from 30% in the last report to 53%.

Program Engagement

Youth and Families

- 163 youth have left the study, up from 125 and 93 in last two reports. An additional individual has been treated as withdrawn due to data complications. CNY continues to have the highest withdrawal rate among IG at 15%.

- About 22% of IG and CG youth demonstrated attendance problems in school. This level is consistent with previous reports.
- Overall, 44% of IG participants were categorized as highly engaged. Notably, over 50% of the IG in WNY were highly engaged. Combining the highly and moderately engaged numbers, 70% of PROMISE IG were in the top half of the engagement scale. This was a significant improvement over the time since the measure's development for the spring 2017 Learning Community. At that time (May 2017), roughly a quarter of the IG was in each of the four engagement categories.
- 38% of youth had an IEP meeting within the last quarter. Among the IG, 67% of youth attended this IEP meeting and 77% of parents attended. Measurable post-secondary goals were developed in 88% of IEP meetings. Employment was a stated goal in about 90% of plans. Moreover, IEPs indicated a variety of transition activities. Instruction was the most common activity indicated and received. Notably, employment objectives were received more frequently by IG than CG, 35% and 31%, respectively. Among self-determination skills, the three most common skills were choice-making, problem-solving, and decision-making skills. Each of these skills were seen in almost two-thirds of IG (with non-missing data) receiving these transition activities.
- The data revealed two primary paths to school completion for IG students: Regents diploma (35%) and a SACC (41%). There was wide variation in educational paths between regions. For example, 61% of WNY IG youth expected a Regents Diploma, while only 20% of NYC youth expected the same.
- As of this report, 32 of the enrolled IG youth had participated in post-secondary education.
- Available data show a very low overall participation rate of youth in work incentives and non-PROMISE vocational services, like WIPA, WISE, and SEIE. This could mean either that the entry of these data has been extremely poor or that NYS PROMISE youth had very low participation in work incentives and non-PROMISE vocational services.
- Notably, the share of IG youth referred to ACCES-VR rose from 8.6% in the summer 2017 report to 14.4%, and the share of CG youth referred rose from 2.7% to 6.0%.
- Improving the participation of SSI youth in employment opportunities as they transition from high school is a primary goal of NYS PROMISE. Across the state, 29% of IG recorded an employment history, compared to only 4% of the CG. This percentage varied by region, with CNY at 39% and NYC at 31%. WNY had the lowest rate at 15%.

RDS/PC and SP

- Both RDS and PC respondents reported an increase in confidence in initiating service referrals in NYESS for the PROMISE services between fall 2015 and spring 2018. The percent of RDS respondents reporting they were confident/very confident grew from 51% to 76%, while PC respondent numbers increased from 60% to 86%. Notably, there was a slight dip in the levels of PCs indicating they are very confident from fall 2017 to spring 2018.
- RDS and PC respondents reported increased confidence in approving completed services in NYESS for the IG (reviewing and confirming that all requirements of the services were satisfied

after the service provider indicates the service is complete). Over three-quarters (76% of RDS, 83% of PC) respondents reported they are confident/very confident.

- The percentage of RDS and PC respondents claiming to be confident/very confident in closing services fell to 68% and 25%, respectively, from the series high in fall 2017 of 73% and 40%.
- 85% of RDS respondents and 51% of PC respondents indicated that they agree or strongly agree that information received via In-person training and technical assistance in spring 2018 was effective.
- 108 group Parent Center core trainings were delivered during this reporting period. The PC core trainings were also updated in the last period to allow implementation of a new one-on-one delivery model, as well as an online training reference site located at <http://paths.nyspromise.org/parentuniversity>, which has resulted in 1,048 individual one-on-one trainings.
- Regional differentiation was high in the utilization of core trainings, the rollout of trainings to program participants, and delivery method for trainings (one on one or group). The Capital Region logged only 4 group trainings between November and April, compared to 78 in NYC and 26 in WNY. Their benchmark requirement was 4 trainings (1 of each type). The growth in one-on-one trainings has been impressive with NYC, WNY, and CAP recording 588, 366, and 94, respectively since November 2017.
- NYS PROMISE hosted a series of 90-minute topical webinars open to all NYS PROMISE members on the findings from the employment services study, the approach to close case management and family coaching relationships, age 18 redetermination, and control group discharge planning.
- During the reporting period, the NYS PROMISE documented 30.5 hours of technical assistance across 118 interventions, impacting 43 individuals/stakeholders. The average length of intervention was 0.25 hours.

