4-336.4

Self-Sufficiency Project Implementation Manual

Lessons Learned from Eight Years of Office of Community Services Demonstration Partnership Programs

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Community Services

Self-Sufficiency Project Implementation Manual

Lessons Learned from Eight Years of Office of Community Services Demonstration Partnership Programs

Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Community services

October 1996

Foreword

Since 1986 the Office of Community Services has funded Demonstration Partnership Projects to develop and try out new ways of increasing the self-sufficiency of the poor. In this Self-Sufficiency Implementation Manual the Directors and Evaluators of many of these projects tell you what has worked and what hasn't, and why.

For those interested in starting or improving projects of their own, the Manual presents findings of great strategic importance to project design and implementation. These findings are equally important to policy makers seeking to move the nation's social programs from a paradigm of maintenance to one of transformation, which can move the poor from welfare dependency to productivity in meaningful work.

The law which created the Demonstration Partnership Program (DPP) calls upon the Secretary to disseminate the project results and evaluation findings of the program so that the new and innovative approaches developed for providing greater self-sufficiency of the poor can be replicated by others. This Manual is a part of that dissemination/replication process.*

We have tried to make the Manual easy to read and easy to use. It is organized into Chapters which reflect the types of DPP Projects which have been funded: projects testing innovative models of Case Management and Family Development; projects involved with Micro-Enterprise and Self-Employment; and Projects targeted at particular populations: Youth-At-Risk, Minority Males, and the Homeless. There is an opening Chapter on General Lessons learned that are common to all projects. Thus readers interested in a particular type of project can focus on the opening General chapter and those chapters relevant to their particular interests without having to read the entire manual. For example, one interested in programs helping urban youth might find all the information they need in the General chapter plus the Case Management chapter and the chapter on Youth-At-Risk, without having to spend time going through other chapters.

In addition, each Chapter is organized into the following topical sections: the Introduction and discussion of a relevant Logic Model; Project Design Lessons; Project Start-Up Lessons; Project Operations Lessons; and Project Evaluation

Lessons. We hope that in this way the Manual can be a useful reference and learning tool throughout the life of a project, from design through evaluation.

For the past three decades Community Action Agencies (CAAs), the principal field structure of the War on Poverty, and since 1981 the primary recipients of Community Services Block Grant funds, have been heavily involved with the problems of poverty, and the need to bring poor people up to a decent level of living. With the advent of DPP in 1986, CAAs were invited by the Congress to add a new dimension to their activities. They were invited to form partnerships with public and private entities in their communities to seek innovative approaches to community revitalization and the problems of poverty. An important emphasis for these new partnerships became the avoidance of dependency: on the development and testing of new ways to improve the capabilities of the poor and to overcome the barriers to their becoming productive members of the work force.

Any new idea for reducing welfare dependency has to be tested at the local level. The DPP has offered a means of developing, trying, evaluating, and refining these new and innovative ideas. As advocates for the poor, CAAs have, over the years, forged a special bond with poor people in their communities. Anyone who has visited CAAs knows the difference between the way poor people relate to their local CAA and to their local welfare office. A new idea that is conceived by a CAA in partnership with its community is more likely to reflect the real needs and concerns of the poor and thus be more likely to produce outcomes that have a significant impact on reducing poverty and dependency than an idea dreamed up by remote bureaucrats or academics. The lessons learned by these projects, as presented in this *Manual,* bear this out.

We wish all readers and users of this Manual success in their endeavors, and hope that it can offer useful, practical lessons in the design and implementation of successful projects, as well as providing insights and a modicum of wisdom to those who will determine the policies and legislation that will shape our future as a caring society.

Richard M. Saul, Director
Division of Community Demonstration Programs
Office of Community Services
Administration for Children and Families, DHHS

* The Office of Community Services has developed a *Replication Package,* which in addition to this *Manual* includes an award-winning film/video, *Realizing the Dream, Lessons Learned from Four Demonstration Partnership Projects;* a *Project Design and Evaluation Guidebook,* a series of *DPP Project Evaluation Monographs,* published each year, and now available for DPP Projects funded from 1986 through 199 1, with monographs for projects funded in 1992/3 forthcoming; and a soon-to-be published *Project Handbook,* narrative descriptions of seven successful DPP Projects. These materials are available from the Division of Community Demonstration Programs, Office of Community Services, by calling (202) 401-9370.

Acknowledgments

For a number of years, it has been fashionable to criticize welfare and job training programs as ineffective. This study clearly demonstrates otherwise. It is a synthesis of lessons learned from eight years of Demonstration Partnership Programs (DPP) run by Community Action Agencies throughout the United States. The lessons that are contained in it make a persuasive argument that well designed programs result in low-income individuals and public assistance recipients becoming economically self-sufficient.

The richness of the Manual was enhanced by many members of the Demonstration Partnership Program community. The authors are particularly in debt to the DPP grant representatives who attended a number of cluster conferences in the summer of 1994 and contributed their knowledge concerning self-sufficiency programs to the process. Sharon Ford, Roger Longo, Cynthia Morgon, and Mary Twitty made major contributions to the Case Management section. Stephen Hedger, Rosalind Johnson, Sharon Kiichli and Lynn Robson assisted in the development of the Micro-Enterprisesection. Robert Odom, Roy Turner and Mary Twitty gave freely of their experiences to the Minority Male section. Rosalind Johnson, Dermis McBride and Doug Swanberg contributed their ideas, knowledge and experience to the Homeless section. Finally, Ginny Vyeno-Bridy, Bill Hansen, Pam Reeders-Esparza, Cindy Roberts-Gray and Sandy Steinfeld enhanced the Youth-at-Risk section, providing a wealth of information on many different approaches to youth self-sufficiency programs.

Many other individuals made important contributions to the book. Community Action Agency personnel were unfailingly helpful throughout the life of the project. Their enthusiasm and interest amazed and inspired us. We dedicate this book to them.

The Authors:
John Rogard-Tabori
Evelyn Bradley
Jack Hermann
Robert Davis
John Buckstead
Mary Ann Scheirer

Table of Contents

I. Introduction

I-A. THE PURPOSE OF THE IMPLEMENTATION MANUAL

The Self-Sufficiency Project Implementation Manual is a synopsis of lessons learned during 8 years (1987- 1994) of Office of Community Services (OCS) Demonstration Partnership Program (DPP) projects. DPP was designed to permit Community Action Agencies (CAAs) to implement and assess innovative approaches to increasing the self-sufficiency of the poor, including individuals and families who rely on or are at risk of relying on public assistance.

DPP projects to date have been divided into five areas. Two of these are groups of projects that employed specific service models (case management and micro-enterprise), and the other three are projects that served specific populations (minority males, the homeless, and youth at risk). There are some overlaps in these categories. For example, some projects served minority males using a case management approach to social service delivery. The Implementation Manual is organized into general lessons learned followed by specific lessons learned regarding each of the five project areas. It is designed for use by Community Action Agencies (CAAs) and other community-based organizations (CBOs) that are interested in developing self-sufficiency projects. Its purpose is to share the wealth of experience that DPP has accumulated, both successful initiatives that should be replicated and pitfalls to be avoided. It is based on the final reports of about 70 grants and in-depth group discussions with a selection of representatives from each project type. A few cautionary notes are in order. One of the key lessons learned from 8 years of experience with DPP projects is that self-sufficiency projects must be tailored to take into account local circumstances, ethnic cultures, social traditions, and economies. A few examples are as follows:

- In rural areas, travel and physical access to services may be a problem.

- Programs serving various cultures must take into account the social customs and unique characteristics of the client population.

- Cooperation among social services agencies (e.g., the formation of partnerships) has progressed further in some areas than others.

- If jobs are not available for butchers, one should not be training butchers-the local economy and job market are the "demand" side of project success, and require careful review and consideration.

In other words, it is important to engage in careful and focused planning during the design phase in order to clearly identify and test a project's underlying assumptions before any services are offered. This manual is not meant to take the place of planning. It is a tool for planning and managing. It provides a check list of items to be considered and suggests some cautions where appropriate

I-B. DEVELOPMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION MANUAL

The Implementation Manual was developed in a three-step process. First, at the 1994 DPP Reporting Out Conference, Project Directors and Project Evaluators were asked to identify "best practices" from their experience. These individuals were involved with projects funded in 199 1 and concluded in 1993. At the conference, they reported their results to the Government and to their peers. The valuable information presented at the conference led OCS to conduct a more in-depth assessment of what had been learned from these projects. Second, over a 2-month period, five team leaders reviewed the DPP monographs for each of the five program areas (case management, micro-enterprise, minority male, youth at risk, and the homeless). The team leaders identified lessons learned and logic models based on project results and evalauation findings for each of the program areas. The third step involved obtaining intensive input from small panels. The compiled lessons learned and logic models were circulated to teams of three to five individuals who were either Project Directors or Project Evaluators for a project in one of the five areas. These individuals were then convened in 2-day cluster conferences, during which the concepts were reviewed and discussed, and specific examples gathered. Team leaders then modified the lessons learned and the logic models based on cluster conference discussion.

After the revised lessons learned and logic models had been reviewed by the conference participants, the section authors developed a draft document. The draft was circulated for review to a number of experts in self-sufficiency programs, project staff and OCS/DPP personnel. These reviews led to a number of additions and enhancements. The outside reviewers, in particular, brought a number of new ideas and perspectives that enriched and tempered the ideas under development.

I-C. ABOUT THE DEMONSTRATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The Demonstration Partnership Program (DPP) is a program of the Office of Community Services (OCS), housed in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. DPP is an innovative initiative, providing Community Action Agencies (CAAs) the opportunity to experiment with new methods to improve the self-sufficiency of low-income individuals and families. The Demonstration Partnership Program (DPP) was originally added to the Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) of 1964 in the 1974 amendments; however, DPP was never funded or implemented, and expired with the EOA in 198 1. The program was revived and reauthorized as a part of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) legislation for the fiscal years 1987, 1988 and 1989. Between 1987 and 1994, over 100 grants have been funded by OCS under the legislation.

Understanding DPP requires a brief historical perspective. Between 1945 and 1973, efforts to reduce poverty in America were relatively successful. Census data indicate that more than one out of three Americans lived in poverty at the end of World War II. By 1960, the number had decreased to one out of five. By 1973, this number had been lowered further to approximately 1 out of 10. However, since 1973 poverty rates have failed to go down further, and have even increased. In 1994, the Census Bureau reported that 14.5 percent of all families reported incomes at the poverty level or below.

A number of factors contributed to the gains between 1945 and 1973. The most important factor may have been the long-term expansion of the American and world economies. Investments in social overhead capital improvements by the Federal Government also played a crucial role. The contributions of programs such as rural electrification and the interstate highway system to the rapid growth of the American economy were significant. Unemployment insurance reduced the impact of business cycles on workers. Social Security reduced poverty among the elderly. These programs both directly and indirectly brought relative prosperity to many Americans who had been enmeshed in generations of poverty. Many of these programs had run their course by the end of the 1960s, or their impact had flattened. They were not replaced by other large-scale capital investment or pension programs.

By the late 1960s a shift toward easing the burden of the poor through direct ameliorative programs rather than indirect capital investment and economic growth programs had occurred. This policy shift was reflected in the complex of programs developed under the "War on Poverty," the expansion of AFDC entitlements, as well as the introduction of the Food Stamp, Medicaid, and Medicare programs. These programs were the subject of considerable controversy, and there was great public uncertainty about their effectiveness. Even economic development programs targeted

to impoverished areas were not obviously beneficial from the view of the general public.

Of the new programs introduced in the 1960's, the War on Poverty was probably the most complicated and controversial. The benchmark legislation was the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. The Act created the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) in the Executive Office of the President, under whose auspices a number of programs were launched. The best known of these include Head Start, Job Corps, Senior Opportunities and Services, Legal Services, and Community Economic Development. The Community Action Program was the conerstone of the then radical idea that the poor knew what their problems were and how best to allocate resources to correct them. Community Action Agencies (CAAs) emerged as the institutional expression and embodiment of community action. Early on, CAAs found themselves embroiled in controversy at the local level as they threatened to upset long established patterns of political and economic power. A number of efforts emerged to curtail Community Action and to reduce funding for many of the programs associated with the War on Poverty.

By the mid-1970s, many of the anti-poverty programs of the War on Poverty had been weakened through funding cuts. By the early 1980s, some had been consolidated or defunded. During the same period, the growth of the American economy had slowed down. The number of individuals living in poverty was on the way up, having gone from about 10 percent of the population to over 14 percent. Periods of economic growth were not marked by even income growth. Income inequality increased at a high rate. By the mid-1980s, it had become clear that new, alternative strategies were needed if the numbers of individuals living in or falling into poverty were to be reduced. The DPP was one response to this need.

The DPP was designed "to stimulate the development of new approaches to provide for greater self-sufficiency of the poor, to test and evaluate such new approaches, to disseminate project results and evaluation findings so that such approaches can be replicated, and to strengthen the integration, coordination, and redirection of activities to promote maximum self-sufficiency among the poor."

Initially, DPP provided CAAs with funds, in the form of 100 percent match grants, to experiment with holistic or integrated case management techniques and microenterpriseprograms to assist individuals to reintegrate into the labor market or start a business, and to achieve economic self-sufficiency. CAAs were targeted as the appropriate vehicles for experimenting with innovative self-sufficiency programs because their long history of serving the poor through a wide variety of services and economic development programs made them likely to have a comprehensive perspective on the complex issues associated with moving individuals toward self-sufficiency. Holistic case management was targeted as the method of choice because the specialization and fragmentation of most social welfare or public assistance

programs prevented them from providing the comprehensive range of services necessary to support self-sufficiency initiatives.

DPP is an experimental laboratory with many innovative and unique features. In addition to its emphasis on self-sufficiency and holistic case management, DPP places strong emphasis on other programmatic innovations-for example, it requires the development of viable relationships with complementary partners and strongly encourages the implementation of innovative approaches to service delivery and program component selection. Programs that show promising results are continued, and replication is encouraged at other locations and with different populations. In addition to innovative program components, DPP places special emphasis on developing and applying strong, consistent evaluation methods. DPP has developed a set of program design and evaluation guidelines formulated in a formal *Program Design and Evaluation Guidebook.* Formal evaluation plans are required, and an independent, local evaluator is to be selected before each program can begin. Evaluation specialists hired by OCS review all evaluation plans and are available to respond to evaluation issues. While these seem like obvious requirements for a demonstration program, they are, in fact, all too rarely practiced.

Reporting is another aspect where DPP is unique. The monograph series of reports produced at the conclusion of each project provides an invaluable record-6 years (1989-1992)—of results from actual economic self-sufficiency programs. The value of the monographs is substantial, providing more than simple outcome measures. Process evaluation and lessons learned provide an invaluable source of information for program replication. The reports document real-life problems encountered in implementing and running low-income self-sufficiency programs and share a variety of creative solutions to those problems. Each report is concise and carefully structured in the field.

The current welfare system is fraught with problems-it does not facilitate the independence of its clients; it is bureaucratic, compartmentalized, and fragmented; it is labor intensive and paper intensive and does not take full advantage of modern information processing technology; it lacks public and political support; and many of its programs are ineffective. Welfare reform commissions have struggled for many years to grapple with these complex issues, and have had difficulty arriving at publicly and politically acceptable alternatives. One reason for the difficulties is the lack of a coherent body of scientific research. A significant proportion of the literature is argumentative and polemical. One school of analysts emphasizes income, the other job creation; the two are rarely proposed in tandem. A remarkable number of the better studies remain as "fugitive" literature, inaccessible to all but the initiated Experiments in reform are rarely well studied or reported. Of the 100 plus DPP projects, only one has resulted in a peer reviewed article, although DPP is unusual in that it systematically publishes evaluation findings. Many programs that purport to

assist individuals to become self-sufficient lack any kind of assessment or evaluation components that result in a systematic report of findings or data. This makes it difficult to frame empirically based welfare reform proposals. The DPP provides both alternative models to the current welfare system and a source of empirical evidence on what does and does not work.

II. General Project lessons learned

II-A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses lessons learned that senior DPP project staff judged to be useful to all low-income self-sufficiency projects, independent of whether the interventions would include education, vocational training, or business development; or whether the project would serve women, men, minorities, youth, the homeless, or other client groups. The chapter is separated, as are subsequent chapters, into four sections-lessons learned regarding project design, project start-up, project operations, and project evaluation.

Prior to presenting the general lessons learned, we discuss logic models-a powerful, visual representation of a program and what it is supposed to accomplish. The specific logic models presented in subsequent chapters are summary examples of an "ideal-typical" DPP project within each category. We suggest that during the project design phase, a logic model should be developed that depicts the specific assumptions, activities, and outcomes of the project. Logic models have been a recommended part of evaluation methodologies for many years. A logic model is a graphic representation of a program that attempts to show the expected causal linkages between the program's services and the intended outcomes of those services. The brief overview below addresses the purposes, components, and uses of logic models.

Purposes Of logic Models

Logic models have multiple purposes. The three primary purposes are to:

- Describe the *components* of a program

- Describe the *chain of expected causal linkages* between those components

- Show the *sequence* between the interventions and the outcomes

Components And linkages Of logic Models

There are five basic components to a logic model:

- The model begins by identifying the *underlying assumptions* about the program, including the needs, problems, resources, and characteristics of the population to be served, the nature and structure of the community within which the project will be placed, and the efficacy of the proposed intervention or service.

- These assumptions provide the rationale for a variety of *activities* (interventions or services).

- Each activity is assumed to result in *immediate changes* (outcomes).

- The immediate changes lead to *intermediate outcomes.*

- The intermediate outcomes lead to the *final program goals.*

The actual process of developing a logic model is likely to be interactive, often starting from intended project activities and working backwards to assumptions and forward to outcomes. The process thus provides planners the opportunity to test the face validity of intended project activities by assessing the accuracy of the assumptions on which they are based-assumptions about the expected clients and their resources and problems. During the program planning stage, program staff should try to document the following:

- Underlying assumptions or rationale for the project-These are the empirical, philosophical, and theoretical beliefs upon which the program is built. For example, the assumptions may concern the needs of expected clients, the current services available to those clients, the appropriateness of the proposed project activities, and/or the impact those activities will have upon clients.

