

Program: JOB CORPS

Population Served:

Size: Currently delivered at 119 Job Corps centers nationwide. Job Corps serves more than 60,000 new enrollees annually.

Age: 16-24

Other Characteristics: Job Corps has been a central part of federal efforts to provide employment assistance to disadvantaged youths between the ages of 16 and 24 since 1964.

Studies: 2 experimental

Program Components:

<u>Component</u>	<u>Provided by</u>	<u>Duration</u>	<u>Description</u>
Academic education	Center *	Open entry, open exit	Individual and self-paced. Includes remedial education, world of work (consumer education), driver education, home and family living, health education, programs for participants whose primary language is not English, and GED courses.
Vocational training	Center or national labor organizations through contracts with Job Corps	Open entry, open exit	Individual and self-paced. Includes business and clerical, health, construction, culinary arts, and building and apartment maintenance.
Residential living	Center	Open entry, open exit	Nonresidential students limited to 20 percent. Includes meals, dormitory life, entertainment, sports and recreation, center government, center maintenance, and other related activities. Required social skills training.
Health care, health education	Center	Open entry, open exit	Residential and nonresidential. Includes medical examinations and treatment; biochemical tests for drug use, sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy; immunizations; dental examinations and treatment; counseling; instruction on basic hygiene, preventive medicine, and self-care.

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Counseling	Counselors and residential advisors	During involvement in program, recruitment, placement, and transition into regular life and jobs	Help students plan their educational and vocational curricula, offer motivation, and create a supportive environment.
Job placement assistance	Placement contractors (state employment offices, private contractors, or Job Corps centers)	Open entry, open exit	Provide assistance with interviewing and resume writing and services for job development and referral. Distribute the readjustment allowance, a stipend students receive after leaving the program.

* Centers are either contracted out or at U.S. Department of Agriculture Civilian Conservation centers.

Program Objectives/Goals:

To help disadvantaged youths become “more responsible, employable, and productive citizens” through an intensive and comprehensive program that offers academic education, vocational training, residential living, health care services, counseling, and job placement assistance.

Costs:

Job Corps costs approximately \$14,100 per participant. This includes program costs, nonreported costs, and costs of land, buildings, and other capital used by the program.

Study 1:

Schochet, P., Brughardt, J., & Glazerman, S. (2000). *National Job Corps Study: The short-term impacts of Job Corps on participants’ employment and related outcomes*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration.

Study Objectives and Measurements:

Objective:

Answer the questions: How effective is Job Corps at improving the employability of disadvantaged participants in the short term? Do Job Corps short-term impacts differ for youths with different characteristics? How effective are the residential and nonresidential components of Job Corps in the short term?

Measurement instrument:

Data at baseline, 12-month, and 30-month follow-up surveys; forms filled out by counselors.

Evaluation:

Type: Experimental design based on a comparison of eligible program applicants who were randomly assigned to a program group (offered the chance to enroll in Job Corps) or to a control group (not given this option); control group members could apply for other job programs.

Statistical techniques: Difference in means, with significance testing; weighted analysis; analysis control group members for background characteristics that may affect outcomes.

Significance level: $p \leq .05$

Population evaluated: 11,787 youths who completed 30-month interviews.

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Key Findings:

Findings are presented per eligible applicant, and per participant, each is compared to the control group. When presenting findings per applicant, the term “program group member” is used. When presenting the findings per participant the term “program participant” is used. These are comparable to the “Intent to Treat” (ITT) and “Treatment on the Treated” (TOT) distinction, respectively.

Education and training:

Compared to the control group, program group members were more likely to receive a GED (35 percent compared to about 17 percent) or vocational certificate (28 percent vs. about 8 percent) and to spend more hours in vocational training (4.5 hours per week vs. 1 hour). Participation did not improve college attendance and had negative impacts on receiving a high school diploma for those enrolled in school at the time they were assigned to participate in Job Corps. Only youths over age 17 spent more hours in academic classes than the control group members, the same did not hold true for younger participants (probably because nearly half of the control group was age 16 and 17 and attended high school).

Employment and earnings:

The program increased average weekly earnings after about 2 years from random assignment: In the last quarter of the 30-month follow-up period, the gain in average weekly earnings per participant was \$18, or 11 percent, compared to the control group; average earnings for all participants were \$13 higher per week. The program provided greater gains for very young students, female participants with children, and older youths who did not possess a high school diploma or GED at the time of enrollment. Program group members secured higher-paying jobs with slightly more benefits in the most recent job in quarter 10 (7.07 vs. 6.82, on average).

