

NYS PROMISE
**Program Fidelity
Report**
Executive Summary



Reporting Period: May 18, 2016 to November 4, 2017



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Executive Summary

The NYS PROMISE Program Fidelity Report aims to synthesize and document program implementation and outcomes on improving transition to adulthood for youth and families enrolled in PROMISE. 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 May 18, 2017 to November 4, 2017.

Youth and Parent Demographics

- As of November 16, 2017, 1,964 participants remained in the program; the average age of enrolled youth on that date was 17.5 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.
- 26% 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 (5.8%) of the Intervention Group (IG) were classified as having significant disability (+29%) compared to those in the Control Group (CG) (+23%).
- 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 \$19,021 for the CG and \$20,039 for the IG. In fact, 54% of families with observed data in the IG had a total household income under \$20,000, which is 49% higher than in the last report. Additionally, families in the IG had \$1,018 more annual income than CG families, consistent with the earlier finding of higher rates of employment among IG parents.
- The most commonly accessed benefit was Medicaid (59% of IG and CG). Looking at all participating households, the average number of benefits received per household was about 1.6, which was .1 lower (1.7) in the winter 2017 report. Notably, the difference in the total number of benefits between the control and intervention group was no longer statistically significant, it was significant 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, 95% 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.
- 94% of the essential data fields from NYESS YFT-A had been completed. 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, 97% 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 (63%), CPP Individual (33%), and BWI Family (18%).
- A central component of PROMISE was the delivery of employment services. IG referral into CUTE was 8%, SCWE 7%, and JDV+PWE 14%.
- Across the state, 78% of IG started at least one service. Focusing on employment services, we see that only 5% started a CUTE, 4% started a SCWE, and 11% started a JDV+PWE. While those numbers need to improve as the program progresses, we also see that 62% of IG started one of the pre-employment services, CBWA (49%) and (26%).
- 56% of IG completed at least one service. The most commonly completed service is CBWA at 18%. There was sizeable variation in the completion rates across regions. NYESS data as of this report showed that WNY had far fewer IG experiencing a completed service, with a rate of only 30%.

Program Engagement

Youth and Families

- 125 youth have left the study, up from 93 in the summer 2017 report. An additional individual has been treated as withdrawn due to data complications. The withdrawal rate in CNY was 10% of their participants, compared to 5% in both WNY and NYC.

- About 20% of IG and CG youth demonstrated attendance problems in school. This level is consistent with previous reports.
- Overall, 38% 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, over two-thirds 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, roughly a quarter of the IG was in each of the four engagement categories.
- As of this report, 13 of the enrolled IG youth of the IG had participated in post-secondary education. Looking at another measure of school engagement revealed lower rates of attendance problems for the IG relative to previous reports.
- 36% of youth had an IEP meeting within the last quarter, down from 47% in the last report. Among the IG, 64% of youth attended this IEP meeting and 81% of parents attended. Measurable post-secondary goals were developed in 90% of IEP meetings. Employment was a stated goal in about 88% of plans. Moreover, IEPs indicated a variety of transition activities. Instruction was the most common activity indicated and received. Notably, employment objectives were indicated at an equivalent rate in both the IG and CG. 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 (37%) and a SACC (41%). There was wide variation in educational paths between regions. For example, 58% of WNY IG youth expected a Regents Diploma, while only 21% of NYC youth expected the same. Another trend that emerged was a shift away from Regents diploma and towards a SACC, with the share of IG youth expecting a regent’s diploma falling from 43% to 37%
- Available data show a very low overall participation rate of youth in work incentives and non-PROMISE vocational services, like WIPA, WISE, and SEIE – nearly always below 1%. 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 last report to 11.0%, and the share of CG youth referred rose from 2.7% to 3.1%.
- 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, 17% of IG recorded an employment history, compared to only 3% of the CG. This percentage varied by

region, with CNY at 27% and NYC at 18%. WNY had the lowest rate at 4%. (Note: a data entry issue in WNY has been negatively affecting this estimate).