- Program activities-These services are the "interventions" being tested by the program that are expected to help clients and produce the desired changes. Each general service or intervention should be identified, and where appropriate, each component of the intervention should be listed. For example, case management is a common intervention with many components (e.g., case assessment, case plan development,referral to other providers, follow-up services, and case plan evaluation).

- Immediate project **outcomes-These are** the results expected from each service immediately after the service is provided. A job readiness training curriculum, for example, might be expected to result in increased

knowledge of how to apply for a job, improved grooming for job interviews, and increasedjob interview skills. Immediate outcomes should be expressed in terms of measurable increases, improvements, decreases, or reductions in knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behaviors.

- Intermediate project outcomes--These are the results that the immediate outcomes are expected to produce. The intermediate outcomes of a job readiness training curriculum are likely to be employment and/or increased income. Often an intermediate program outcome is the result of several immediate program outcomes. Intermediate program outcomes should be expressed as measurable changes in employment, wages, income, or skills related achievements.

- Final project goals, or ultimate outcomes-These are the goals of the program. Some projects have only one ultimate outcome, such as economic self-sufficiency. If all of the desired intermediate project outcomes are realized, they should result in the ultimate outcome(s).

Use Of logic Models

The development of a useful logic model is an interactive process that should involve the program evaluator, program planners, and project management and staff. Once there is agreement that the model accurately reflects the intended project, then the logic model can be used as both an evaluation and management tool.

A logic model is an *evaluation tool* used to:

- Understand the line of reasoning the project uses in assuming that the interventions will have their intended results

- Determine how the project can be evaluated

- Determine what to measure (both process and outcome measures)

- Determine the appropriate sequence of measurements

- Determine if the evaluation correctly assesses the success of the project in achieving the stated goals.

A logic model can be used by a project manager as a *management tool* to:

- Determine the fidelity of project implementation to the intended activities

- Identify the sequence for implementing the project components

- Monitor project change

⁂ Help explain the project to interested individuals, potential funding
sources, new program staff, and the general public

II-B. GENERAL PROJECT DESIGN LESSONS

II-BI. Develop a clear theoretical underpinning for the project--Project designs
should be well grounded in theory and prior findings. Extensive literature searches
and community needs assessments should be carried out prior to project formulation.
Great care should be taken to assess external factors that might influence program
implementation and success. Historically, social service and self-sufficiency project
designs, and associated project evaluation plans, have tended to be univariate; that is,
they have not taken into account the fact that other influences in the client's
environment might have produced the results attributed to the project. In particular,
there is a real need to take into account local economic and labor market conditions.

Project benefits and impacts at levels other than individual client self-
sufficiency are rarely discussed. For example, do the projects result in an increased
capacity of the sponsoring organization to serve their clients? Do the partnerships
result in increased inter-agency communication and cooperation? Frequently the
specific impacts of other cited benefits on the client are not clearly linked to self-
sufficiency. For example, if improvement in self-esteem is listed as an interim
outcome (either immediate or intermediate) that leads to self-sufficiency, the
theoretical link between self-esteem and self-sufficiency should be explained, and the
actual link between improved self-esteem and improved self-sufficiency should be
measured. As an evaluation caution, few self-esteem measurement instruments have
been validated for individuals dependent on public assistance-they have generally
been validated for college students, who are considerably different from the welfare
population in age and socioeconomic status. Competing models should be proposed,
explored, discussed, and tested. Greater attention needs to be paid to the formal
modeling of projects and the specification and validation of causal pathways within
the models. These concepts are further discussed in the sections of this Manual that
address developing logic models.

II-B2. Understand the characteristics of the client population—Because the match
between project and client characteristics is a critical success factor, client
characteristics and location must be documented during project planning. If the
hypothesized (rather than documented) characteristics are wrong, project redesign
may be required. For example, if support for attaining a GED is the project
intervention and most clients turn out to be high school graduates, the project must
be redesigned. Also, written materials must be designed appropriately to the clients'
literacy level-complex intake tools and measurement tools are inappropriate for

functionally illiterate clients. Projects may also find that the number of potential clients for experimental and control groups is lower than expected. These projects may find that their cost per person is higher than expected as resources are not fully utilized. Some projects reported that they needed to invest a considerable amount in outreach in order to meet enrollment goals. One project found that as they performed intake assessment, only *30* percent of welfare recipients were capable of earning a salary equal to or greater than their welfare grant. The majority of the participants had been enrolled several times in a JOBS program without positive outcomes. This implies that projects should be realistic about the number of individuals who can be successful graduates of self-sufficiency programs.

II-B3. *Apply an empowerment model in place of a service* model-The philosophy and assumptions of a project affect how it is structured and seem to affect how successful it is in terms of self-sufficiency. The DPP projects that were based on a service philosophy (in which services are given to participants) were less effective than models that gradually empowered clients to help themselves, initially providing advocacy services, and eventually relying on the participants' growing self-confidence in their decision-making and system navigating skills.

Empowerment is an approach that "teaches participants to fish" rather than "giving them a fish." It is strength focused rather than problem focused. Self-confidence and self-esteem are by-products of successful participant decision-making rather than ends in themselves. Empowerment builds on participants' strengths to address their needs. Empowerment provides participants the information to make informed choices with a clear understanding of possible consequences. This has proved a formidable approach to self-sufficiency in many DPP projects. In empowerment approaches, project staff have a key role in helping participants to make *informed* choices, e.g., if a participant wants to be a physician, inform them of what it takes to do that. If a participant wants to take out loans to go to school, be sure they understand that student loans are virtually never forgiven, and must be paid back.

II-B4. Plan for realistic time frames--Client self-sufficiency projects need to allow for the substantial periods of time that even motivated low-income clients may require to make progress toward self-sufficiency. Also, client assessments should consider whether there is a likelihood that a client will ever achieve self-sufficiency. For example, clients with substantial developmental, mental, substance abuse, and/or physical problems must address these issues before a self-sufficiency program is appropriate. For clients with severe disabilities a self-sufficiency project may never be helpful; in those cases an appropriate referral should be made.

Clients with chronic problems must receive ongoing support for these problems or they will not be able to remain employed. Clients who start a program in crisis, whether undernourished, homeless, or involved in family conflict, must be

stabilized before employment issues can be addressed. Clients who lack basic literacy skills must achieve literacy before they can enter job training or education programs. If the intervention is education, participants' earned income will not begin to increase until they are finished with school, but then their income (on average) should be higher over their subsequent work history. Also, projects must account for the long start-up time frame (about a year) for a project to become fully operational.

II-B5. *Include the evaluator at the design phase where* possible-Evaluators can assist with identifying measurable outcomes and defining the links between project interventions and outcomes. They also can address data collection requirements, and can devise ongoing measures that will provide input for continuous project self-assessment. Competitive bidding requirements for evaluation contracts prescribed by local, State, or Federal authorities may be a barrier to early evaluator inclusion. In these circumstances, consideration should be given to developing a basic ordering agreement with a local evaluator. Under such an agreement, they can be included in the grant writing process under a pre-cleared procedure. Each evaluation effort does not have to be rebid, but rather a task order issued under the basic ordering agreement

II-B6. *Plan to use measurable objectives to monitor progress-Many* of the successful DPP projects relied on client outcome measures to determine project success. This contrasts with practices that focus on progress notes and "bean counting" (e.g., number of referrals) as measures of success. Process documentation (e.g., number of client encounters, extensive progress notes) should not be so burdensome as to interfere with other case management activities. Outcome measures include such items as total income, percent of income from public assistance, hourly wages and benefits, etc.

Successful projects also monitored ongoing progress on outcome measures to determine the overall success of project participants, to compare experimental and control groups, and to assess the success of specific clients and staff. In this way, the projects were able to determine whether they were achieving results. By reviewing their outcome results in an ongoing manner, some projects were able to make adjustments needed to ensure program and client success. Interpretation of outcome data must be performed by individuals who understand the project and its purposes. For example, one project anticipated an initial increase in use of public assistance as participants learned skills to achieve access to full entitlement. This was to be followed by an anticipated drop in use of entitlement funds as self-sufficiency training/education was completed. DPP project outcomes have often been expressed in terms of economic self-sufficiency. Projects may wish to consider monitoring intermediate outcomes that may effect self-sufficiency-for example, variables that show participants to be stronger in characteristics, such as expanded personal

networks and stronger skills for managing adversity, that may help them to withstand setbacks in their lives.

II-B7. Link the project to the existing marketplace—Projects experienced success by linking individual client plans to local employment, either by direct involvement of large local employers as partners, or by directing educational/vocational/ entrepreneurial services toward targets in local employment markets. For example, micro-enterprise projects should train participants to perform a market survey and include it as part of their business plan.

II-B 8.   Perform intensive background work-Background work includes determining the level of commitment of all key personnel and partners. Project Directors whose projects were successful were flexible and resourceful. When one option fell through, they continued to develop alternatives until a solution was achieved. Note that any changes in project design require close interaction with the evaluator. Major changes may require approval of the funding office (e.g., OCS).

Projects must begin with a detailed analysis of the local community organizational structure, and must continue with ongoing identification of organizational services and linkages.

II-B9. Identify project barriers—A realistic assessment must be made of possible barriers to project success, and plans must be made for dealing with barriers that are identified. The host agency and partners should be involved. For example, one project experienced start-up delay because State waivers essential to the project took substantial time to obtain. Barriers may vary substantially from State to State, and from community to community.

In some projects, client empowerment led to increased use of public assistance for which participants were eligible. This was followed, in most cases, by the client's application of skills, knowledge, and self-confidence to areas that enabled him or her to give up public assistance in favor of a paying job. Nevertheless, public assistance agencies may be threatened by any initial surge in use of entitlements. They should be made aware of the project and its initial and long-term effects. Public assistance cut-off rules also serve as a barrier to self-sufficiency, as participants' wages and benefits must replace any public assistance to which they are entitled, such as housing, food, and medical care subsidies. Waivers to cut-offs should be instituted wherever possible, or arrangements should be made so that public assistance benefits do not decrease more rapidly than income increases.

II-B10.   Communicate with other Project Directors (PDs)—Face-to- face and telephone interactions among Project Directors is essential for synergistic problem solving and PD training.   Topics covered should include evaluation methods,

operations issues, best practices, practical problem solving, creating stable partnerships, case management practices, etc.

II-B11. Confer with experienced individuals-For replication of the best practices learned from projects to date, advice should be sought from the best practitioners-those whose projects have been the most successful.

II-B12. ***Identify appropriate services for the specific population*** served-Groups of clients vary by age, sex, culture, and experience. To be effective, projects must be tailored to respond to the specific problem set and cultural expectations of clients. For example, projects for youths, wherever possible, should have the support of and be linked with local schools. Family/household members should be involved wherever appropriate, with respectful attention paid to different cultures' views of male and female roles, and to cultural expectations regarding guests in the home, including how visitors are viewed and expected to behave.

II-B13. Develop clear criteriaforprojectparticipation and termination- Projects need to institute controls to prevent clients who are less motivated or less prepared for a self-sufficiency program, or for other reasons are not progressing within the project, from consuming resources for extended periods.

Projects need a clear understanding of the limits of the services they will provide in order to identify appropriate clients. One project indicated that clients should have a specific minimum score on an educational test, an affirmative mental health record, and a desire and willingness to participate in the project, in addition to meeting minimum income and welfare eligibility.

II-B14. Plan for rapid client results-Care should be taken to ensure rapid initial client involvement by providing the client with quick results or solutions to immediate problems in limited areas. This will help to secure the trust and loyalty of the clients. One Project Director likened the process to having participants step onto an escalator where progress is being made, momentum is in place, and it is difficult to turn back. Once clients and other agencies become familiar with a project, referrals and word-of-mouth should generate sufficient clients.

II-B15.   Offer a wide range of accessible stabilizing services-Accessible services-some combination of housing, child care, transportation, health care (including mental health and substance abuse) services-are generally necessary to stabilize clients before they are receptive to self-sufficiency interventions such as education or training.

II-B16.   Make emergency and incentive funds available-Low- and no-income clients are frequently living on the edge. A new car transmission may mean the difference between successfully completing a project and dropping out. Incentives

such as ceremonies, certificates, celebrations (and, for high school students, mall store gift certificates) may prove powerful short-term motivators.

II-B17. Invest in staff-To maintain their enthusiasm staff members, like participants, must also have a ladder to climb. They require continuing seminars(in-house or offered elsewhere in the community) and/or educational opportunities such as education loans, or they themselves will feel trapped as they watch their clients move on.

As a practical matter, staff must be compensated well enough to allow them to maintain reliable transportation, particularly if meetings with participants occur in their neighborhood (not in the case manager's office). Some project staff caution against the case manager using his or her car to provide transportation to participants They believe this puts the case manager in the role of enabling rather than empowering.

II-B1 8. **Foster participant networks—Participants** use networking among themselves to set up resource sharing (e.g., ride pools, shared baby-sitting) and to exchange information and experiences. Some projects found that informal contacts (e.g., a picnic setting) were more effective than formal programs with speakers. These projects found that when clients needed a specific topic addressed they would ask. for it and be ready to receive the information.

II-B19. **In replication, note local** differences-Replication of a successful design may be affected by differences in the population served, the management style of the host agency, the local employment market, etc. The potential impact of these variables should be considered during planning.

II-B20. Understand attrition issues-Almost all projects experienced substantial attrition. Careful preparation for tracking clients may assist the project in determining why clients left-e.g., whether they got a job, moved, or dropped out. Follow-up requires active attention by staff. Although follow-up is not usually a funded activity, the project plan and budget should address it as an important project task. In order to minimize attrition, one project recommended beginning active project participation as soon as the client is determined to be eligible.

II-C. GENERAL PROJECT START-UP LESSONS

II-Cl. Communicate a clear project vision—To assist in motivating staff and partners and providing them with clear direction, establish and reinforce a clear, agreed-upon vision of the project goals and objectives. This process supports focused project implementation and aids in resolving start-up issues. If the project is

experimental, staff should have grounding in the project's evaluation/replication goals.

II-C2. Establish realistic start-up time frames--Staff must be recruited and partnerships solidified and activated. Project policies and procedures must be developed and implemented and participant recruitment and referral patterns established. In some cases, regulatory restrictions must be addressed. Required changes to the initial plan must be made. Evaluation impacts of any change to the project design must be addressed. Projects are typically stable after a 6- to 12-month start-up.

Logistical planning should be thorough. Plans should be made for stable space to house project activities, supplies, equipment, etc. One project in a rural area needed to locate facilities to house participants, trainers, horses, and tack!

II-Q. *Develop new or tailored staff and client training curricula-Many* projects use curricula developed by other organizations in other settings. These may not be directly transferable to new, innovative case management projects. Development of new curricula is preferred, but if existing curricula are used, they should be reviewed, tested, and modified to support the specifics of each project.

II-C4. *Understand the need for client outreach—*New projects are not well known. Extensive outreach is initially required, in the form of educating referral sources, distributing brochures, and placing advertisements on radio and in public transportation. Mature projects that are successful and meeting a need in their community should not need to rely on outreach.

II-D. GENERAL PROJECT OPERATIONS LESSONS

*II-DI. Develop stable partner relationships-*Projects that had successful prior experience collaborating with their partners were likely to experience substantially less difficulty in the start-up phase. However, fall-back plans should be considered for significant partnering responsibilities. Projects must be prepared for the fact that proposed partners may not be able to participate in the project or to perform the anticipated role and provide the anticipated services. Also, partnering relationships can be compromised by changes in key staff at partnering agencies, particularly if the new individuals are not committed to the partnership. Alternative partners may need to be recruited.

Successful relationships require built-in time commitment, both to develop linkages and to implement partnering plans. In some instances clients were successfully included as partners. Regular partnering meetings should be held throughout the project. These will initially focus on policy and procedure issues,

roles, and responsibilities. One program recommended assigning a single agency the responsibility for client testing, evaluation, and selection, and for client termination from the project. Subsequently, as partnerships stabilize, the emphasis will shift to coordination among those involved in program operations. Projects recommend that issues specific to one partner be addressed with that partner rather than in general meetings. They also recommend that partners be given the opportunity to review in advance any progress reports submitted to funding agencies. In some cases, management approaches of partnering agencies varied, leading to conflicts that required resolution. One project referenced management differences between CAP agencies. Another project mentioned interagency conflict that predated the project inhibited cooperation. The project's purpose, resources, and limitations must be communicated to partners, particularly those responsible for referring clients to the project. One job placement project had problems with a partner referring clients who *were* not "job ready." Creative collaborations can be established using both formal (contractual) and informal partners. It is possible to have too many partners to manage. It is sometimes necessary to decide a partnership is not working out and must be terminated.

II-D2. Establish multi-level interagency communication-Not only must case managers have clear access paths to counterparts in partnering agencies, the Project Director must have defined communication paths with agency decision-makers for rapid issue resolution.

II-D3. Plan for intensive inter-project communications-Projects need frequent access to shared information regarding best practices, successes, and failures of other projects. Routine Project Director and Project Evaluator conferences, as well as communication paths along the "information highway" (one of the international automated network packages available) would promote sharing of training curricula and experience.

II-D4. Establish clear communication with clients regarding project limitations— Projects should be clear with clients regarding the limits of project services and project time limits so that clients have reasonable expectations of the project.

II-D5. Establish reasonable limits and safeguards on specific benefits—Specific types of assistance, such as automobile repair, may require dollar limits, competitive bids, or work with project-approvedrepair shops. Limits should be conveyed in both written and verbal formats.