According to several nonexperimental analyses, less than half of those who actually enrolled (39 percent) said they received job placement services, and 75 percent took “world of work” classes that taught general skills for getting and keeping a job—preparation of a resume and application, job sources and interviewing, transition issues.

Non-labor market outcomes:

Arrest rates were reduced by 22 percent. For those ages 16 and 17, reductions were largest in the early follow-up period (about 40 percent), before they started leaving the program. Impacts were more sustained for older applicants—the arrest rate for this group did not increase as much after they left the program.

Compared to the control group, program group members reported receiving about \$300 less in public benefits and were less likely to report their health as poor or fair. The program did not significantly affect use of alcohol and illegal drugs or drug treatment services, living with a partner, having a child, or the likelihood of living with or providing support for a child.

Positive impacts for 16- and 17-year-olds are striking:

Earnings gains per participant were nearly 20 percent by the end of the follow-up period. The percentage earning a high school diploma or GED was up by 80 percent. Arrest rates were reduced by 14 percent, and rates of incarceration for a conviction were reduced by 26 percent.

Participation:

73 percent of youths given the opportunity to enroll in Job Corps did so. Program group members reported staying an average of 8 months, with over 25 percent staying more than 1 year.

Other Information:

Program funded through Job Training Partnership Act. Evaluation took place 30 months after assignment to the program group. Time in program varies for each individual; for many, the 30-month point represents short-term (about 0- to 15-month) impacts. Residential and nonresidential components not randomly assigned; therefore, results for this difference are not causal.

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Study 2:

Schochet, P., Brughardt, J., & Glazerman, S. (2001). *National Job Corps Study: The impacts of Job Corps on participants' employment and related outcomes*. Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

Study Objectives and Measurements:

Objective:

Answer the questions: How effective is Job Corps at improving the employability of disadvantaged participants in the short term? Do Job Corps impacts differ for youths with different baseline characteristics? How effective are the residential and nonresidential components of Job Corps?

Measurement instrument:

Baseline data and follow-up data at 12-, 30-, and 48-month periods after random assignment.

Evaluation:

Type: Experimental design based on a comparison of eligible program applicants who were randomly assigned to a program group (offered the chance to enroll in Job Corps) or to a control group (not given this option); control group members could apply for other job programs.

Statistical techniques: Difference in means, with significance testing; weighted analysis; analysis control group members for background characteristics that may affect outcomes.

Significance level: $p \leq .05$

Population evaluated: 11,313 youths who completed the 48-month interviews (6,828 program group members and 4,485 control group members).

Key Findings:

Findings are presented per eligible applicant and per participant. When presenting findings per applicant the term "program group member" is used. When presenting the findings per participant the term "program participant" is used.

Education and training:

Compared to the control group, program group members were more likely to receive a GED (42 percent vs. 27 percent) or vocational certificate (37 percent vs. 15 percent) and to spend more hours in vocational training (3.1 hours per week vs. to 0.9 hour). Participation had negative impacts on receiving a high school diploma for those without credentials at the time they were assigned to the program: 7.5 percent of control group members received diplomas vs. to 5.3 percent of program group members. Job Corps provided participants with the instructional equivalent of 1 additional year in school.

Participation did not improve college attendance. About 12 percent of each group (program and control) attended 2-year colleges, and about 3 percent attended 4-year colleges. Less than 2 percent obtained college degrees.

Impacts on education and training were large across all subgroups. Older youths spent more hours in academic classes, and program participants in all age groups spent more hours in vocational training. There were no differences in hours spent in academic classes for 16- and 17-year-olds because nearly half of all control group members in that age range attended academic classes in high school.

Program: JOB CORPSEmployment and earnings:

The program increased average weekly earnings after about 2 years from random assignment: In year 4, the gain in average weekly earnings per program participant was \$22, or 12 percent, compared to the control group (average earnings for all program group members were \$16 higher).

Beginning in year 3, program group members were more likely than control group members to be employed, and they spent more time employed. In year 4, 69 percent of the program group was employed, compared to 66 percent of the control group. In year 4, program group members worked 27.4 hours per week, compared to 26 hours per week for control group members.

Program group members secured higher paying jobs (\$7.55 per hour compared to \$7.33, on average) and employed program group members were more likely to receive benefits. In quarter 16, 57 percent of employed program group members received health insurance, compared to 54 percent of employed control group members.