Learning Community

- 97% of the evaluation respondents rated the Spring Learning Community event as Excellent/Very Good/Good. NYS PROMISE has hosted nine learning communities over the course of the project.

Quality of Delivery

- Our program partners (RDS, PC, and SP) have written policies for ensuring confidentiality and privacy of clients. These policies appear to have supported these important objectives as over 97% of the IG cohort parents who said their youth had received services either strongly or somewhat agreed with both.
- Many RDSs report improved collaboration with PCs and SPs. This is also evident through analysis of the formal collaborative network survey data with the state and each region showing growth in the collaboration since 2015. Further, the quality of information collected by RDS for supporting seamless case management services has also improved and student files were more complete than were reported previously.

- 78% of parents and 77% of youth expressed that they are provided clear information on services and their benefits.

Recommendations for Technical Assistance and Quality Improvement in Implementation

- Across New York State, the growth in the engagement of IG participants has continued its upward trend – 70% of IG youth compared to roughly 50% in the spring of 2017. This sizable increase was achieved by growth within each region. With case managers and service providers now more able to engage with the IG youth, there will be a significant opportunity to propel NYS PROMISE towards its employment services and paid work experiences goals.
- With the average age of the youth now at 18, an increasing number of IG youth are successfully exiting high school with either a diploma or other credential and thus at a significant crossroads on their transition to adulthood. While the early patterns observed now from the NYESS data show the IG completing high school and participating in post-secondary education at higher rates than the CG, these successful transitions create more complex needs among the IG youth. The youth both in and out of school are increasingly interested in employment, so their need of case management and employment services is higher.
- There has been improvement in the rates of referral and service delivery for employment-related services over the past year. Access to pre-employment services is strongest among that category with CUTE also showing large growth. As NYS PROMISE moves into its final phase, there is a need to deliver more paid employment services, both SCWE and JDV+PWE. A potential concern in achieving this goal is the decline in service providers' confidence in delivering JDV+PWE, which needs further consideration and perhaps TA.
- To support the continued growth in employment services and paid work, new trackers have been developed that will update case managers and service providers on SCWEs, JDV+PWEs, and paid employment. Case managers and services providers will track their progress toward quarterly goals using the new tracker as shared in a monthly e-blast.
- With the growth in employment service referrals and an increased program-wide focus on the delivery of key employment services, there remains the previous concern regarding the capacity of known employer networks available to match to youth. Further TA on building upon and strengthening existing employer networks is necessary.
- The quality of case management and service delivery is evidenced by the high levels of satisfaction with delivered transition services, with the level of involvement in service decisions by both youth and guardians, and with the youth's understanding on how to get additional services. Building on these strengths, there is a need to explain SSA work incentives to IG youth.
- As NYS PROMISE moves into its sixth year, turnover and staff changes will likely be a topic that needs careful monitoring and regular TA. These changes will compound the existing challenges with submitting final service reports and using FileNET.
- Another recommendation for PROMISE staff as the IG enters the final year of the program is the rollout of training in how to shift the locus of control in decision-making and seeking services to parents and youth.

During the next reporting period, we will continue to provide individual TA and training related to the closeout process, including strategies for building independence in families and youth as we prepare to phase out services over the next year. In addition, we have developed a series of intense training modules that will be delivered in-person to case managers in NYC and will then be made available through OTAC to staff in other regions. Topics covered will include:

- Providing Effective Information & Referral Services
- Preparing Youth and Families for Future Mental Health Needs
- Supporting Youth with Substance Abuse Difficulties
- Understanding the Impact of Trauma & Attachment on Young Adults
- Protecting Yourself Against Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma
- Engaging in Conversations About Sex and Sexuality
- Increasing Independence in Supported Employment
- Taking Case Management Skills to the Next Level: Critical Reflection & Case Conceptualization Skills
- Understanding & Maintaining Effective Boundaries in Case Management