II-D6. Stay tuned to clients-they cannot listen until they are ready/motivated— Projects must be flexible enough to accommodate clients with different needs. Not all clients need stabilization services, but many do. At the other end of the spectrum,

some (e.g., those who were recently laid off but have a strong work history and few personal problems) may simply need assistance finding a job.

Analysis of the individual client's barriers to self-sufficiency is key to determiningwhether the client is an appropriate candidate for a specific project. Many projects had specific training, education, or micro-enterprise related missions and lacked the resources to provide mental health and substance abuse treatment. They, therefore, did not select applicants with mental health or substance abuse problems, but referred them to more appropriate programs. Once clients are selected for participation, barriers must be assessed in more detail to ensure that the individual's plan will be effective. One project used a "barrier analysis" to determine the services needed for each participant. Barriers analyzed included physical disabilities, education and information limitations, community problems, lack of housing, low wage structures, and 'geographic constraints.

II-D?. Understand the extent of client need for follow-up-Some projects found that more follow-up was needed than was planned for, while others found that they did not need as much follow-up as they expected. Projects should be guided by experience with requests for follow-up and conversation with graduates regarding their needs.

II-D8. Recognize participant accomplishments-Motivators such as program graduation ceremonies, congratulatory lunches, food or clothing coupons for teens, and small financial incentives *linked to the individual's negotiated goal-driven plan* have been found to increase participation in many, but not all cases.

II-D9. **Consider providing a resource center**-Some projects provided resources specifically requested by their populations or required to support their project objectives. These included, for example, a shower facility for a homeless project and a "business incubator" with a business address, desks, and telephones for a micro-enterprise project.

II-D10. Understand the commitment required by mentor&--Some projects found mentoring-linking clients or client families to volunteers who would provide various types of support--to be a key success factor. Others found that mentoring programs required excessive resources (both time and financial). Recruiting and training volunteers is time-consuming and costly, and retention rates are not always as high as might be hoped.

II-D1 1. Develop written procedures and understandings-Documentation may protect the project. Projects may find that liability may be lessened or eliminated by having written procedures regarding staff handling of difficult situations. Also, contracts, such as those with employers of project graduates, should limit project responsibility for employee conduct.

II-E. GENERAL PROJECT EVALUATION LESSONS

II-E1. Adjust results for effects of the local economy-Changes in the state of the local economy is the most critical external variable influencing program outcomes. Any evaluation of self-sufficiency project objectives that include increasing employment must statistically compensate for the impact of changes in the local economy, local unemployment statistics and sector employment opportunities.

II-E2. ***Account for impacts of work disincentives-Until*** health care reform is implemented, and in the absence of affordable quality day care, substantial disincentives to work continue to operate. Medicaid has a value of several thousand dollars, and child care costs can render minimum wage below subsistence levels. The impact of these disincentives (as well as other external variables such as changes in Federal or State projects affecting the availability of referral services) should be accounted for.

I__-E3. ***Identify appropriate self-sufficiency targets***—Self-sufficiency targets must account for intervention duration. For example, a college enrollment program cannot begin to show results for 2 to 4 years.

II-E4. ***Begin evaluation data collection afterproject stabilization--Measuring*** client outcomes before the project services are well underway may impede the interventions Post-intervention data should be collected only after the project has completed its start-up phase.

II-E5. Trackproject dropouts-Many projects had high non-completionrates. How many of these clients quit because they found jobs, and how many just quit? Every effort should be made to identify the disposition of dropouts. Some projects advise that attempts to obtain extensive alternative contact information from participants may drive them away. Use of contacts within the social service network or participant networks may be more effective.

II-E6. Use ***a comparison*** group--In some instances random assignment of individuals to a non-intervention control group was objected to on fairness grounds. If this is an issue, comparison groups rather than control groups are an alternative.

One project offered services to members of the control group as well as the experimental group in the interest of being "ethically correct." The project should be designed such that the control or comparison group does not receive the services tested for efficacy. Several projects mentioned ethical dilemmas regarding the fact that they provided service to some project participants but not to others who were randomly assigned to either the experimental or control group. Project Directors and Evaluators should understand that different services can be provided to the control and experimental group if the project is so designed. Hypotheses can be established, for example, to test the comparative effectiveness of two types of micro-enterprise training methods or to test the efficacy of adding one or more case management

services (such as mentoring or peer groups) to the experimental group, while the control group receives all other case management services. Control groups not only allow projects to demonstrate that what they have done is effective, they also show that it is not harmful. Often ideas are embraced because they seem like a good idea. Unless they are tested, they may actually be harmful. In one project the control group did better than the group receiving services. This required a closer look to determine why.

II-E7. ***Include evaluation as an operationalproject component-The*** objectives of providing service and rigorous evaluation may be perceived as incompatible- staff motivation to collect data is viewed as a lower priority than providing referral and survival services. Data collection instruments can be designed to be used as intake forms. Data collection efforts must be consistent over time and among personnel.

II-E8. Document project operations-Changes to operations may affect project outcomes. An understanding of operations may aid in explaining unexpected results. Project replication is also facilitated by documenting operations.

II-E9. Conduct routine programmatic reviews-Programmatic reviews should be designed to enrich the evaluation and to identify barriers and facilitators to project and client success. These reviews should address project-wide issues such as services required by a number of enrollees.

II-ElO. Maintain systematic contact among grantees and Project Evaluators— This type of contact provides a valuable outside eye on project changes and evaluation issues as they emerge. Contact with Evaluators also provides valuable cross-fertilization as experience from one project is transmitted to another.

II-Ell. Select appropriate evaluation designs and use standard notation— Evaluations may address questions of *internal validity (e.g.,* did the project have any positive effect on the client) or of *external validity (e.g.,* was project success greater than for other projects). Evaluators must be clear about what they are trying to measure, achieve, or clarify. There is a need for more sophisticated evaluation strategies appropriate to the context of the project. Consideration should be given to using:

- Patched up designs-the inclusion of non-planned data

- Multiple indicator strategies

- Advanced case study

These are addressed in the *Evaluation Guidebook* The notation system developed by Julian Campbell *(Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Design,* 1966) should be uniformly applied, and citations should be provided for statistical formulas.

Evaluators also should be careful not to overpower the data with statistical techniques that are either too complex or inappropriate for the project design.

II-E12. Measure longitudinal effects-Many projects found it difficult to cross-link data on clients from different State and local welfare agencies. In addition, response rates on follow-up were uniformly low both among former project participants *and* control/comparison group members. Without longitudinal data, it is impossible to make definitive statements concerning project impact.

Long-term evaluation will tell the story. Empowerment, self-confidence, life management skills, informed decision-making approach-these carry over. Even if a micro-enterprisegraduate does not succeed in business, he or she may do better in employment situations. Follow-up through contacts with other social service agencies is recommended. For example, a client, who dropped out because she was not ready to move forward, later turned up in a college class. Self-sufficiency is not a linear process.

II-E13. Select skilled, independent, informed evaluators-Evaluators must have the appropriate social science and statistical knowledge and experience. While maintaining independence, they must remain informed of changes to the project that may affect the evaluation. Every opportunity should be taken to eliminate bias in the evaluations. While it may not be possible to attain absolute and final objective truth, this should be the goal.

II-E14. Measure secondary effects-Income earned by a client has a multiplier effect. This should be included in any assessment of project benefits. Also, reductions in crime, alcohol and drug abuse, as well as intra- and inter-family violence, and their associated costs, should be measured.

II-E15. Monitor projects routinely-In addition to outcome monitoring, process indicators of project success and project monitoring protocols should be developed. Projects should be monitored quarterly in the first 18 months, with written feedback provided. Projects or project elements that are not operating efficiently and effectively should be modified or terminated.

II-E16. Ensure data integrity-Physical data integrity should be ensured, particularly in times of change. Backups and physical safeguarding are key. One project lost data when there were changes in a partnering welfare agency. The same project lost data integrity when data collection design changed midway through the project.

II-El 7. Control for any intervention inconsistency-Evaluation is compromised when large programs (e.g., statewide) do not provide standard interventions, and when there are large differences in the education/experience of staff that are not

accounted for. Also, the number of hours of intervention may vary significantly across program sites and clients.

II-El 8.   Control for instrumentation—Those who administer client assessment instruments should be trained and tested on the consistent administration of tests.

II-E19. Measure outcomes appropriately-Outcome measures should be directly related to interventions—e.g., if a project is not likely to directly affect self-sufficiency, but rather to improve personal competencies (self-esteem, problem solving, locus of control, positive social network, family relations, parental attitudes), outcome measures should look at improvements in social competency.

As another example, if clients enroll in education programs, their reliance on public assistance can be expected to remain the same or increase during their enrollment in school (which can be quite lengthy). Self-sufficiency can require a substantial amount of time, particularly among those who start in crisis or with chronic medical/emotional problems, or who need to improve their literacy. These should be taken into account when planning evaluation time frames. Ultimately measurements of self-sufficiency should look at client-generated income less entitlement (including in-kind benefits). One program looked at multiplier effects-the total impact of dollars generated as they work through the economy. Projects also recommend monitoring use of transition funds (with high use a sign progress is being made) and use of crisis funds (with continued high use a sign progress is not being made). One project had case workers fill out a very simple progress report indicating these variables. The evaluator provided the project with monthly overall progress reports that indicated progress achieved by each case worker's clients and each individual/family participant. Independent (as opposed to self-reported) sources of evaluation data should be sought wherever possible.

II-E20. Develop evaluation feedback loops—Progress reporting can be used by the project to help determine what is working and why. A strong relationship with the evaluator is needed, as well as commitment to ongoing monitoring, and simple data collection forms.

One project monitored income and source; initially most participant income came from subsidies, but progressive data showed a gradual transition to self-sufficiency. The project also monitored ongoing use of crisis funds as an indicator of a lack of development toward self-sufficiency and participant use of supportive or transition funds, which was considered a measure of project effectiveness.

III. Case Management Project lessons learned

III-A. INTRODUCTION AND LOGIC MODEL

III-A1. ***Introduction-The*** vast majority of Demonstration Partnership Program (DPP) projects have applied case management as a primary or secondary intervention This includes projects that serve the homeless, youth at risk, and minority males, as well as those which provide training in micro-enterprise development. For some projects, holistic family development or other forms of innovative case management were the sole focus of the project intervention. For example, in these projects if a comparison group was used, clients receiving case management services were compared with those who received more traditional services. Project evaluation summaries for these and other DPP projects are available through the DPP monograph series, available from OCS.

As with the homeless, youth at risk, minority male, and micro-enterprise projects, many of the general lessons learned presented in Chapter II are applicable to case management projects and should be reviewed. This chapter presents lessons that are specific to case management projects.

III-A2. ***Case management self-sufficiency logic model-A*** sample case management self-sufficiency (CMSS) project logic model is provided as Exhibit III- 1. This logic model is "generic"—it does not reflect the complete reality of any specific CMSS project. As discussed in Chapter II, logic models illustrate the logical flow from a project's underlying assumptions to its activities and show the linkage between immediate outcomes and the final project goal of family self-sufficiency. Logic models enable a project to mentally test whether the activities selected are based on reasonable assumptions that reflect local realities, and whether anticipated outcomes can be expected to result from those activities. They are also useful in identifying measurable objectives. As discussed further in Section E of this chapter, measurable objectives are critical for gathering the ongoing feedback about project effectiveness necessary for accurate project evaluation.

Exhibit III-1
LOGIC MODEL
Sample Case Management Self-Sufficiency (CMSS) Project

Assumptions

- Some low-income individuals are not appropriate clients for CMSS projects at the time they present for services. Individuals who are severely developmentally disabled, mentally handicapped, or compromised by substance abuse should be referred to appropriate services

- All individuals and families have strengths and resources that can be applied to meeting their needs

- CMSS clients' participation in developing self-sufficiency plans and completion of individualized sets of activities contribute to their self-sufficiency

- Participant needs vary widely, not all participants need all services. Participants may need stabilization services, supportive services, training or education services, and/or job placement services

- Not all clients have the same goals, skills and interests. Not all progress at the same rate, nor are ready for services at the same time

- Family participation increases program effectiveness. The decision to include family and the definition of the family should be at the client's discretion

- A wide spectrum of services are needed by program participants to overcome barriers to self-sufficiency

- Communities offer a range of services and resources to assist low-income individuals overcome barriers to self-sufficiency

- In CMSS projects, the purpose of case management is to link participant and community strengths and resources to meet participant needs so that they may achieve self-sufficiency

Activities

Case management activities
- Orientation
- Assessment
- Plan development
- Referral with advocacy/brokering and referral followup
- Service coordination
- Reassessment
- Attrition followup
- Advising—includes informal life skill and problem solving
- Training
- Facilitating support groups
- Home visits

Stabilization services
- Family crisis intervention
- Food
- Clothing
- Shelter and utilities
- Emergency medical/mental health
- Emergency detoxification

Supportive/transition services
- Transportation
- Child care
- Healthcare, including mental and dental
- Health services, nutrition training
- Formal life skills training
- Work clothing and tools
- Parenting training
- Counseling

Employment training
- Preemployment training
- Vocational education/training
- Internship
- On-the-job training

Job development/placement
- Job development
- Employment counseling
- Job placement
- Employment maintenance

Education services
- Basic skills training
- Remedial education/literacy
- GED program
- High school options
- Community college
- College

Microenterprise development services
- See microenterprise logic model

Immediate Outcomes

- Referrals are made to community services in accordance with the case plan

- Participant has basic life skills (home management, money management, parenting, etc.)

- Participant abilities in problem solving, conflict management, self-reliance, and resilience are increased

- Clients experience fewer crises that impede project participation and are better able to manage these crises

- Participant is enrolled in a job placement, education, training, or microenterprise program.

Intermediate Outcomes

- Completion of an education, employment training, or microenterprise program

- Employment at a predetermined minimum hourly rate with employee benefits or self-employed

- Reduced use of social welfare programs and reduced dependence on system-provided personal and family interventions

Final Project Goals

- Family self-sufficiency

The sample CMSS logic model can be used by CMSS projects as a "straw man" or starting point for developing their own logic model. A project wishing to do so should begin by reviewing the sample logic model's assumptions. Assumptions should be added (and tested) regarding the characteristics of the population to be served. Assumptions about client characteristics determine the proposed project activities.   For example, one project assumed that their clients would require assistance with obtaining a high school degree and GED, but found that most clients had at least a high school education. This substantially changed the services they needed to provide.

The assumptions provided in the sample logic model should be tested to determine whether or not they are valid for the project's community.   Sometimes there is an assumption that "services are available." This may not be true in all cases. For example, a community may have a shortage of detoxification facilities, or a lack of education or training programs. This in turn may affect the clientele that can be served by the project, and the level of impact that can reasonably be predicted.

Next, the project's activities should be reviewed. Planners should ask themselves (1) whether the activities they are proposing are appropriate responses to the assumptions made, and (2) whether the activities are linked to desired outcomes. Activities do have many internal linkages that project planners can think through. To keep the sample logic model easy to read, the internal linkages among activities have been left out. For example, case management services (specifically the client's plan) guide client-appropriate stabilization and supportive/transition services. Also, case management, stabilization, and supportive services must be in place before a client is enrolled in a training/educationprogram. One final note on the sample CMSS logic model-it is unlikely that a project will provide all four types of training/education services at once. Providing employment training, job development and placement, education, and micro-enterprise programs is beyond the scope of most agencies. However, the project may elect to develop referral linkages or partnerships with others providing these options to clients.

III-B.   CASE MANAGEMENT PROJECT DESIGN LESSONS

Time and thought during the design phase can prevent the need for some types of later re-design. For example, if the design phase is used to verify assumptions about the nature of the population served, the program can be structured to meet participant needs. During the design phase, assumptions should be challenged and, if possible, information gathered to support the assumptions. Also, all aspects of services should be identified. For example, if auto repairs are offered, what are the limits and what are the mechanisms? Following the design phase (during start-up), application of the

interventions selected may reveal the need for changes in project design to improve effectiveness.

Most of the lessons learned described in Chapter II apply to case management projects, but two more general design lessons are specific to case management-the need to plan appropriate case loads, and the need to plan for a full range of case management services.

ZZZ-BZ. Plan for low client ratios-Low-income participants often face many problems and need intensive case management services (at least initially). Ratios of 15 to 20 clients or client families per case manager have been found by some DPP projects to be manageable. In one instance, case loads of 25 for intensive case management proved too high, and were cited as a reason for staff turnover. Another project stated that case loads could gradually increase as clients became more self-sufficient.

Appropriate case loads vary from project to project. Several factors affect the number of clients a case manager can provide with quality service. These factors include the following:

- **The location of services-Some** projects recommended reaching out to participants from a home-based or community-based location rather than in an office setting. Home- or community-based services require travel time.

- **The mix of client** needs-If a project's typical client only needs a job referral, a case manager can support many clients. However, if the typical client is at the other end of the spectrum of needs (is, for example, homeless, lacking child care and transportation, and/or challenged by physical, emotional, or substance abuse problems), the case manager will need to provide intensive service to fewer clients.

- Whether the individual is considered to be the client, or whether the family is considered to be the client-DPP participants felt that family-based programs were more effective, involving all family members in planning and goal setting, and establishing objectives for each member of the family.

- The degree to which the social service system is fragmented-If various social services are offered at many locations, coordination of services can be very time-consuming.

- The level of services that are available--As is mentioned in the next item, DPP projects recommended offering a wide range of services.

However, when more services are offered (either in-house or out-of-house1 more coordination is required.

The number of services that are provided by the case manager as opposed to referred-e.g., the amount of counselingprovided by the case manager. If the case manager provides in-depth services, more time is required.

III-B2. *Plan to offer a full range of* services-When designing case management projects, many DPP projects recommend that a full range of services be available. Based on their project design and clientele, specific projects may not need all of the services identified below; however, many should be offered or be available through referral. Each participant or family plan determines specific services needed in each individual case. Some projects recommended offering only services agreed to as appropriate in the individual or family plan-few required every participant to attend specific training programs. Comprehensive case management services are listed in the logic model under Case Management Interventions, Stabilization Services, and Supportive Services, and described further under III-D, Case Management Project Operations Lessons. These services may be provided by the project, by a partner, or by another social service agency.

