

Program: JOBSTART

Population Served:

Size: 13 local programs nationwide from 1985 to 1988 (2,312 eligible applicants for demonstration)

Age: 17-21

Other Characteristics: Economically disadvantaged school dropouts with poor reading skills; funded through the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982.

Studies: 2 experimental

Program Components:

<u>Component</u>	<u>Provided by</u>	<u>Duration</u>	<u>Description</u>
Basic education	Site staff	Minimum of 200 hours offered; actual participation varied by site and individual	Self-paced and competency-based; computer-managed or -assisted; focused on reading, communication, and basic computation skills
Occupational skills training	Site staff	Minimum of 500 hours offered; actual participation varied by site and individual	Classroom setting, combined theory and hands-on experience; prepares enrollees for jobs in high-demand occupations; developed with assistance from private sector to ensure that graduates meet the entry-level requirements of local employers
Training-related support services		Varied by site	Tailored to individual needs; include transportation and child care and some combination of work-readiness and life skills training, personal and vocational counseling, mentoring, tutorial assistance, and referral to external support systems; need-based payments or incentive payments tied to length of stay, program attendance, or performance
Job development and placement assistance	Site staff and subcontractors	Varied by site	Assist participants in finding training-related jobs

Program Objectives/Goals:

- In general, to improve the lives of young, low-skilled dropouts. The five specific goals were to:
1. Have local agencies attract young, economically disadvantaged, low-skilled dropouts into an alternative education and training program.
 2. Put in place a package of services designed to address the needs of these youths while working within the constraints of JTPA funding, performance standards, and administrative practices.
 3. Have the young people respond favorably to this opportunity and make an investment of their time and effort by participating in the services.
 4. Increase educational attainment, as measured by receipt of high school diploma or GED.
 5. Over time, increase employment and earnings and reduce reliance on public assistance.

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Costs:

In 1986, the program cost \$4,548 per participant.

Study 1:

Cave, G., & Doolittle, F. (1991). *Assessing JOBSTART: Interim impacts of a program for school dropouts*. New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

Study Objectives and Measurements:

Objective:

Specifically, to answer the first 3 questions and part of the 4th question listed in program goals above.

Measurement instrument:

JOBSTART enrollment form filled out by program staff; monthly report of participation in JOBSTART activities; tests of Adult Basic Education; 12- and 24-month follow-up surveys of sample designed to measure impacts of amount of education and training received, employment and earnings, and other outcomes; qualitative descriptions of the program and participants' experiences.

Evaluation:

Type: Experimental; random assignment of JOBSTART applicants to experimental or control group (who did not receive JOBSTART services).

Statistical techniques: significance testing, regression analysis.

Significance level: $p \leq .05$

Population evaluated: 1,839 out of 2,312 youths who applied for JOBSTART and who provided information at the 24-month follow-up constitute the "impact" sample; 949 were in the experimental group and 890 were in the control group.

Key Findings:

Overall, sites reported that about 89 percent of the youths assigned to the experimental group actually participated in JOBSTART. Four factors influenced the percentage who participated: length of intake (youths dropped out when the intake period was long); open entry, open exit vs. fixed-cycle scheduling (youths assigned to fixed-cycle sites might face delays in program startup, resulting in lower participation rates); start-up or scheduling problems (such difficulties result in lower participation rates); and differences in sites' attendance reporting.

Education:

33.1 percent of participants vs. 16.5 percent of the control group received a GED or high school diploma, a significant difference.

Employment:

As expected, more youths in the control group than in the experimental group worked during the first year of follow-up; the difference is not significant in the second year of follow-up.

Participants' earnings were significantly below those of the control group in years 1 and 2. Among women living with their own children at the time of random assignment, a higher percentage of participants than control group members worked in each of the two years, with the second year showing a somewhat larger impact on employment rate.