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 fall 2017. The percent of RDS respondents reporting they were confident/very confident grew from 51% to 72%, while PC respondent numbers increased from 60% to 83%.
- 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 (71% of RDS, 80% of PC) respondents reported they are confident/very confident.
- In fall 2017, 73% (n=18) of RDS respondents and 40% (n=3) of PC respondents reported they were confident/very confident in closing services in NYESS. PC respondents generally reported lower confidence on closing services compared to other tasks.
- Fifteen percent (15%) more SP respondents reported high levels of confidence in utilizing NYESS during the fall 2017 survey, than during spring 2017 (see Figure 24). SP staff report lower levels of confidence this round related to receiving and managing PROMISE referrals. This may reflect the increased volume of PROMISE referrals that SPs are encountering and the learning curve associated with managing them within the system.
- 77% (n=23) of RDS respondents and 58% (n=4) of PC respondents indicated that they agree or strongly agree that information received via In-person training and technical assistance in fall 2017 was effective.
- 49 group Parent Center core trainings were delivered during this reporting period. The PC core trainings were also updated in this period to allow implementation of a new 1 on 1 delivery model, as well as an online training reference site located at <http://paths.nyspromise.org/parentuniversity>.
- Regional differentiation was high in the utilization of core trainings, the roll-out of trainings to program participants, and delivery method for trainings (one on one or group). The Capital Region logged no group trainings since September 2017. Their benchmark requirement was 4 trainings (1 of each type). CAP has offered few 1:1 trainings.
- The training and curriculum specialist provides face-to-face TA training to case managers (CM) and Parent Center (PC) staff on topics targeted to their unique regional needs. During this review period, 6 sessions of in-person training were delivered: 3 in NYC, 1 in the Capital Region and 2 in Western NY. The majority of staff (91%) responded

that they either strongly agree or agree that the in-person technical assistance and training received from the Outreach and Technical Assistance Specialist was from a knowledgeable source and the information was helpful in their daily work.

- 97% of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the technical assistance/training provided at the Fall 2017 Learning Community. NYS PROMISE has hosted eight learning communities over the course of the project.
- NYS PROMISE hosted a series of 90-minute topical webinars open to all NYS PROMISE members on utilizing Person Centered Planning Principles to address particular behaviors and questions commonly encountered in NYS PROMISE case management. A group of 68 case managers and family coaches were originally identified as mandatory attendees for the Case Management Community of Practice. As of this report, 38 participants have successfully completed the training.
- Between 05/18/2017 to 11/04/2017 the NYS PROMISE documented 42.5 hours of technical assistance across 119 interventions, impacting 197 individuals/stakeholders. The average length of intervention was 0.35 hours.

Quality of Delivery

- Rates of referral and service delivery for employment-related services improved over the past year, with the biggest increases seen in access to pre-employment services. As NYS PROMISE moves into its final phase, there is a need to deliver more paid employment services, both SCWE and JDV+PWE. Additionally, there is historical evidence of a drop in the continuity of service delivery during the upcoming summer months, especially in NYC. There is an immediate need to plan solutions to avoid this drop.
- Statewide levels of engagement increased substantially since fall 2017. As case managers and service providers work to plan and deliver needed services, there is an understanding that time and effort is limited, and engagement is not consistent across program participants. The primary priority for case managers should be the provision of additional services to participants that are highly or moderately engaged. Secondly, effort will be made to reach less engaged participants and disengaged participants.
- While there has been growth in the delivery of employment services, there is also concern regarding the known employer networks that can be tapped for NYS PROMISE. There is a need for increased TA on connection, development, and enhancement of employer networks as well as regional resource networks.
- With the average age of PROMISE youth increasing, there is greater need for training on advanced case management. The issues of highest demand are age 18 redetermination, accessing community resources for transition, and targeted guidance on transition issues for those with mental health issues and developmental disabilities.

- As indicated from multiple sources, there is a need for TA on discharge procedures including timelines and expectations. This discharge guidance is an excellent opportunity to provide case managers with a checklist of essential data to collect during the final interaction with the youth participants. One topic on the checklist will be level of educational attainment, and we will provide guidance on how to consistently document educational status.
- A recommendation for future work is to modify the system that tracks withdrawals. User feedback indicates that the current system includes too many steps. A new system could be streamlined and identify levels of engagement for appropriate levels of outreach.

Recommendations for Technical Assistance and Quality Improvement in Implementation

TA webinar and in-person training topics that may be addressed in the next reporting period include:

- Preparing youth for turning 18: guardianship, age 18 re-determination, healthcare transition, disclosure of disabilities, etc.
- Training on advanced case management issues: age 18, redetermination, transition issues for those with mental health, developmental disorder, and those with co-occurring disorders.
- Helping those with mental health issues prepare for transition.
- Transition support for youth and families, accessing community services.
- Training on how to develop a youth employer network for service providers.
- Training on how to develop a regional resource network for case managers.
- Discharge planning process & procedures.
- Discharge planning (therapeutic skills): impact of attachment and loss, therapeutic techniques, boundaries.