III-C.   CASEMANAGEMENTPROJECTSTART-UPLESSONS

The following are lessons learned by DPP projects during the early stages of case management self-sufficiency projects.

*III-Cl. **Hire skilled case*** manager-Effective self-sufficiency case managers have the following skills and knowledge:

- Experience in dealing with low-income individuals and families

- An ability to empathize with the situation of their clients

- Understanding of the language(s) and culture(s) of the specific client population(s) targeted by the project-for example, cultures vary on their views of privacy, family roles, etc.

- Counseling, life management training, and communciationskills that allow the case worker to promote self-sufficiency rather than supporting dependence

- Knowledge of the existing social service agencies in the area and the functions they serve

   ⁑   The ability to link appropriate services together to meet participant and family needs

These skills may come either from education or from the case manager's life experience. Some projects felt that the ideal situation is to have some staff members who have gained their skills through education and others who have had direct experience overcoming the challenges participants face. Many people believe that case managers who have had past experience similar to their clients provide a better perspective. However, the Project Directors pointed out that there must be some time in between-that a person cannot be a client today and a case manager tomorrow. Skills should be maintained and supplemented with an ongoing training program (addressed below under project operations). Projects also mentioned that the case manager's philosophy or approach is a critical factor in promoting self-sufficiency. Many Project Directors found that the case manager's approach empowered clients by supporting client efforts to apply their strengths to meet their needs (e.g., by encouraging client decision-making).

For example, within the structure of services offered by the project, successful case managers followed clients' career interests and skills. They did not discourage individual motivations, but rather (themselves, or working with a career counselor) explained the consequences of various career choices-for example:

   ⁂   The academic requirements and length of education required to become a doctor

   ⁑   The income-earning potential of a typical arts career

   ⁑   The likely results as well as the top of the ladder for various career choices

   ⁂   The transferability of various skills

On the other hand, case managers who supported client dependence (directly arranging for services and mediating crises on an ongoing basis) were felt to be less successful in facilitating client self-sufficiency. Those who involved the client, both in decision-making and in taking responsibility for working to resolve difficulties, were felt to be more successful. The project's approach to case management should be discussed by staff, and the degree of latitude allowed individual case managers should be clearly established. For example, there is often lively debate over case managers providing transportation to clients. On the one hand, lack of transportation is seen clearly as a barrier to self-sufficiency for low-income individuals, and it may take time to establish reliable independent client transportation. Also, the drive times may offer "teachable moments" (see below). On the other hand, providing transportation directly can be seen as fostering participant dependence on the case manager. The difference is between "doing for" the participant and "building with."

The skilled case manager is a partner working together with the participant and his or her family.

III-C2. Provide an informative staff orientation-To do the job expected by the project, staff need specific information about many aspects of project philosophy and operations, including the following:

- Project overall goals and measurable objectives

  How project activities are expected to support achieving objectives

- Staff and participant responsibilities

- Partners' roles and responsibilities

- Project rules such as who can access files

- Evaluation concepts and measurements

- Project services and service limitations

III-D. CASE MANAGEMENT PROJECT OPERATIONS LESSONS

The following are lessons learned by DPP projects when running case management self-sufficiency projects.

III-DI. Buildfromparticipantstrengths to meetparticipantneeds-This approach focuses on personal and family strengths and resources. It contrasts with approaches that consider welfare recipients to be either victims of the system or "dysfunctional" individuals.

III-D2. Encourage the participant to drive the train-Effective participant-case manager relationships involve the participant's active involvement from the outset. The participant should be involved in the process of (1) developingpersonal or family goals and measurable objectives, (2) developing a self-sufficiency plan to achieve those objectives and goals, and (3) taking steps to implement the plan and achieve the goals. For many projects (depending upon whether or not their clientele is comfortable with paperwork or filling out forms) the participant contract has served as a powerful tool. In this approach, the case manager and the participant each agree on specific activities they will undertake to achieve participant objectives and, **eventually, goals. The contract can be reviewed when progress is not being made to** reaffirm or renegotiate commitments, and is periodically revised.

While initially the case manager provides broker or advocate services, participants gradually become empowered to make informed choices and improve their situation; this may initially involve learning to assertively navigate the social services system. Depending on the participant's situation on entering the project, short-term participant commitments may be small steps along the way (getting up and dressed and making children's meals). However, the participant should gradually take more and more responsibility as his or her skills, knowledge, and self-confidence increase. On the other hand, the case manager's role must shift as the participant's independence increases. At first the case manager may need to accompany the client and provide active advocacy as the client learns to navigate various social systems. A key case worker function is appropriate support and facilitation, gradually empowering participants to do for themselves. While the process varies depending on the client's situation upon entering the project, some low-income self-sufficiency projects found that this process took from 1% to 2 years. The approach of identifying participants' needs and strengths, and building from strengths to meet needs, is cited time and again by successful projects. One project found that at about 20 to 24 months, many clients had resolved their stabilization issues and had taken the lead in establishing plans and goals. Another project agreed that this was about the juncture where "value added" dollars were generated.

III-D3. Involve the participant's family-Participants are likely to be more successful when they are supported by their relationships. Wherever possible the participant's family should be included in the plan, with goals set for each family member. Involving family members ensures that they understand what the primary client is doing and, in many cases, enlists their support in his or her success.

"Family" should be defined by the participant as participantsmay have reasons for not including certain family members at certain times.

III-D4. Provide a full range of case management, stabilization, and supportive services, as well as variouspaths to self-sufficiency—Case manager roles encompass all phases of case management. A thorough needs assessment should be carried out for each participant and a case management plan developed to address identified needs. Active referrals (including in-person brokering and advocacy by the case manager if needed) should initially be made for services provided by other agencies. Counseling (e.g., family goal setting) and life skills development (e.g., home management, parenting) are often needed. Case managers need to periodically evaluate each case plan or client contract, and modify it to meet changing client needs.

We found in reviewing DPP project reports that the definition of "case management"varied greatly from project to project. While this is not a textbook on case management, we did ask our panelists to identify the services that should be

considered by projects proposing comprehensive case management. While not all services are needed for all populations, a mix of case management services, stabilization, and supportive services are needed by all case management projects. We have separated case management self-sufficiency services into four categories: stabilization services, supportive services, paths up services, and case management services.

Stabilization services-These are survival-orientedservices designed to meet basic needs, providing a secure platform from which self-sufficiency can be considered. Stabilization services include:

- Food

- Clothing

- Shelter and utilities

- Family crisis intervention

- Emergency medical and mental health care

- Emergency detoxification

Supportive **services**—These are designed to address some of the barriers to self-sufficiency that are reality for many low-income individuals. Many projects found that an essential key to success was to have funds available to provide **short-**term solutions to urgent problems such as car repairs or child care needed by participants to attend class or get to work. Supportive services include:

- **Transportation**—In some cases, specific arrangements were contracted with auto repair businesses for meeting emergency needs.

- Child care

- Life skills training (may be provided by the case manager)

- Parenting training (may be provided by the case manager)

- Health care, including dental health, nutrition

- Mental health counseling

- Work clothing and tools

Paths up-In addition to the services identified above, self-sufficiency for low-income clients requires a ladder up through education, vocational training, and/ or business development/micro-enterprise training. Appropriate paths to **self-**

sufficiency vary depending on participants' strengths and interests: some may only need job placement; some may be ready for educational, micro-enterprise, or vocational training programs; and others may require additional literacy or math skills.   Wherever possible, offering a variety of these opportunities enables participants to pursue their interests and build on their strengths. Some participants who dropped out of a program later re-surfaced actively involved in another self-sufficiency initiative. Client readiness is a key, and may be difficult even for the client to assess. Paths up services include:

- Participant Orientation
    - Eligibility criteria
    - Project background, goals, and objectives
    - Staff responsibilities and roles
    - Participant responsibilities and commitments
    - Project process
    - Services provided
    - Service limitations
    - Evaluation purpose and requirements

- Education Services
    - Basic literacy and math skills
    - Communication skills
    - GED courses
    - High school alternatives
    - Post-secondary education

- Employment Training
    - Pre-employment training
    - Vocational training and education
    - Internships
    - On-the-job training
    - Job development
    - Job placement, and maintenance

- Micro-Enterprise Development Services

    - See Chapter IV

III-D5. Develop and implement strong client assessment procedures-Client assessment provides an initial review of the project participants' strengths and skills

as well as their needs and barriers to self-sufficiency. It serves as the basis for jointly developing a plan. In-depth knowledge of individual clients' strengths and needs is necessary to develop an appropriate plan or contract for progress toward self-sufficiency. The specific items included in an assessment vary from project to project. Among the items that have been assessed by various DPP projects are the following:

     Ability to complete a work application

- Interview skills
- Driver's license/transportation access
- Reading skills
- Writing skills
- Math skills
- Oral communication skills
- Chronic health problems (including mental health and dental problems)
- Access to a telephone at home
- Housing adequacy
- Belief in ability to succeed in the work force
- Composition and stability of family situation or support system
- Education level
- Work habits/skills
- Work history
- Work interests
- Length of time on welfare
- Age appropriate employment goals
- Child care needs
- Goals
- Legal issues (such as child support obligations)
- Family planning knowledge and practice
- Parenting skills
- Budgeting skills including buying skills
- Home management and housekeeping skills
- Dress and hygiene
- Car maintenance
- Current subsidies-both types and amounts

   ⋇ Other sources of income

   ⋇ Decision-making and problem-solving skills

This list is not intended to be handed to a participant as a checklist during the initial interview-a participant would run the other way! Panelists recommend that the case manager begin with an exploratory conversation, perhaps over a cup of coffee. Gradually, assessment information will emerge during the course of several interviews as a relationship is formed. The case manager can review the list to ensure that an item (such as identification of non-urgent medical conditions) has not been overlooked. Caution should be used when discussing barriers to employment such as incarceration history, substance abuse, and presence of violence and/or abuse. Questions in these areas may trigger defensive reactions or withdrawal from the project and cannot be assessed until a trusting relationship has been built. However, if mental health or substance abuse programs are available, this should be made known to participants. Caution should be used in assessments of self-concept or self-esteem, such as assessments of locus of control, belief that one can change one's current situation. These indices are multi-dimensional and may mask other problems such as depression.   Assessment is a diagnostic process. Projects use various assessment tools. Panelists noted that standardized tests such as literacy tests may understate true competency-some people do not react well to tests; others may excel in interpersonal and verbal skills but have difficulty writing.

III-D6. Provideplans and referrals—If a project is not designed to serve those with severe developmental disabilities, mental health problems, or substance abuse problems, this should be made clear during the project design phase, and plans should be made to ensure that appropriate referrals are made both into and out of the project Client motivation may also be a screening criteria; mechanisms should be put in place for determining when and how to terminate clients who are unwilling to meet the commitments of their plan.

     ▦ Plan developmen&---Plans identify short-term and long-term goals for the participant, and often, for members of the participant's family. They also identify steps on the path toward meeting those goals. They can serve as or generate a contract that identifies roles and responsibilities of the participant and family members as well as those of the case manager. A plan is a living document that should be reassessed and updated periodically, particularly if goals are not being met.

     ▦ Referral, advocacy, and **follow-up**—A referral includes all aspects of making sure a client receives a needed service, not simply handing the client a piece of paper with the name of an agency that might help them. Initially, the case manager may need to (1) call to ensure that the agency

provides an appropriate service, (2) serve as a broker or advocate for appointments, and (3) follow up to ensure that the client's needs are met. As the client's knowledge, problem solving, and self-confidence increases the client makes more of his or her own arrangements, but the case worker should still follow-up to ensure that a needed service was received.

- Service coordination-With many agencies offering services, the case manager must ensure that the client is not receiving overlapping or contradictory service. The case manager must coordinate with. other service providers with whom the participant has a relationship.

- Reassessment and plan **revision**—As the participant meets objectives and achieves goals, the plan and any associated contracts must be revised.

III-D7. *Offer the 'leachable moment" approach-Clients* do not start with a uniform set of needs, do not follow one path through a project, and do not finish a project in the same place. Many case managers have found it ineffective to answer a question before it is asked. Clients often do not understand or absorb information until they have a specific need for it. They may even take a "so what" attitude toward information or suggestions that are not in context. This makes the one-on-one relationship with the case manager critical.

In the teachable moment approach, the case manager is responsive to client-identified needs. The approach is based on the concept that people must ask a question before they can really absorb information-that information can only be integrated when the participant perceives that he or she needs the information. Life management skills are not taught in a pre-defined order with everyone required to participate in sessions without regard to personal strengths and needs; rather, instruction is provided when the participant seeks information he or she needs to meet a goal. At that time, the information is provided directly by the case manager, or the client is referred to appropriate training or seminars. In some cases, client support groups requested information on topics of interest to members of the group. Some projects referred motivated clients to training or classes available in the community. Other projects offered specific training periodically, and clients enrolled as they were ready. Some clients did not respond well to a classroom setting at all and relied on the case manager exclusively.

III-D8. *Organize or facilitate support groups-For* some projects, participant support groups proved valuable sources of networking. Participants share experiences with various social service providers and in some cases share resources such as child care and transportation. Some projects found informal social settings such as picnics were most effective, while others had regular meetings with formal programs.

III-D9. Continue case manager training-Ongoing case manager training and educational opportunities are essential for case manager motivation and for maintaining quality of services. Case managers need a path up as well as clients.

In one project, case managers were trained in active listening, assessing family strengths and needs, focusing family strengths, teaching goal-setting skills, and encouraging developmental goal achievement. Another project developed an g-day training and certification program for family development specialists. An outgrowth of work done under a DPP grant at the Mid-Iowa Community Action (MICA) agency, the Family Development Program is a strength or asset based approach to case management. It focuses on the family, rather than the individual, as the unit of assistance and assumes that each family has a number of strengths that can be drawn on to move the family toward self-sufficiency. The program notes that need based approaches to case management lock individuals into the past and do little to identify individual or family assets or promote a forward looking plan of action. The program also notes that individuals who request public assistance generally are embedded in a family structure which may provide assets or constraints to future action. If case managers are not trained to take these complex personal relationships into account, it is not likely that any plan for self-sufficiency will work well.

Case manager training encompasses many areas:

- Developing listening and communication skills

- Improving client assessment skills

- Developing plans with participants-including guiding participants as they develop short- and long-range goals, identifying resources needed to reach goals, and developing a contract that designates participant and case manager responsibilities

- Reassessing and revising plans including discharge planning

- Enabling and encouraging families to succeed

- Imparting decision-making skills

Training may also include use of tools for case management that help to identify participants' resources or that graphically depict family social history. Case managers may also need stress management skills. If there is substantial attrition of case managers, the project should assess the reasons and take appropriate steps to encourage retention. Replacement staff must be provided with orientation to the program and ongoing training.

III-E. CASE MANAGEMENT PROJECT EVALUATION LESSONS

The following are specific lessons learned by DPP projects when evaluating case management self-sufficiency projects.

III-E1. Results-basedevaluation-Panelists recommended focusing on participant outcomes (indicators of progress toward **self-sufficiency**)**rather** than processes (such as number of referrals made). This does not mean that process evaluation is not an important tool, or should be ignored, but rather that process indicators are not outcome indicators.

Note that, paradoxically, under self-sufficiency programs welfare payouts to individual participants and their families may increase at first. In the beginning, as participants' self-confidence and competence increase, they can be expected to be more aggressive and better informed about obtaining entitlements for which they are eligible. However, entitlements-while they vary from State to State-do not provide a comfortable life. Some projects found that an initial increase in subsidies was followed by greater self-sufficiency as participants applied the skills and **self**-confidence they had gained by successfully navigating the social service system to other areas to achieve a better life. A greater use of entitlements may also continue throughout education/training programs until self-sufficiency is gained. Therefore, if long-term movement toward self-sufficiency is to be measured, the evaluation design will have to take into account lag times and provide mechanisms for following clients beyond the initial case management period. Training that moves the participant along a career path is likely to have a much higher social payback than placement in a low-paying job with few, if any, benefits and no advancement potential. When projecting a benefit stream, therefore, the impact of this initial increase in dependence on social welfare should be taken into account.

III-E2 Attention to individual case manager's results-Individual case managers (like individual therapists) may be effective no matter what the intervention model through their ability to connect with clients or to motivate them. This counselor effect can impact on program outcomes significantly if the study sample is small. Many of the DPP projects employed no more than four or five case managers. Positive results could be a consequence of one or two unusually effective case managers/workers rather than the method or treatment implemented by the project. Case management projects are particularly prone to this issue. Analysis of results should take this phenomenon into account.

One project claimed that one of their case managers achieved substantially better results than the other. Another project recommended, "avoid if possible using case managers primarily oriented to and experienced in relating to clients as welfare dependents." Project personnel and the Project Evaluators agreed that, at a minimum,

case managers involved in self-sufficiencyprojects must believe their clients have the potential to become self-sufficient. The best case managers are those who are calm and who keep participants (and the project) focused on goals and outcomes. They build on participants' strengths, and reinforce success. They maintain a "can do" goal achieving approach, and they do not feed participants' crises or ruminate with them on their problems.

III-F. CONCLUSION

Case management is an "umbrella" intervention consisting of many components. Further exploration is needed to determine which components are of most benefit to specific populations. Also, further exploration is needed to assess which approaches (e.g., mix of one-on-one vs. group) are most effective. Questions raised by the panelists include the following:

- *Which specific case management activities are most effective?*—We have identified those we think are effective, but we do not know which activities are important in which situations (e.g., whether participant groups are necessary to participant success in self-sufficiency).