Other:

During the first 24 months of follow-up, JOBSTART had no statistically significant impacts on receipt of most public benefits, childbearing, fathering of children, provision of child support, or criminal arrests.

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Other Information:

None

Study 2:

Cave, G., Bos, H., Doolittle, F., & Toussaint, C. (1993). *JOBSTART: Final report on a program for school dropouts*. New York, NY: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation.

Study Objectives and Measurements:

Objective:

To assess the difference the program made in the lives of the young people who participated in JOBSTART. Specifically, to answer all 5 questions listed in program goals above.

Measurement instrument:

JOBSTART enrollment form filled out by program staff; monthly report of participation in JOBSTART activities; tests of Adult Basic Education; 12-, 24-, and 48-month follow-up surveys designed to measure impacts of amount of education and training received, employment and earnings, and other outcomes; qualitative descriptions of the program and participants' experiences.

Evaluation:

Type: Experimental; random assignment of JOBSTART applicants to experimental or control group (who did not receive JOBSTART services).

Statistical techniques: Significance testing; $p \leq .10$

Population evaluated: 1,941 out of 2,312 randomly assigned youths who had 48-month follow-up data (988 in the experimental group and 953 in the control group).

Key Findings:

Education:

JOBSTART led to a significant increase in the rate at which participants passed the GED (42 percent vs. 28.6 percent of control group members).

Male participants were more likely than males in the control group to receive any education or training in the follow-up period. They also received more hours of education or training than control counterparts. Results are similar for young women. Participants who were white, non-Hispanic, black, non-Hispanic, Hispanic, or of other races/ethnic backgrounds were more likely to receive any education or training in the follow-up period than their counterparts in control groups. In addition, participants age 16-19 and 20-21 were more likely than their control counterparts to receive any education or training in the follow-up period.

Male participants were more likely than males in the control group to earn a GED during the follow-up period. Results are similar for participants who are female, non-Hispanic white, non-Hispanic black, Hispanic, age 16-19, and age 20-21.

Employment:

In the final 2 years of the follow-up, average earnings of participants were higher by approximately \$400 per year, but this difference is not statistically significant.

Impacts on earnings were encouraging for young men with an arrest record when they entered the program (impacts were positive and statistically significant in year 4) and for young men who had dropped out of school because of educational difficulties before entering the program (in year 3)

More youths in the control group than in the experimental group worked during the first year of follow-up; in the second year, slightly more participants than control group members worked; in the third and fourth

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years there was no significant difference.

Other outcomes:

No significant impacts on youths' receipt of public assistance except that female participants who were not mothers when they entered the program were significantly less likely than their counterparts in the control group to receive AFDC during the later years of follow-up. Female participants living with their own children received more in total general assistance income than their counterparts in the control group.

Arrest rates were reduced during the first year of follow-up for all participants and for some subgroups. A larger impact was observed on young men without a prior arrest. However, there was only a small difference in arrests during the entire 4-year period, implying that involvement in the program made a difference that did not continue once participation ended.

Participants reported significantly less use of drugs other than marijuana, compared to the control group (4.1 percent of participants vs. 5.8 percent of youth in the control group reported drug use).

Male participants were more likely to experience positive activity (work or further education or training) during the follow-up than their control counterparts. Similar results are seen for women living their own children and women not living with their own children (including those who do not have children).

Subgroups:

Custodial mothers who entered JOBSTART experienced significantly increased childbearing and no impact on receipt of AFDC. These participants saw a \$1,004 increase in net income, resulting from increases in both earnings and welfare payments received for additional children. For other participants, the effect of JOBSTART on income remained negative after 4 years of follow-up.

Participants received substantially more services than the control group. More than 90 percent of the experimental group participated in JOBSTART and averaged 400 hours of activities.

There is no discernable pattern of effective program practices in the 13 sites. It does not seem to matter whether programs offer education followed by occupational training or offer education and training simultaneously.

Other Information:

JOBSTART is funded primarily through the Job Training Partnership Act.