The program provided gains across most key subgroups including those at special risk of poor outcomes (very young students, mothers, youths who had been arrested for nonserious offenses, and older youths who did not possess a high school diploma or GED at the time of enrollment) as well as those at lower risk (that is, those with a high school credential at the time of assignment to the program).** Earnings gains were similar for male and female participants.

The program had negative impacts on employment and earnings for Hispanic youths and for 18- and 19-year olds. Researchers have not been able to explain these findings, although the following factors have been ruled out through analysis: differences in enrollment rates or length of time in the program, personal or family characteristics associated with low impacts, and a language barrier.**

** The magnitude of the impacts for each subgroup can be found in the complete report.

Receipt of public assistance:

Over all 4 years, program participants reported receiving \$640 less, on average, than control group members; program group members reported receiving \$460 less. Each subgroup analyzed—young men, young women with children, and young women without children—experienced this impact at a different time. For young men, reductions were uniform throughout the follow-up period. For mothers (most of whom were nonresidential), reductions were small while the youths were in the program but larger during the follow-up periods, as earnings rose. For young women without children, reductions were greatest just after the program ended, but they declined to nearly zero later.

Involvement in the criminal justice system:

Overall, participation reduced arrest rates, conviction rates, and time spent in jail. Over the 48-month follow-up, arrest rates dropped by 16 percent. Reductions were statistically significant during the first year after random assignment, when youths were still in the program. Smaller reductions were realized in subsequent years, but those reductions are not statistically significant. Program group members and participants had lower conviction rates and were less likely to have served time in jail after being convicted of a crime than control group members: 22 percent of program group members were convicted compared with 25 percent of control group members, and 16 percent of program group members served time in jail for convictions, compared with 18 percent of control group members. However, there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups in the average number of weeks in jail for convictions.

Substance use:

The program had no impact on tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drug use and had no statistically significant impact on time spent in drug treatment.

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Health status:

Participants were less likely than control group members to report their health status as “poor” or “fair”: about 15.5 percent vs. 17.5 percent.

Family formation and child care:

The program had no impact on fertility or custodial responsibility. Thirty-nine percent of program group members and 37.8 percent of the control group had children 48 months after random assignment, a difference that is not statistically significant. Custodial responsibility (measured only for young men) did not differ between the program and control groups. Custodial responsibility measures include living with the child, spending time with the child, providing any type of nonmonetary support, and providing monetary support.

Program group members were slightly less likely than control group members to live with their parents 48 months after random assignment (34.7 percent vs. 31.8 percent). Program group members were also more likely to be married or living with a partner than control group members (31 percent vs. 29.4 percent), a difference that is statistically significant.

Participants used an average of about 146 more hours of child care during the 48-month follow-up period than they would have if they had not enrolled in the program. Participants were more likely than their control group counterparts to use child care during the first year after random assignment (while still enrolled in the program) and during the fourth year (when employment gains were largest). In the first year, 17.3 percent of the program group and 15.1 percent of the control group reported using child care; in the fourth year, 35.2 percent of the program group and 33.3 percent of the control group reported using child care. Subgroup analyses found impacts for females but not for males (only a small percentage of fathers were living with their children).

Mobility:

There were no statistically significant differences on measures of mobility (i.e., difference in miles between zip code at application and at 48-month interview) between program group members and the control group. Also, there were no significant differences in the characteristics of the counties that control group and program group members lived in at the 48-month follow-up.

Positive impacts for 16- and 17-year-olds are striking:

In year 4, average earnings gains per participant were nearly \$900. Program participants were significantly more likely to receive a GED or diploma than control group members (46.7 percent vs. 36.2 percent). Over all four years program group members were less likely to have been arrested or charged with a delinquency or criminal complaint than control group members (38.1 percent vs. 41.4 percent) and were less likely to have spent time in jail (20.7 percent vs. 24.2 percent).

Positive impacts for females with children at the time of enrollment:

Women in this subgroup saw positive earnings growth (more than 20 percent) at year 4. Many of them were nonresidential students.

Residential and nonresidential subgroups:

The programs serve different types of students, but each is effective for its target group. Earnings and employment impacts during the last 2 years were generally positive for those assigned to both the residential and non-residential groups (except for young women without children in the nonresidential group). Note: analyses do not allow residential and nonresidential programs to be compared, since they serve different types of students.

Other Information:

None