- *Does empowerment 'carry over" from one arena to another?*— Empowerment consists of building on participant strengths and developing participant resources:

    — **Skills** such as managing personal resources, preventing or minimizing and handling crises, making choices, navigating social systems

    — **Knowledge** about entitlements, job opportunities, personal strengths, possible consequences of various decisions

    — **Self-confidence** that comes from successfully applying skills and knowledge

    Practitioners believe that empowerment carries over from one life-choice to another (i.e., that a participant who has achieved some empowerment prior to leaving a project will apply his or her skills, knowledge, and self-confidence in other life efforts). One evaluator mentioned a participant who had dropped out of a case management project but later showed up as a member of a college class.

- *What are project impacts on community social and economic development?-Another* potentially fruitful area for further investigation is the impact of projects on the grantee agency's role in social action and

economic development--or on community social change. One project stated that community social change was a goal. Gaining a "place at the table" in economic circles was cited as a secondary outcome by several micro-enterpriseprojects. In one case, social action shifted the focus of the project somewhat as project staffbecame involved in questioning a Federal program's policies.

Other questions raised during discussion included the following:

■ What case loads are most effective, and under what circumstances (e.g., level of client needs vs. strengths, type of services provided)?

■ What services are most effective and for whom?

■ How long does it take to achieve self-sufficiency given various beginning points and different paths?

■ Which paths provide the largest payoff-in terms of lifelong income for the individual and/or in terms of number of self-sufficient families?

■ Which populations respond to which alternatives?

■ For what proportion of individuals on welfare is self-sufficiency an unrealistic goal (e.g., the developmentally disabled or severely mentally handicapped)?

■ Given that most individuals leave the welfare roles on their own, how can their human capital and social infrastructure be strengthened so they do not need to reapply?

■ What is the most appropriate end point-how long should follow-up services be provided?

■ What are the outcomes of various interventions (e.g., family-based plans with goals for all members, decision-making training, etc.) on family dynamics and behaviors?

■ What are the "escalators" that will draw people into the project?

IV. Micro-enterwise Project lessons learned

IV-A. INTRODUCTION AND LOGIC MODEL

IV-A1. ***Introduction-Most*** adult-oriented DPP self-sufficiency programs have attempted to initiate or directly reintegrate individuals into the local labor market. The emphasis has been on helping individuals to locate, apply for, obtain, and hold a job at an economically sustainable wage level. Multiple strategies are used, including assisting individuals with job searches, helping them acquire new or upgraded job skills, or helping them to further their general education. Case management and ancillary support services are provided in order to assist the individuals to stabilize their lives. At the core, however, is the notion of matching individuals to jobs offered by others. Job creation, capital formation, and self-sustaining economic development have only rarely been addressed.

Micro-enterprise programs take a different approach. They address self-sufficiency at the structural level, giving individuals the opportunity to create their own business or job. They are job creation and capital formation driven. Micro-business entrepreneurs are not expected to adapt their skills to an existing market, but to create their own business and their own market. These very different program goals have critical implications for program design that lend a unique character to micro-enterprise projects. Case management and individual-centricapproaches are ancillary rather than central; they assist individuals to stay in the program rather than make them the focus of it. As a consequence, micro-enterprise projects are likely to have very different impacts on CAPS and other programmatic components.

In order to be successful, micro-enterprise programs have had to address the following core issues:

- Lack of business skills and experience among low-income individuals

- Lack of start-up capital for micro-enterprises

- Legal barriers to capital accumulation by individuals who are receiving public assistance

    ⸱⸴ Lack of trained and experienced staff capable of starting and managing a
        micro-enterprise training program

Unless these "barriers" can be overcome, it is unlikely that a micro-enterprise
program can successfully launch individuals onto an entrepreneurial path. While
these issues are interconnected, they must be addressed separately if they are to be
resolved. Below, the approaches used by micro-enterprise projects funded under the
Demonstration Partnership Programs are introduced and assessed. While the majority
of lessons learned that are presented are positive ones, significant negative or mixed
results are also documented. It is important to be aware of both negative and positive
outcomes if increasingly scarce resources are to be applied effectively. The lessons
presented below are drawn from the DPP micro-enterprise projects that were funded
by OCS between 1987 and 1992. (The results from the programs funded during the
1992 grant cycle have not yet been published.) The funded projects operated in both
urban and rural locations in most geographical areas of the country. In addition to the
review, representatives from four micro-enterprise projects attended a 2-day cluster
conference for discussion of program elements and lessons learned. The lessons
presented are based on the cluster conference, the project reviews, and comments by
other project staff. Although this report addresses a number of critical issues that
must be taken into account when designing micro-enterprise programs for low-
income individuals and families, there remains a need for a greater refinement and
understanding of the elements of an effective micro-enterprise project. The lessons
and observations that are presented should be understood as work in progress.
Additional evaluations and policy analyses will need to be undertaken, and the results
widely distributed.

Those who are interested in starting a micro-enterprise program or learning
more about them should contact OCS/JOLI and the Self Employment Learning
Project (SELP) of the Aspen Institute, 1333 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Suite
1070, Washington, D.C. 20036.

IV-A2. Micro-enterprise logic model—The logic model that is proposed for micro-
enterprise projects (Exhibit IV-l) suggests that a number of differences set these
projects apart from other DPP projects. The client-centered nature of most other self-
sufficiency projects tends to drive them toward case management as the core tool for
bringing about individual and familial change. As a consequence, partnerships are
fashioned that permit the agency to put into place a holistic case management system.
Most projects are variations of a case management system which includes or excludes
specific non-traditional interventions or populations. Micro-enterprise projects
assume the existence and availability of case management and other general social

Exhibit IV-1
LOGIC MODEL
Micro-enterprise Program

Assumptions	Activities	Immediate Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Final Program Goals
Low-income populations are heterogeneous.	Participant recruitment	Business plan	Business startup expansion or stabilization	Self-sufficiency
Low-income individuals are capable and motivated to start own business	Participant assessment	Marketing plan		Continuing business activity • Stable • Expansion/growth
Market opportunities exist	Business education and technical assistance • Business plan development • Marketing plan development . Cash flow projections • Personnel management training . Accounting and bookkeeping • Filing and document control systems • Communications systems • Legal compliance • Time management . Strategic planning . Market access skills • Financial planning • Customer relations • Loan application preparation • Ongoing tech"& assistance	Loan application	Loan execution	
Business skills can be taught to low-income individuals		Licensure application	Jobs created	
Skilled staff are available		Legal requirements	Value added	Sell business at profit
External support exists		- 4 Tax requirements		
External social environment is supportive.		Peer bonding	Business closes • Without debt • With debt	Access to traditional funding
Probability of success increases with targeted technical assistance		Increased business skills	Loan paid off	
Well-designed microenterprise program can remove barriers and level-playing field	Internship	Clear self-assessment about readiness	Loan defaulted	
The domain of business development is well defined.		Internships		

	Financial technical assistance
	• Loan fund
	  − Targeted
	  − Dedicated
	• Grant funds
	. Physical assets
	. Bank and commercial funds
	• Credit lines
	• Loan circles
	. Loan servicing
	  − Monitoring
	  − Technical assistance			

	Participant support services • Life and employment skills training • Personal money management • Nutrition • Employment referral • Resume development			
	Resources • Business library • Hardware and software • Industry newsletters • Calculator with paper • Databases			

service delivery systems. When case management services are needed by a client, project staff will refer program participants to the case management partner or program component. However, as important as the case management function may be, it is only one of three critical components. The other two are the availability of loan funds and business technical assistance resources. A close examination of the logic model on the previous page shows the extent to which these latter two functions dominate the micro-enterprise model.

IV-B. MICRO-ENTERPRISE PROJECT DESIGN LESSONS

The review of the DPP-funded micro-enterpriseprojects and the information gathered at the cluster conference generated the following lessons specific to micro-enterprise programs.

IV-Bl. Maintain strong partnerships—Partnerships with banks and/or area employers are a critical success factor for obtaining flexible loan sources, and for acquiring in-kind contributions such as mentoring and training/technical assistance. Partner representatives who are members of loan boards substantially assist in loan decision-making. Partnerships with local small business development centers and the business departments of schools are desirable because they provide the opportunity for "learning the ropes." A number of micro-enterprise programs also have found it useful to develop partnerships with volunteer business organizations such as SCORE (Senior Corps of Retired Executives).

IV-B2. *Develop multiple flexible loan sources*—Multiple loan sources provide the flexibility to find or develop a loan package that meets the specific needs of a client. It is particularly important to have access to commercial banks that will provide loans to micro-businesses as they grow. Many micro-enterprise programs have created partnerships with venture capital groups that specialize in funding low-income entrepreneurs. Not only do such groups provide experience in helping micro-businesses to start up, they also provide knowledge and skills in the management of high-risk investment and loan portfolios. Also, if one loan source dries up, there are others to draw upon. However, if the loan program is to work, it is particularly important that a pool of money be established that is to be used specifically to support micro-enterprises that are managed by low-income individuals who are on, or have been on, public assistance. Many micro-enterprise, venture capital groups target a much broader range of individuals than those who are receiving public assistance. This may reduce the likelihood that individuals who are on public assistance will apply to the program.

IV-B3. *Obtain regulatory and asset waivers*—Many States and local jurisdictions impose stringent asset restrictions on individuals who are on public assistance. These

rules specify that an individual may only possess a limited number of assets. These rules make it difficult for a low-income individual to accumulate either the capital equipment or cash reserves necessary to run a small or micro-business while continuing to receive public assistance. If micro-enterprise programs are to recruit and train entrepreneurs from among the ranks of welfare recipients, they must obtain asset waivers for program participants. For example, in Montana, until a Statewide asset waiver was mandated for micro-enterprise participants, the project was unable to recruit anyone to the loan program who was on public assistance. These regulatory and asset waivers should be obtained **before** the program begins. Without asset waivers, micro-business programs have found it difficult to recruit potential entrepreneurs from among those who are on public assistance or to persuade them to apply for loans.

IV-B4. ***Maximize the flexibility of the program environment--In*** order to serve clients better, it is necessary to create a flexible program environment. Multiple teaching approaches should be used that are adapted to different learning styles and client requirements. Teaching methods can range from one-on-one, to small group sessions, to formal classes. However, most of the programs found that the one-on-one and small group tutorial approaches were the most effective. They permitted the greatest flexibility in tailoring the learning process to match individual needs.

IV-B5. Carefully consider loan fund operations and programmatic locus of control—One of the most important design issues that a micro-enterprise project must face is where to place the locus of organization and program control. Should the project be driven by the loan fund or by the business technical assistance component? Recent Federal and State court rulings suggest that lenders are liable for any business advice given to the borrower. If the business advice leads to a business failure, or can be construed as having led to it, the borrower may no longer be obligated to pay back the loan. As a consequence, the business technical assistance and the loan fund management operations must be kept legally and organizationally separate. DPP grantees have generally set up their programs from the perspective of business technical assistance and have found lending partners. This appears to be because CAAs are better adapted to manage a business technical assistance program than a loan fund. However, at present there is no evidence that would suggest that taking a technical assistance centered approach is better than a financial centered approach.

IV-B6. Offer alternative self-sufficiency opportunities-Even under the best of circumstances, not all individuals who enter a micro-enterprise program will complete it. Even if participants complete the program, they may not be ready or able to start a business. In fact, a significant proportion of those who enter a micro-enterprise program will elect not to start a business. Based on the DPP experience, between 50 and 60 percent of those who enter a program will opt for another income-generating

alternative. For this reason, alternative employment, employment training, and education programs should be available.

IV-C. MICRO-ENTERPRISE PROJECT START-UP LESSONS

IV-C1. Performfocused client recruitment--While not all low-income individuals are motivated or ready to learn and apply business skills, a significant proportion are. It is essential to recruit individuals who are *stable, motivated, skilled, and imaginative.* Stable clients are those who have their essential needs for food, clothing, shelter, child care, health care, and transportation met; case management is often necessary to support stabilization. Motivated clients are those who want to start a business and are willing to work to meet their goals. Skilled clients have the basic reading, writing, and math skills needed to benefit from business training. Imaginative clients have an idea of the type of business they want to start. Although supporting data are sketchy, it appears that up to 16 percent of all low-income persons may be ready to pursue a micro-enterprise or self-employment initiative. However, it must be remembered that with each business started, there is a significant multiplier effect, and the possibility that the business will employ additional individuals. For example, Working Capital, a micro-business venture capital firm located in Cambridge, Massachusetts, has found that for every 100 micro-businesses that they fund, 40 new full-time equivalent jobs are created.

Agencies that refer clients to micro-enterprise initiatives must also have training, so they understand both the process and services offered by the micro-enterprise initiative and the type of clients who should be referred.

IV-C2. Recruit and retain trained and experienced staff-The training and experience of micro-enterpriseproject staff differ considerably from that of other DPP project staff members. Micro-enterprise staff members, particularly the trainers, should have direct experience with the planning and start-up of micro-enterprises and small businesses. The individuals who provide ongoing technical assistance in the areas of business growth, crisis management, and loan development must be experiencedwith the business world and preferably have had training in or experience with the problems of low-income individuals. It is better to start with experienced business persons who have the right temperament and provide in-service case-management training to them on issues related to poverty rather than the other way around.

IV-D. MICRO-ENTERPRISE PROJECT OPERATIONS LESSONS

IV-Dl. Support businessplan development-Programs must offer clients assistance in developing realistic and detailed business plans. Business plans which include a market analysis and cash flow projections show that the client has thought through and understands his or her business proposal. While this detailed knowledge is extremely beneficial, an understanding of the risks involved in owning a small business may cause some clients to seek non-entrepreneurial types of employment.

IV-D2. ***Offer comprehensive business training-Programs*** must offer a strong training curriculum in business practices—including training in business and market development, as well as the development and implementation of accounting, communications, and filing systems. The legal aspects of running a business, such as compliance with licensure and tax laws, must be addressed. Key business concepts (e.g., the separation of personal from business finances, planning revenue and expense flows) must be covered. Most micro-enterpriseprojects have found it useful to adapt existing training curricula rather than develop their own.

IV-D3. ***Develop loan circles***-Groups of clients who share responsibility for one another's success provide mutual reinforcement of business practices as well as peer support and validation. However, there is a significant body of anecdotal evidence from the DPP projects to support a finding that low-income individuals are no more likely to apply for and successfully manage a business loan when they are in a loan circle than when they are not. It would appear that low-income individuals served by the DPP grantees were uncomfortable with the notion of taking on debt. Little is known about whether this behavior changes as the DPP micro-enterprise program participants gain more experience with their business. It is also unclear whether this resistance is a function of the DPP environment or some other background variable. Venture capital groups such as Working Capital have been able to successfully create loan circle systems within very low-income populations.

IV-D4. ***Develop savings circles***-Savings circles play a functional role similar to loan circles in that they tend to evolve into support groups in which business practices and decisions can be discussed. The difference lies in the fact that by placing their own money into the savings pool the micro-business entrepreneurs vest more fully into the "circle." DPP grantees are under the impression that savings circles are more effective at maintaining group cohesion and participation than are loan circles. However, the issue has not been investigated systematically.

IV-D5. Initiate support groups—Both loan circles and savings circles have personal "costs" associated with them. Loan circles introduce the problem of judgment, both of and by others. Savings circles require an individual to place scarce funds into the hands of strangers. For many, these costs may act as a barrier to membership in the

group. Support groups provide the benefit of loan and savings circles at a lower "price." DPP project personnel note that where they have been tried, support groups have been quite successful in retaining member loyalty.

IV-D6. Provide *client follow-up*—Clients require follow-up both to ensure that their training is sufficient (e.g., business records properly maintained) and to ensure that they are able to weather the first crises of their fledgling business. For example, when a business grows to the point of employing others, training regarding personnel practices and their legal implications must be provided.

IV-D 7. Support marketing—Identifying and developing a customer base or market that will support the business is one of the most difficult tasks that small and micro-businesses face. Without a secure market or customer base, financial stability is almost impossible to achieve. Many new micro-business entrepreneurs find it nearly impossible to effectively carry out the steps necessary to develop their market while keeping current customers satisfied. As a consequence, it is very useful for the project to provide ongoing technical assistance in the area of marketing that goes beyond formal training. Programs that have assisted their micro-business entrepreneurs with market identification and development have found that it can lead to exciting results. One program was able to secure the volunteer assistance of a local college professor who taught marketing. Through her assistance, some of the micro-businesses have created what amounts to a small export cooperative and are selling their specialty items to international buyers. It is unlikely that these entrepreneurs would have been able to penetrate the international market so swiftly, if ever, without assistance.

IV-D8. Consider *mentoring*—Mentors can serve as a sounding board, a source of business connections, and a source of advice to the new entrepreneur. Motivation is the key to establishing a strong mentor program, as mentors are difficult to recruit and retain in micro-enterprise programs. Mentors must be from the same or a similar "industry" as the low-income entrepreneur. Substantial costs are associated with mentors as they must be recruited, trained, and supported. Projects vary on their assessment of the cost/benefit ratio of developing a mentor program.

IV-D9. Develop an internship component-Most programs found it important to develop internship opportunities for their participants. Internship programs can work in combination with, or in lieu of, a mentoring program. Internships offer potential micro-business entrepreneurs the opportunity to observe the operations of a business in their chosen industry or field. Internship programs are generally easier to establish than mentoring programs and require fewer resources.

IV-D1 0. Provide ancillary support services—It is critical that micro-business programs make available child care and transportation assistance. Programs that do

not provide these support services have had significantly higher dropout rates and even have had a difficult time recruiting the expected number of participants. Jobs services should be available to all micro-enterprise participants. Based on the experiences of the projects, about 50 percent of the micro-enterpriseparticipants will not start their own business. They will be interested in finding "regular" employment Even those who start a business may wish to find employment to supplement their income while they build their business.

IV-D11. Strive for synergy with case management--While not all low-income entrepreneurs need case management services, many do require assistance with overcoming one or more barriers to success in business. Even clients who are "stable" when they enter the program may be on the edge-one negative life event may destroy their fledgling initiative. Case management services must be available on a continuing basis, whether the source is internal to the program or through referral.

IV-D12. Offer loan application assistance—Programs must be able to offer clients assistance in the completion of loan applications. This assistance must include help with the calculation of interest costs, credit history reporting, the development of payment schedules, and other pertinent supporting documentation. For liability reasons, this function should be kept separate from the business technical assistance activities.

IV-D13. Develop the project's entrepreneurial side-An important operating characteristic of the most successful of the DPP micro-enterprise projects is their entrepreneurial style. It is difficult to design for this characteristic. However, it is reflected in the willingness of project staff to spend time exploring market opportunities, brainstormingwith project participants to solve complex problems, and generally assisting in the design of non-traditional business when necessary. Entrepreneurial activity can also be expressed as a willingness to act as change agents within the broader organizational and social context. One of the micro-business programs has gone on to develop a business incubator and is currently working on establishing a business training center within the heart of a recently designated urban Enterprise Zone and Empowerment Community (EZ/EC).

IV-D14. Put resources into staff training and development-Micro-enterprise projects need to emphasize ongoing staff training and development. Appropriately trained and experienced business development and loan personnel are not likely to be trained or experienced in case management techniques. Although it is not necessary to turn the business and loan technical assistance providers into case managers, they should be familiar with the framework of case management and referral. In-service training should be provided in the basics of case management. Case managers who

assist micro-enterprise program participants should be introduced to the program and should be kept abreast of program development. Individuals who are attempting to start a business may often face different problems than those who are simply asking for temporary relief or looking for assistance in finding a more traditional job. Similarly, case managers/socialworkers can benefit from a working knowledge of the business-related issues that may impact on low-income individuals on public assistance attempting to start a micro-business.

IV-D1 5. Provide ongoing technical assistance—The standard measure of success for a small business is to remain in operation for more than 7 years. The payback schedule for even small loans can stretch to 10 years. Public funding streams for micro-enterpriseprograms have rarely matched this time cycle. At best, DPP grants currently have an outer limit of 5 years, an original plus a continuation grant. Fragmentary evidence suggests that micro-businesses are at a higher risk of "failure" when they are unable to access follow-up technical assistance. At least one project reported that loan default rates went up when program funds ceased and technical assistance to loan recipients had to be curtailed. The most successful of the micro-enterprise programs were those that were able to develop independent and relatively stable sources of technical assistance funding.

IV-DI6. *Monitor and track* loans-In addition to providing technical assistance at the loan application stage, it has been found to be important to track and monitor loans once they have been awarded. Many serious financial problems can be avoided through early intervention. Periodic financial and cash-flow reviews can be used to isolate problems at an early stage. Once problems are identified they can be referred to the business technical provider or other information and assistance providers. In the one case where funding difficulties forced a suspension of this follow-up activity, the program noted a significant increase in loan default rates.

IV- E.   MICRO- ENTERPRISE PROJECT EVALUATION LESSONS

IV-El. Evaluate both individualself-sufficiencyand businesssuccess- Evaluation of micro-enterprise projects is complicated by the fact that two distinct but overlapping outcomes are being assessed: (1) the success of the individual program participant in achieving self-sufficiency and (2) the success of the micro-enterprise itself. A program participant can achieve self-sufficiencywithout starting a business. Similarly, although less likely, a business may become successful without the original founder becoming self-sufficient.   In order to model these two outcomes and determine in what sense the micro-enterprise project has a beneficial impact, the evaluation team must use several strategies and assessment tools. It is important for the evaluator to look at gross sales and the profitability of the firms that are started

under the program. Multiplier effects and other common measures of economic growth should be used to assess program impact. Micro-enterpriseprograms not only impact the individual and reduce tax burdens by getting people off public assistance, but also generate economic activity and growth within the local community where the businesses are situated. They add value to local properties and enlarge local markets. These issues need to be addressed in order to assess the full impact of the programs.

IV-E2. ***Consider time series designs***—Most of the DPP evaluation approaches attempt to apply an experimental or quasi-experimental design with a control or comparison group. These approaches are often less appropriate when examining micro-enterprise projects since there appear to be no clear-cut comparison groups available or reasonable methods for creating a true control group. These issues will tend to force the evaluator to seek alternative designs, particularly time series designs. The difficulty with time series designs is that they require multiple measurements at discrete and separate points in time. As a consequence, they are relatively resource intensive. Also, trends, particularly economic trends, tend to unfold slowly, making it difficult to be certain of the validity of conclusions concerning outcomes in the short run. A number of the projects have noted that many of their micro-enterprise program participants were not able to stabilize their businesses until considerably after they had completed their training.

*IV-E3. **Considerpatched up*** design-Another approach that might successfully be used in the evaluation of micro-enterprise projects is the application of patched up designs. This approach makes use of external administrative and social data to assess whether a program is progressing in the expected fashion. For example, if a local community college reports 15 percent completion rates of business plans in its adult education business plan courses and the micro-enterprise program reports 40 percent completion rates, that is reason to believe that the program is working at some level. Similarly, if 30 percent of the micro-enterpriseparticipants come off public assistance in a year as compared to 22 percent of Job Training Partnership Act participants, that is also a sign of project success. As more data become available on other micro-enterprise efforts, additional "standards" of success will be identified. In fact, a preliminary review of results suggests that micro-enterprise programs achieve exceptionally high levels of success, with better than 50 percent of the participants achieving self-sufficiency.

IV-F. CONCLUSION

Micro-enterprise projects represent an exciting tool for helping individuals to achieve economic self-sufficiency. As noted, the evidence indicates that individuals who participate in the programs are likely to become self-sufficient more rapidly and

permanently than those who participate in other standard welfare-to-work programs. In addition to helping individuals to escape poverty, micro-enterprise programs appear to have potentially broad and beneficial impacts on economic growth within their local community.

Micro-enterprise projects also appear to have systemic impacts on the host organization. Every one of the CAAs that operated a micro-enterprise project reported significant impacts on organizational behavior. Uniformly, they indicated that there was a tendency for the organization to become more entrepreneurial and to pay significantly more attention to the local business environment. In most cases, the host organization developed ties with the local financial and business communities— ties that had either not existed before or had grown moribund over the years. The host CAAs regarded these new economic ties as a valuable asset for the future. Many of the micro-enterprise projects reported that their involvement with business development led them to be invited to participate in larger community economic development activities. At least four of the projects have indicated that they have become part of larger coalitions that are concerned with economic renewal and development in their local area.

- **One** project is represented on the EC/EZ board of governors.

- Another has recently been invited to join a public/privatecoalition to renew their local community and achieve self-sustaining economic growth.

- Another plays a principal role in State-level deliberations on small and micro-business development and is the senior partner with the State small and micro-business loan fund.

- Another was the model for the Statewide micro-enterprise loan program.

Whereas previously these CAAs had only tangentially been involved in local, regional, and Statewide economic development issues, they are now being asked to participate directly in the planning and implementation of economic development projects. Community Action Agencies that wish to implement a micro-enterprise project should be aware that to be successful they will have to do careful planning and **may have to reorganize themselves. There is considerable experience with micro-enterprise programs in many communities,** and there are a significant number of sophisticated, potential partners that can be tapped. There is also a wide body of published materials on micro-enterprise approaches that can be acquired. These materials can provide a firm basis for planning the project; however, not all methods work for the same audience. Some fairly disparate results have been obtained depending on whether the individuals who are targeted for recruitment to the program are on welfare or not, are working poor or are at the poverty level, are minority or non-minority, or are urban or rural. In the long run, the impact of a micro-enterprise

project will depend on the goals and objectives of the host organization. Is the program focused on the individual, or is there a larger goal-to influence economic development in the community? Both goals are worthy and exciting, and both can be advanced.

V. Minority Male Project lessons learned

V- A. INTRODUCTION AND LOGIC MODEL

V-A1. Introduction-Self-sufficiency projects that target minority males face a tremendous challenge. In general, services to males who seek public assistance are limited. Services that target the specific problems of minority males are almost non-existent.   The lack of services is complicated by the fact that low-income minority males often lack a strong education, are more likely to have had adverse contact with the criminal justice system, and have a mixed work history. All of these factors accumulate to make it very difficult for low-income and unemployed minority males who are at risk of welfare dependency to find work at wage levels that support self-sufficiency. Racial and ethnic discrimination continue to play a critical role by placing subtle barriers in front of minority males who are attempting to achieve self-sufficiency. Of the social barriers to minority males that have been listed above, none is more serious than the entanglement of young African American males with the criminal justice system. It has been estimated that, on an average day, one out of every three African American males between the ages of 20 and 29 is in prison or jail, or on probation or parole (The Sentencing Project, 1995). The lifetime risk of an African American male being arrested and spending time in jail may be higher than 60 percent in many urban areas.   The effects of criminal justice encounters are devastating. They impact on the ability of the individual to get and sustain work in an occupation that allows for a secure, financial future. In addition, minority entanglement with the criminal justice system at this intensity level reinforces deeply held prejudices among the majority white population in America and has the potential for reigniting discrimination against minorities in groups where it had begun to wane.

Another complicating factor is that while the problems and needs of minority males are increasingly being described, few solutions have been offered. Self-sufficiency programs that target young minority males are critical in the fight to overcome these problems.   Properly structured, they offer hope and present an opportunity to move in another direction. A considerable amount of programmatic experimentation still needs to be done. Agencies that wish to serve minority males

or establish minority male programs find that they have to start from scratch. There are few antecedents or examples to draw upon.

Programs that wish to serve minority males usually require access to many, complex services in a world where few services exist. In addition to building a conceptual framework, minority male projects find that they often have to develop partnerships with groups that have little or no experience providing services to low-income populations, especially minority males. Inventing or brokering new systems of service provision can be resource intensive.

A number of DPP grants have either directly or indirectly targeted minority males. The lessons presented below are based on a comprehensivereview of minority male projects funded by OCS between 1987 and 1992. The funded projects operated in both urban and rural locations in most geographical regions of the country. In addition to the review, representatives from three minority male projects attended a 2-day cluster conference for discussion of program elements and lessons learned. The lessons presented are based on the cluster conference, the project reviews, and comments by other project personnel and outside reviewers.

A number of Demonstration Partnership Program (DPP) grants have either directly or indirectly targeted minority males. Based on a review of these projects, two types of minority male self-sufficiency projects have been identified: One targets low-income minority males not in school; the other targets minority males who are in primary or secondary school and are at risk of dropping out before they acquire their high school diploma. These models do not include every type of project that targets minority males. They do, however, describe the programs that have been tried to date within the DPP framework. Additional evaluations and policy analyses will need to be undertaken, and the results widely distributed before we can say with certainty what works, and under what circumstances. The work presented in this chapter is work in progress, but work that is strongly grounded in experience and has been empirically tested.

V-A2. Minority male logic models—A logic model for each of the two types of minority male projects has been developed to facilitate an understanding of the principal components of the minority male projects that have been tried within DPP. While these logic models are based on actual programs, each model is a composite of individual program types and should be seen as an ideal-typical design rather than a direct representationof any single program. As is the case with any abstract social or program model, the two logic designs tend to oversimplify the programs and do not fully capture all of the complex linkages and interactions between program elements. Finally, the logic models do not address management issues. They are focused on client interventions. Including partnership and project management elements within the model would make the logic models far too complex and would distract from a clear understanding of the intervention components.

Exhibit V-I
LOGIC MODEL
Self-Sufficiency Project for Low-Income Minority Males Not in School

Assumptions	Activities	Immediate Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Final Program Goals

Institutional barriers
- Hiring discrimination
- Employer/union EEO concerns
- High community unemployment levels

Personal strength/difficulties
. Strength in work experience (includes cash economy)
. Survival skills
- Limited career choices
- Noncompetitive skill levels
- Limited resources
- Unfamiliarity/noninternalization with mainstream business practices
- Detachment from families (offspring), other social groups
- Health issues including substance abuse, psychological problems
. Limited financial management skills
- Limited conflict resolution skills

Social barriers*
- Limited employment opportunities
- Child-linked social services (unavailable to males to support training/education)
. Lucrative cash economy and illicit income opportunities
- Media-projected images
  – glamorize negatives
  – sensationalize
- Prejudice/fear reaction
- Violent neighborhoods/weapons
. Exposure to drug culture
. Weak business networks
. Substandard housing

Legal barriers
- Criminal record
- Child support obligations

Employment services
- Job bank
- Job development
- Career counseling

Training/education
- Basic math/reading
. GED and beyond
- Business/employment skills/training
. Microenterprise training

Barrier remediation
. Family-based case management
- Substance abuse education/treatment
- Medical care (including psychiatric, dental)
- Legal aid
- Life skills training
- Financial aid/counseling
. Supportive services, e g transportation, work clothes, tools
- Peer groups
- Housing assistance (shelter, transitional, permanent)

Improved employment status
- Immediate employment
- Job opportunities
- Career goals and plans

Improved skills
- Math, communication, reading
- Business knowledge
- Technical skills

Improved personal stability
- Family/peer relationships unproved
. Health improved
- Progress toward freedom from substances, debt, legal problems
. Improved conflict management/interpersonal skills
- Improved financial management
- Stable housing situation

Income from job/business adequate to sustain self-family-benefits

Completion of education/training programs

Stronger personal reserves
- Financial management
- Conflict management
- Planning
- Problem solving
- Health
- Self-confidence

Stronger interpersonal reserves
- Business network
- Family network
- Social network

Economic self-sufficiency

Stronger employability
- History
- Skills
- Certification

• Program components do not address wider social issues but may help individuals cope with or improve their individual situations

Exhibit V-2
LOGIC MODEL
Self-Sufficiency Projects for Low-Income Minority Males in School

Assumptions	**Activities**	Immediate Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Final Program Goals

Social barriers
- Few appropriate role models
- Violent neighborhoods
- Exposure IO drug culture
- Prejudice/fear reaction
- Separation from mainstream culture
- Media-projected images
- Exposure to weapons and violence

Personal barriers
- Health/developmental problems
- Neglectful/abusive adults – dysfunctional home
- Gang/peer values and pressure
- Limited choices and expectations
- Few/unrealistic career aspirations and short goal horizon
- Sporadic school attendance
- Limited academic skills
- Limited problem-solving and conflict-management skills
- Negative self-concept
- Family obligations
- Involvement with substance abuse

Inadequate schools
- Inadequate resources
- Limited special needs programs
- Overcrowded, disrupted classrooms
- Noninvolving curricula
- Demoralized, inadequate teachers with low expectations
- Peer pressure

Limited extra-curricular opportunities
- Athletic
- Social
- Income generating

Activities
- Mentor Program
- Drug educational/treatment program
- Healthcare and disabilities services
- Family case management
- Liaison with juvenile protective services
- Career counseling
- "Basic" remedial
  - Education/tutoring
  - Life skills training
  - Conflict management training
  - Problem-solving training
- Enhanced special needs programs
- Culturally based curricula
- Extra-curricular activities
  - Athletic/social clubs
  - Social development (helping others
  - Positive cultural grounding
  - Job development

Immediate Outcomes
- Regular involvement in positive relationship with adult
- Reduced involvement with substance abuse
- Improved health disability mitigation
- Improved family situation
- Develop career aspirations and plan
- Improved school attendance
- Improved academic skills
- Improved interpersonal skills (fewer "incidents")
- Improved decision-making skills
- Reduced gang involvement
- Greater involvement in positive oriented peer groups
- Income generation and experience in legitimate job

Intermediate Outcomes
- Satisfactory school performance
- Improved self-concept
- Improved positive social linkages (reduced involvement with gangs)

Final Program Goals
- Drug free and drug averse
- Best possible health and developmental status
- Career plan (goals and strategy)
- Completion of high school with strong academic skills
- strong self-concept, sense Of Direction and career goals
- Strong positive friend and family network
- Strong skills in
  - Conflict management
  - Interpersonal relations
  - Decision making
- Absence of criminal activity

V-B. MINORITY MALE PROJECT DESIGN LESSONS

V-Bl. Verify assumptions about minority males, and adjustprograms to reflect this reality-Some projects assumed that clients lacked realistic job-seeking and employment skills. In fact, many clients, while they had not held "regular jobs" for a long period of time, had previous work experience as semi-skilled or unskilled laborers in the underground or "cash" economy (i.e., they worked but were not officially employed). Project activities and evaluations should be designed to reflect the real characteristics of the clients served, replacing objectives that assume lack of job-seeking and survival skills with objectives that reflect the realities of client experience. It is difficult to negotiate change once a project starts off with faulty assumptions. Agencies must focus on how their project design serves people rather than adjusting people to fit their design or model. Minority male charettes and focus groups are excellent qualitative methods for acquiring information and verifying assumptions.

V-B2. ***Develop realistic plans-The*** original project design or methodology often differed from what was ultimately implemented because of an inability to deliver needed services to an unrealistically large number of clients or because of interagency coordination problems. Public assistance programs generally offer few services to males, much less minority males, and hence have few trained personnel who have the necessary skills or knowledge. In circumstances where project clientele have had a previous history of involvement with the criminal justice system, it may be particularly difficult to find partners or personnel who can provide effective and relevant assistance. The project may have to create or broker a service system from scratch. Those few minority male projects that have been able to develop program continuity were those that were able to draw on non-traditional social service providers. For example, one program was able to convince a law firm to provide pro bono services to assist clients with civil and criminal matters.

The same project was able to convince a U.S. Senator to hire one of its graduates. One key to a successful innovative project that serves minority males is to have a flexible pool of money available that allows for change throughout the project without penalty and that permits the project to purchase emergency support services for clients.

V-B3. ***Develop an empowerment strategy and curriculum that strengthens self-esteem and*** self-efficacy-Minority males, particularly African American males, frequently encounter direct and indirect expressions of racism. This is particularly true for those who do not have the financial resources to purchase expensive and conservative clothing for job interviews, etc. It is important to equip minority males

with the tools to defend themselves against the constant corrosive effects of discrimination. A strong course that instills ethnic pride and provides the participant with skills to cope with prejudice has been found to be a powerful tool by a number of the DPP minority male programs.

V-B4. Offer a career path-Many jobs made available for clients have been low-wage, no-benefit positions in the service industries, i.e., protection/security agencies, fast food chains, small construction companies, and other general service jobs. Wage levels for these jobs do not provide sufficient income to support an individual and his dependents. These jobs do not compensate as much as the underground economy, and require much more accountability. Minority males cannot afford to stay in these low-wage jobs, and they don't.   Projects cannot recruit and keep clients with the message "come with us so you *cannot* make it, but do so *the right way."* The message should be centered on getting clients onto a career path or job with realistic opportunities for upward mobility.

V-B5. Plan options for meeting transportation needs-Most clients live far away from jobs sites, and public transportation may be uavailable, too expensive, or too slow. The transportation needs of clients must be taken into account.

V-B6. Arrange for a project job developer-The importance of a job search/job developer component in self-sufficiency projects should not be underestimated. Employment in low skilled, minimum wage jobs should be viewed as an initial step in the self-sufficiencyprocess and not an end in itself. Clients should be encouraged to take advantage of project opportunities and then consider other options that reflect upward mobility.

V-C. MINORITY MALE PROJECT START-UP LESSONS

V-CL Show respect to clients—Projects must be based on respect; an agency should be more than just an office. Clients should be greeted with a warm welcome, a smile, and a handshake. No paper work should be encountered or required until the client's second or third visit. This allows for mutual assessment to take place, and it presents a less bureaucratic image. Other deterrents to program participation must also be avoided (e.g., long delays for appointments, lengthy sit and wait time, insufficient explanation of the services available, and no child care). It should be remembered that minority males expect to be treated with disrespect. Minority male programs have to overcome the inherent tendency by prospective clients to judge the program on the basis of past experiences and expectations.

V-C2. Establish responsivenessto clients'needs early in the program— Identifying and providing access to services such as health care, treatment for alcohol and drug addiction, legal assistance, family counseling, housing, child care, and transportation is a must for project success. The responsiveness of a project to a client's needs is often used by the client to judge a program's legitimacy or validity. An agency's track record with its clients determines its future opportunities with the minority male population.

V-D. MINORITY MALE PROJECT OPERATIONS LESSONS

V-Dl. Target activities or services to meet minority male needs and interests— Emphasis on "preachy" seminars that encourage acceptance of middle-class values and the work ethic should be refocused toward the job-related needs of clients. The primary concern of most minority males entering self-sufficiency projects is a job. Once they hold a job that provides some level of income, minority males can focus on further education or training. Programs that offer immediate access to jobs are more likely to recruit and retain clients in their program.

V-D2. ***Take a "job-first" approach-Most*** minority male clients want two things when they come into a project, "a GED and a job." These should be the first steps in the self-sufficiency process. Projects must offer an approach in which additional education and training are offered **after** the immediate employment and income needs of clients are met. The next step is to get them to understand that the GED and/or a minimum wage job is the first rung on the **self-sufficiency** ladder; the next rung might be technical school, community college, or a **4-year** college. The trick is to keep clients motivated once they begin nearing a decent wage, so they will continue to take advantage of opportunities that offer possibilities for upward mobility. Meeting the job service needs of clients promotes confidence in the legitimacy or validity of a project and its staff. Client networks then begin to be an agency's source of future project participants.

V-D3. Build on client strengths and interests-Projects should start by identifying work used to earn income in the cash economy. Minority males have excellent survival skills; projects must try to move these skills into the mainstream economy. This can be accomplished by focusing on clients' strengths and their vision of what they *want to do* (do not make assumptions about the client's strengths and needs). Work with the client to find a job based on his background, potential, and ability. Project staff should work with clients as long as they are actively looking for employment, working on acquiring an education, or developing a business.

V-D4. *** Understand, respect, and where possible include the family-Consistent*** participationin family and community life is an important step in moving clients from dependency to self-sufficiency. Projects that recognize the critical importance of families in enhancing client interest and cooperation make it a point to encourage family contact and include family members and significant others in all phases of project operations. Getting and keeping jobs that support families is the common objective that builds trusting relationships between staff, clients, and their families.

Encouraging minority males to take an active role in parenting their children or to re-establish contact with their children and their mother should be a major objective of all self-sufficiency projects. This can be problematic. Some minority males feel that they must go back to their families as "Santa Claus," bearing gifts. Hence, many simply avoid contact. There is also the difficulty of family as barriers-restricting contact or **demanding** money. In some cases the mother may not want the father in the picture because there may be another male in her life; nevertheless, minority males should be encouraged to keep in contact with their significant others and their children as the situation dictates.

Males generally, and minority males particularly, are expected to be socially responsible and to perform effectively in the role of prime economic provider for their families. Getting a "steady, decent paying" job goes a long way toward enhancing a client's self-confidence and self-respect.

The minority male projects will need to weigh the problems of child support enforcement carefully. As public pressure increases to locate absent fathers and enforce child support rules, recruitment to government supportedjobs programs could become difficult. Low-income individuals are more likely to be in arrears on their child support payments than middle and high income individuals. Individuals in arrears may be fearful of presenting themselves to a government supported program.

V-D5. ***Include a peer support component-One*** of the unanticipated outcomes of several projects was the benefits of peer counseling among and between participants. The experience enabled clients to support each other, empowering themselves in the helping relationship and creating a sense of belonging that enhanced cooperation and interest in the projects.

V-D6. ***Consider the costs and benefits of a role model mentoring component***— Greater emphasis must be placed on documenting the influence of role models and mentors in helping project participants to achieve self-sufficiency. Great care must be taken in the selection and training of role models and mentors. Direct monitoring and record keeping of the activities between program participants and their mentors must be undertaken. In addition, finding and monitoring appropriate male role models in the local community is time-consuming and requires careful planning. Role models do not have to be celebrities; on the contrary, they only need to be

"somewhat successful guys" (by society's standards) who are able to connect to and understand the reality of the situation that the clients are caught up in. Finally, they should be good listeners and should not feel that they must "fix it all." The important thing is that a relationship is established with clients, which provides visible proof that an alternative path to self-sufficiency has potential positive outcomes. Some projects have tended to overemphasize the importance of role models and mentoring in bringing about behavioral and attitudinal changes in program participants. This attachment to role models as the catalyst for positive change is based on an over-individualized view of the factors that move minority males toward self-sufficiency. Such a view obscures the impact that structural variables (e.g., the state of the local economy, residential and/or social isolation) have on progress toward self-sufficiency,

Programs that are interested in developing mentoring or role model components should consider developing partnerships with local Big Brothers and Big Sisters programs.   These programs have well developed recruitment and training programs in place.

V-E.   MINORITY MALE PROJECT EVALUATION LESSONS

V-E1. Evaluate outcomes-Academic gains, employment status, and family functioning must be evaluated over the course of project participation and 12 to 24 months after project completion. Clients require follow-up to ensure that progress toward self-sufficiency is continuous and not episodic. In addition, it is important to document the projected outcomes of becoming self-sufficient (such as enhanced self-concept, self-efficacy, and self-esteem, and attachment to family and community) over time.

V-E2. Use *comparison rather than* control groups-Realizing that random selection of clients is not feasible and that attrition of subjects in control groups is a major problem, projects should make every effort to compare the experiences of participants with appropriate comparison groups.   These groups should get an alternative treatment (not no treatment at all). One option is to use the Year One control or comparison group as the experimental group in Year Two.

V-E3. Provide a long-term commitment--Projects tended to run for too short a time for the desired outcome (e.g., active parenting, attachment to labor market, rise in achievement and grades) to occur. Projects should provide a long-term commitment to participants and should allow for flexibility in participation and enough time to address complex problems in a meaningful way.

V-F. CONCLUSION

Minority male programs present a number of complex challenges. Few precedents exist from which well-defined program and design lessons can be drawn. More importantly, resources are scarce. The focus of most public assistance programs on women, infants, and children has left few resources available for males, much less minority males. The lack of resources has resulted in a dearth of social service personnel who have experience or are trained to cope with the multiple complex issues that face low-income, minority males who are seeking to become self-sufficient. Even a cursory examination of the facts demonstrates the need for such services. Minority males are significantly more likely to be unemployed, hold low wage jobs, or be in prison.

The few DPP programs that have focused on minority males have demonstrated that with some thought, those needs can be met. Each DPP project encountered a number of difficulties in locating and organizing the necessary resources at the start of the project. It appears to be important to spend time during the beginning of the project tracking down resources and laying the groundwork for a strong referral network. Health, housing, and legal services can be particularly important. Transitional jobs, if available, are also very important to locate. All of the programs noted that if they could get a person a job right away, they were more likely to be able to get that individual to complete the rest of the program.

Programs should also begin to develop strategies to sustain the program over time. This is a difficult task. As noted, there are few funds available to serve minority males. The project will have to develop and persistently pursue such a strategy early in the life of the program. The project should develop very close ties with the evaluator as evaluation of minority male programs is critical. There is a genuine need to know what factors improve the likelihood of minority males achieving self-sufficiency. In addition, the demonstration of program efficacy can increase the likelihood of obtaining continued funding.

Finally, care should be taken not to assume that popular mythology accurately reflects reality. For example, it is sometimes said that minority women should not be case managers for minority males. One program found the opposite to be true. The greatest success was achieved when the case managers were minority females.

VI. Youth At Risk Project lessons learned

VI - A. INTRODUCTION AND LOGIC MODELS

VI-A1. Introduction—Self-sufficiency projects for youth at risk of welfare dependency are complicated and challenging to implement and maintain. They involve many services, designed to result in multiple interrelated project outcomes. Usually a large number of project partners are needed to provide the wide array of services. These partnerships often include the school system, social and health service providers, and employment training projects such as the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA).

A number of DPP grants have targeted youth at risk. Based on grant applications and project final reports, four types of youth at risk projects have been identified and are described in this manual: school-based, teen parent, employment training, and homeless youth. This report, however, does not exhaust the possible types of projects for youth at risk. Other approaches are possible. Regardless of the approach taken, these projects all have some core service components including case management, support services, educational services, and employment training.

Of the DPP grants that targeted youth at risk of welfare dependency, final reports for five of these projects were available for review. This review produced a broad range of lessons learned. In addition, a cluster meeting was held with four individuals representing three of these programs to refine and expand on the lessons abstracted from the final reports.

The structure of this chapter is somewhat different from that of other chapters because four types of youth at risk projects have been identified. First, logic models for each of the four types of projects are presented. Then project design, start-up, operations, and evaluation lessons learned are presented-these are applicable to *all* youth at risk projects. Finally, this chapter includes four additional sections which present specific lessons learned for each of the four types of youth at risk projects.

VI-A2. Youth at risk logic models—A logic model for each of the four types of youth programs has been developed to facilitate the description of the programs and what each one intends to accomplish. Although these logic models are based on

actual program designs, each model is a composite abstraction of programs and does not describe any one program.   Each model is also, to some extent, an oversimplification of the program and does not fully capture the complexity and linkages between all program components. Finally, the logic models address only program activities around client services. There are many other program activities related to project management and the maintenance of partnerships necessary to maintain the program's services. Inclusion of these other activities would make the logic models even more complex and distract from the focus on program interventions.   Discussion of the four logic models follows, with logic model components indicated in italics.

VI-A3. *Logic model for a "school-based" program*—Exhibit VI- 1 is a sample logic model for school-based self-sufficiency programs for at-risk youth. School-based programs link school systems with other services and employment training to help targeted youth complete high school or GED courses and eventually find employment.   Some of the youth served by these programs are college bound, and enrollment in college is considered to be progression toward self-sufficiency. These programs often provide a number of services that complement and supplement traditional education to help keep youth in school. The types of services offered by a program will depend on the unique risk factors of local youth and the existing services within the local school system-no one program offered all of the services described below; they represent the range of services that have been provided by at least one program. Essentially, these programs include components that supplement school services. They do what the schools cannot do for students who are at risk of dropping out.

Case management services are central features of these programs, functioning as the glue that holds together all the other component program activities. Case management is provided to increase access by youth to supportive services and to make sure those services are coordinated. Case management is usually provided by the grantee agency, often stationing one or more social worker in the school. Included in case management are individual assessments, case plan development, service referrals, follow-up on referrals and the progress of the student through the program, and advocacy on behalf of the student. Immediate case management outcomes include the increased use of supportive services such as health care, income support, and transportation. Case management is also expected to help keep youth in school and maintain them in other program services.

Counseling services are often closely linked to case management. It is assumed that many youth at risk of dropping out of school have fragmented support structures, and have been witnesses and/or victims of violence in the home or community. Counseling services are usually provided by the school through school counselors. The exact forms of counseling offered are determined by the local school

Exhibit VI-I
LOGIC MODEL
Youth at Risk "School-Based" Program

Assumptions	Activities	Immediate Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Final Program Goals
Youth at risk lack access to supportive services	Case management services • Assessments • Case plan • Referrals • Followup • Advocacy	Increased use of supportive services • Health care • Mental health • Family planning • Income support • Transportation		
Youth at risk need help coordinating supportive services				
Youth at risk have been exposed to family violence, are victims of violence, and have fragmented support structures	Counseling services - Mental and emotional assessment • Individual and group counseling	Improved emotional and mental health		
Low self-esteem hinders educational and employment achievement	Self-esteem-building curriculum	Increased self-esteem		
Some school policies have an adverse impact on targeted youth	Advocate changes in school policies	Changed policies		
There are opportunities for community service available to youth served by the program	Community service options • Leadership training • Volunteer program . Community projects	Improved retention of youth in school Increased self-community identity		
Youth at risk are often highly motivated and want opportunities for social involvement	Competency-based curriculum . Remedial reading . Basic English • English as a second language	Improved educational competencies . Increased reading skills . Increased math skills . Increased English proficiency	College enrollment	
Youth at risk lack adequate education for employment	Tutoring services High school diploma program option Academic counseling services		High school or GED completion	Increased self-sufficiency
Youth at risk lack employment training and job-related skills	Employment training curriculum • Preemployment training : Job skills training : Job placement services	Improved employability : Increased job readiness • Increased job skills	Employment at predetermined hourly rate	
		Increased job interviews		
Youth at risk often lack basic life skills	Life skills training curriculum • Problem-solving training • Money management • Consumer education	Improved life skills		
Targeted youth are likely to be sexually active and at risk of pregnancies	Relationship and sexuality curriculum Family-planning services	Increased knowledge of relationships Increased knowledge of sex and body Increased knowledge of birth control		
Targeted youth are at risk for alcohol and other drug use	Substance abuse prevention curriculum	Increased knowledge of AOD effects Increased negative attitudes about AOD use Reduced AOD "se		
Youth at risk often lack social support networks	Self-help groups	Increased social support		
Youth at risk often lack appropriate adult role models and interaction	Mentoring program	Increased youth-adult interaction		
Parents of targeted youth often are not involved in their children's education or schools	Family involvement strategies • Home visits • Parent activities	Increased parental involvement in school		

67

system, but they often include mental and emotional assessments, individual counseling, and group counseling. These services are expected to improve the emotional and mental health of youth, help keep youth in school, and contribute to the achievement of other desired program outcomes. Many of the youth served by these programs presumably have low self-esteem, which is thought to hinder success in education and employment training. A *self-esteem building curriculum,* a common feature of these programs, is an effort to increase youths' self-esteem, which in turn will improve their chances of completing school and gaining employment.

Advocacy for changes in school policies is a common activity of these programs. A major barrier facing youth at risk of not completing high school is that some school policies work against them. For example, a school system may require students who dropped out of school to take courses over again, regardless of the student's competencies. Such a policy discourages dropouts from returning to school. Advocating for competency-based accreditation of courses would help to improve the retention of youth in school. Although youth targeted by these programs have many risk factors, they also bring to the program resources such as motivation, creativity, and skills that can be tapped and used to help keep them in the program. *Community service options* are available and can capitalize on youths' resources. Included in this program component may be leadership training, a volunteer program, or community projects. These activities are intended to give youth greater self-confidence and strengthen their community identity.

A number of educational services are provided by school-based programs to help youth complete school and find employment. A *competency-basedcurriculum* is important. This curriculum ensures that the student becomes competent in specific skill areas and is not just passed on to the next grade. Included in the curriculum may be courses in remedial reading and math, basic English, and/or English as a second language. *Tutoring services* are usually provided to the students to help them with their course work. *Academic counseling* is another important educational service to help the students decide what type of educational program to pursue and to resolve academic problems before they prevent the students from completing school. Some students will not be-able to complete regular high school and need a *high school diplomaprogram option* that will give them an equivalency diploma. *GED courses* may be an appropriate option for these students. Educational services are intended to improve the academic competencies of youth, especially in reading, math, and English, and help them to complete the education program and gain employment. Note, however, that students should be informed that a GED is not always accepted as the equivalent to a diploma. The military and some employers do not accept the GED. For example, one of the largest fast food chains, which employs one out of every five minority youth in this country, recently dropped the GED as an employment criterion. New employees must now have a high school diploma.

An *employment training curriculum,* a key component of school-based programs, is intended to prepare youth for work by teaching job-related skills. These curricula often include pre-employment services, job skills training for specific employment, and job placement services to help youth locate and apply for jobs. All of these activities are expected to improve the employability of youth and result in job interviews and eventual employment.

A *life skills training curriculum* may be included in employment training because many of the targeted youth are thought to lack these skills. This curriculum may include problem-solving training, money management skills, checkbook maintenance, and consumer education. Improved life skills are expected to help youth complete their education and employment training programs, and eventually help increase their self-sufficiency.

These programs usually assume that the youth they serve are sexually active and at risk of early parenthood. Often a *relationship and sexuality curriculum* as well as *familyplanningservices* are offered to students to increase their knowledge about relationships, sex, and their bodies, and to provide information about birth control. It is hoped that pregnancies will be either prevented or delayed to give youth a greater chance of completing school. Effective parenting education can give young people a more realistic understanding of the physical and emotional needs of babies and young children and familiarize them with the responsibilities, caring, and hard work involved with being a nurturing parent. Experience has shown that this understanding can reduce the incidence of teen pregnancy as well as improve sibling and family relationships. Similarly, targeted youth are assumed to be at risk for alcohol and other drug (AOD) use; thus, a *substance abuse prevention curriculum* often may be included in a school-basedprogram. By increasing their knowledge of AOD effects, encouraging negative attitudes about AOD use, and reducing the use of alcohol and other drugs, youth are more likely to complete school and find suitable employment.

Family involvementstrategies also may be used by programs to increase the involvement of parents in the school and encourage the cooperation of parents with the program. Home visits have been used to increase parental involvement as have special parent activities. Some programs have provided parents with employment services to improve the self-sufficiency of the family. Often parents of at-risk youth also lack education By offering GED courses or an evening high school diploma program, a project enables these parents to improve their education and employability. As with other program services, family involvement strategies are intended to contribute to the retention of youth in education and employment training so that they will become self-sufficient.

Self-help groups are another common activity offered by school-based programs. Such groups may be conducted for children of alcoholics or drug users,

youth who have been exposed to violence, youth who have lost a parent to death or divorce, or youth who are suicidal. These groups are intended to increase the social support of the youth and help keep them in school and other program activities.

Some school-based programs have a ***mentoring*** component to provide youth with appropriate adult role models and interaction. This adult-youth interaction contributes to increased social support and helps keep youth in the program. Mentors can be linked to the employment training program by pairing youth with an adult in a work setting to help train him or her in desired job skills.

VI-A4. ***Logic model for a "teen parent" program***—Exhibit ***VI-2*** is a logic model for a "teen parent" self-sufficiency project. These programs are based on many assumptions about factors that put teen parents at risk of welfare dependency. These risk factors are addressed through a very broad range of services, each leading to different outcomes. For the most part, program services are intended for teen mothers. These programs strive to provide services that will assist young mothers to stabilize their family environment, prevent additional pregnancies, obtain a high school diploma or GED, and eventually find employment. In working with teen parents, programs must provide for some very basic needs before they can begin to address the educational and employment issues. Even after a teen mother enters an education or employment training program, continued case management and support services must be provided if she is to complete the program and move toward self-sufficiency.

Case management services, including home and school visits, are provided to give youth access to other needed services and to coordinate those services. Given each teen's unique situation, case management services are highly individualized and intensive. Home and school visits increase contact with the youth and allow the case manager to gain a more complete understanding of individual needs and progress. Case management is expected to result in an immediate increase in the use of supportive services such as AFDC, Medicaid, the WIC program, and Head Start. Use of supportive services should eventually contribute to a more stable family environment, help prevent additional pregnancies, and lead to the completion of the mother's education and her employment.

As part of case management, ***medical service referrals*** are made for the teen mother and her baby for services such as prenatal care, well-baby clinic, infectious disease screening, and early childhood developmental testing. Medical services are expected to improve the health of the mother and her baby, which in turn is expected to contribute to the stability of the family.

Program planners assume that teen parents usually want to be good parents, but they lack good role models and parenting skills. A ***parenting training curriculum*** should be part of the program to improve the parenting skills of the teens.

Exhibit VI-2
LOGIC MODEL
Youth at Risk "Teen Parent" Program

Assumptions

Teen parents lack access to supportive services and need coordination of those services

Teen parents require individualized assistance

Teen parents need intensive contact in both the home and school

Teen parents and infants need medical services

Teen parents are likely to be victims of child abuse and neglect and lack a functional support system

Tan parents lack basic life skills

Teen parents are usually motivated and want to be good parents

Teen parents most often lack parenting skills

It is important for the teen father to be involved with the teen mother and his child

The families of the youth need help in providing a supportive environment of the parents

Teen parents are likely to be sexually active and at risk for repeated pregnancies

Teen parents often need adequate housing if they are to complete educational and employment training programs

Tam parents are at risk of not completing high school or obtaining a GED

Teen parents need support services if they are to complete their educational training programs

Teen parents lack employment and job skills

Activities

Case management services
- Assessment
- Case plan
- Referrals
- Followup
- Advocacy
- Home visits
- School visits

Medical service referrals
- Prenatal care
- Well-baby clinic
- Infectious disease screening
- Early childhood development services

Counseling services
- Mental and emotional health assessment
- Individual counseling
- Group counseling

Life skills training curriculum
- Housekeeping training
- Money management
- Checkbook maintenance
- Problem-solving training
- Consumer education

Parenting education curriculum

Teen dad program
- Child bonding
- Parenting training
- Education services
- Employment services

Family involvement services

Relationship and sexuality curriculum

Family planning services

Adoption counseling

Housing assistance services
- Referrals
- Vouchers
- Rent subsidies

Educational services
- Academic counseling
- Education program locator
- GED courses
- Tutoring services
- Literacy training
- High school diploma program

Support services
- Child care
- Transportation
- Emergency food

Employment training curriculum
- Preemployment services
- Job skills training
- Job placement services

Immediate Outcomes

Increased use of supportive services
- AFDC
- Medicaid
- WIC
- Transportation

Improved mother and baby health

Improved emotional and mental health
- Decreased depression
- Increased self-esteem

Improved life skills

Improved parenting skills

Increased father involvement
- Emotional support
- Child support
- Parenting skills

Increased family support

Increased knowledge of relationships

Increased knowledge of sex and body

Increased use of birth control

Increased adoptions of unwanted children

Improved housing
- Obtain affordable housing
- Obtain safe and secure housing

Enrollment in educational program

Increased school attendance

Increased GPA

Stable child care, transportation, and other supports

Improved employability
- Increased job readiness
- Increased job skills

Increased job interviews

Intermediate Outcomes

Stable family environment

No additional pregnancies

High school or GED completion

Employment at predetermined hourly rate

Final Program Goals

Increased self-sufficiency

Better parenting skills are expected to contribute to a stable family environment for youth.

It is believed that teen fathers need to be involved with their children and the mothers of those children when the children are not given away for adoption. *Teen dad programs* have been used to increase the father's involvement in providing emotional and financial support, as well as to improve parenting skills. Increased involvement of the teen father is expected to strengthen the stability of the family environment. Likewise, it is assumed that the family of the teen parent needs to be encouraged to provide a supportive environment for the youth. Programs may offer some form of *family involvement service* to increase the family support and provide a more stable family environment.

Counselingservices are also provided to youth. It is assumed that many teen parents have been victims of child abuse and neglect and that they lack functional support systems. These counseling services may be provided by the case managers or through another service provider. Included in these services are mental and emotional health assessments and individual and group counseling. These services are expected to result in improved emotional and mental health, such as decreased depression and increased self-esteem, which are then expected to contribute to improved family stability.

Teen parents presumably lack basic life skills. Therefore, these programs are likely to offer a *life skills training curriculum* that may include training in housekeeping, money management, checkbook maintenance, problem solving, and consumer education. This training is intended to give youth improved skills in each area, which will also contribute to a more stable family environment.

Teen parents are likely to continue their sexual activity and are at risk for repeated pregnancies. Programs serving these youth often address this issue by providing a *relationship and sexuality curriculum* and *family planning services.* These program components are intended to increase youths' knowledge about relationships, sex, and their bodies, and to encourage youth to use birth control if they are sexually active. *Adoption counseling* may also be provided to help any teen mothers with children for whom they cannot care. It is hoped that all of these services will prevent additional pregnancies, thus allowing the mother to complete her education and become employed.

Some teen parents need independent housing. They may, for example, be living with their own parents, and the new baby puts a strain on the existing housing arrangement. Programs may include *housing assistanceservices* to provide the teen or her family with housing referrals, vouchers, or rent subsidies. These services are intended to improve the living situation by obtaining affordable, safe, and secure housing. Improved housing, when it is needed, is expected to help the youth complete her educational and employment training programs.

Once a teenager has a baby, she is assumed to be at risk of not completing her education. Specially designed *educational services* are provided by these programs to help the young mother obtain a high school diploma or GED. These services include, but are not limited to, academic counseling, educational program locators, tutoring services, literacy training, high school diploma curricula, and GED courses. Immediate educational outcomes include enrollment in an education program, increased school attendance, and increased GPA. These outcomes lead to high school or GED completion, which in turn are expected to result in employment.
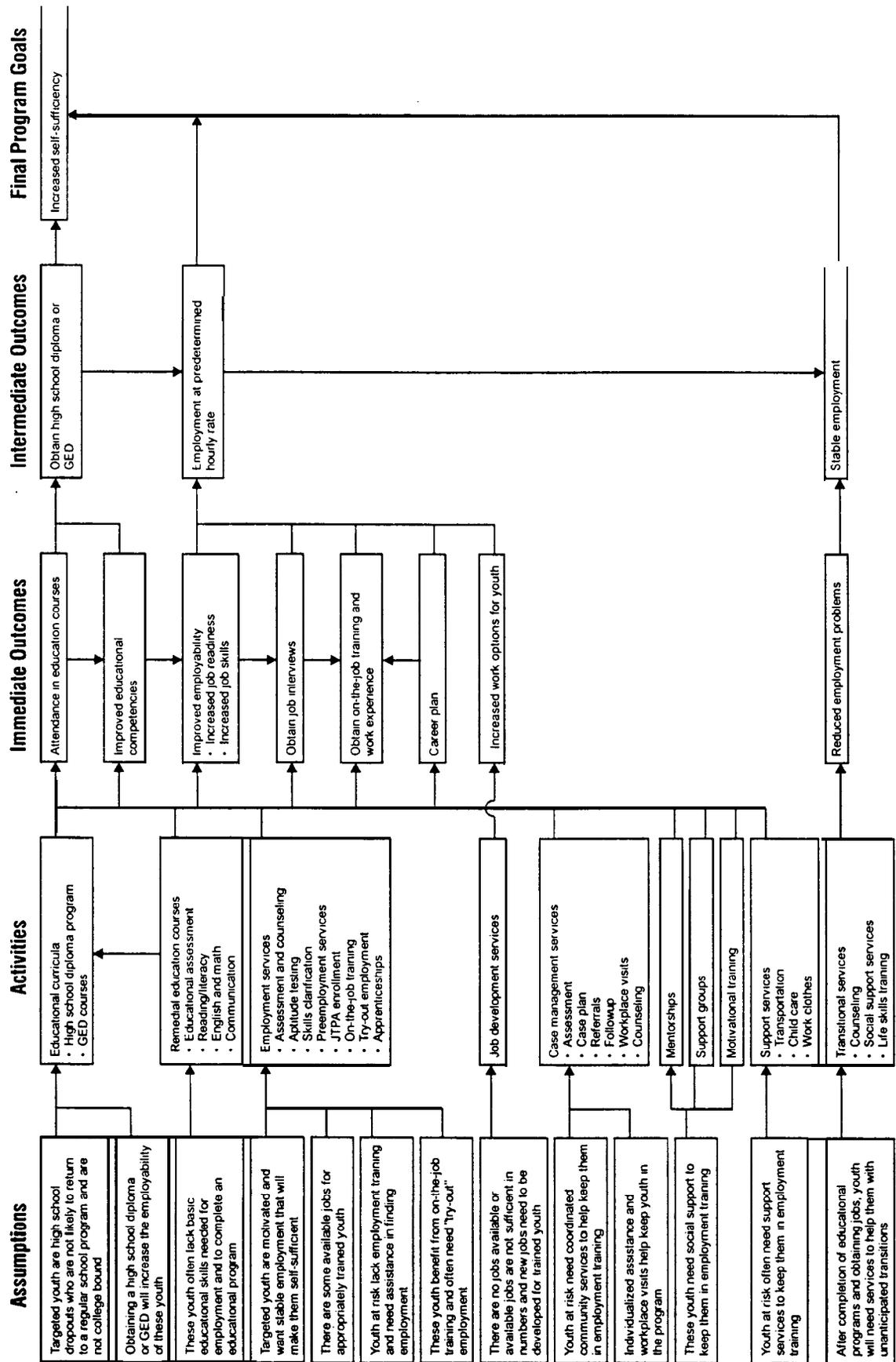
Support services are needed by the teen parents if they are to stay in school and in their employment training. Critical support services include child care while the mother is in classes and training, transportation to and from school, employment training, other service providers, and emergency food and essentials on an as-needed basis.

Often, teen parents lack work experience and job skills necessary to find and obtain steady employment. An *employment training curriculum* is an important component of these programs. This training may be offered to the teen mother as well as the teen father. Common features of this training include pre-employment services to assess aptitude and training needs and employment behavior (e.g., timeliness, appropriate work appearance, etc.), training in specific job skills (e.g., computers, bookkeeping, auto mechanics, medical laboratory), and job placement services to help teens locate openings and apply for employment. Immediate outcomes of employment training include increased job readiness, job skills, and job interviewing skills. These outcomes are expected to result in employment at a hourly rate that will allow youth to become self-sufficient.

VI-A5. *Logic model for an "employment training"* **program--Exhibit *VI-3*** is a logic model for a youth at risk employment training project aimed at self-sufficiency. Employment training programs are geared for youth who have dropped out and are not likely to return to a regular school program and who lack sufficient skills to obtain jobs available within the community. Consequently, the focus of these programs is to help youth obtain a high school equivalency diploma or GED, while providing employment training and services at the same time. Educational and employment services are combined with other services considered necessary tohelp youth to complete the program and eventually find stable employment that will lead to self-sufficiency.

Educationalcurricula are offered to targeted youth to improve their academic skills and increase their employability. By obtaining either a high school equivalency diploma or GED, it is assumed that youth will qualify for more jobs than they do as

Exhibit VI-3
LOGIC MODEL
Youth at Risk "Employment "Training" Program

Assumptions	Activities	Immediate Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Final Program Goals

Assumptions

Targeted youth are high school dropouts who are not likely to return to a regular school program and are not college bound

Obtaining a high school diploma or GED will increase the employability of these youth

These youth often lack basic educational skills needed for employment and to complete an educational program

Targeted youth are motivated and want stable employment that will make them self-sufficient

There are some available jobs for appropriately trained youth

Youth at risk lack employment training and need assistance in finding employment

These youth benefit from on-the-job training and often need "try-out" employment

There are no jobs available or available jobs are not sufficient in numbers and new jobs need to be developed for trained youth

Youth at risk need coordinated community services to help keep them in employment training

Individualized assistance and workplace visits help keep youth in the program

These youth need social support to keep them in employment training

Youth at risk often need support services to keep them in employment training

After completion of educational programs and obtaining jobs, youth will need services to help them with unanticipated transitions

Activities

Educational curricula
· High school diploma program
· GED courses

Remedial education courses
· Educational assessment
· Reading/literacy
· English and math
· Communication

Employment services
· Assessment and counseling
· Aptitude testing
· Skills clarification
· Preemployment services
· JTPA enrollment
· On-the-job training
· Try-out employment
· Apprenticeships

Job development services

Case management services
· Assessment
· Case plan
· Referrals
· Followup
· Workplace visits
· Counseling

Mentorships

Support groups

Motivational training

Support services
· Transportation
· Child care
· Work clothes

Transitional services
· Counseling
· Social support services
· Life skills training

Immediate Outcomes

Attendance in education courses

Improved educational competencies

Improved employability
· Increased job readiness
· Increased job skills

Obtain job interviews

Obtain on-the-job training and work experience

Career plan

Increased work options for youth

Reduced employment problems

Intermediate Outcomes

Obtain high school diploma or GED

Employment at predetermined hourly rate

Stable employment

Final Program Goals

Increased self-sufficiency

high school dropouts. Employment training programs may either provide directly or link youth with a high school diploma program or GED courses. Although a high school diploma provides more job opportunities than a GED, a GED is still an appropriate option for some youth. Supporting the educational curricula are *remedial education courses* for those youth who lack basic educational skills needed to complete a diploma program or GED. An assessment of educational competencies is important to make sure youth are provided with appropriate remedial instruction. Remedial courses may include reading and literacy, English, math, and communication. Completion of remedial education is expected to allow youth to succeed in the educational curriculum and obtain a diploma or GED.

Job development services are provided by some employment training programs because there are not sufficient local jobs for the youth who complete the program. Employers need to be encouraged to come to the program whenever they have job openings. The program may also work with local employers and civic leaders to develop new jobs for trained youth. The intention of job development is to increase work options for youth in the program so that they will find employment after completing their education and training.

Employment services are a key component of these programs. It is assumed that the targeted youth are motivated and want stable employment, that there are available jobs in the community for appropriately trained youth, and that with training and other employment services youth can find work that allows them to become self-sufficient.

Employment services can vary in their scope but may include employment assessment and counseling, aptitude testing, skills clarification, pre-employment services, JTPA enrollment, on-the-job training (OJT), "try-out" employment, and apprenticeships. An important outcome of employment services is a career plan for each youth. These services are also expected to result in improved employability through increased job readiness and job skills, work experience, and job interview skills. These immediate outcomes are expected to lead eventually to employment at an hourly rate adequate for self-sufficiency and stability.

Case managementservices are often a key component of these programs and are usually provided directly by the lead agency. This service links program participants to needed social and medical services and coordinates the use of those services. In addition to the traditional case management services, workplace visits may be conducted to help keep youth in the program and monitor their progress. Case management services are designed to support youth in their education and training programs and to contribute to the outcomes of those program components. Youth served by these programs are assumed to need social support to keep them in employment training. Programs may use several mechanisms to do this. *Mentorships* can link youth to adults in the work force who serve as role models.

Mentors may be individuals who work where the youth performs OJT or try-out work or has an apprenticeship. *Supportgroups* can be held for youth, so they can develop friendships in the program and learn from others how to deal with the everyday issues of employment. *Motivational training* is another form of support. This training builds on their desire to get good jobs by teaching youth how to define achievable goals and then work to achieve those goals.
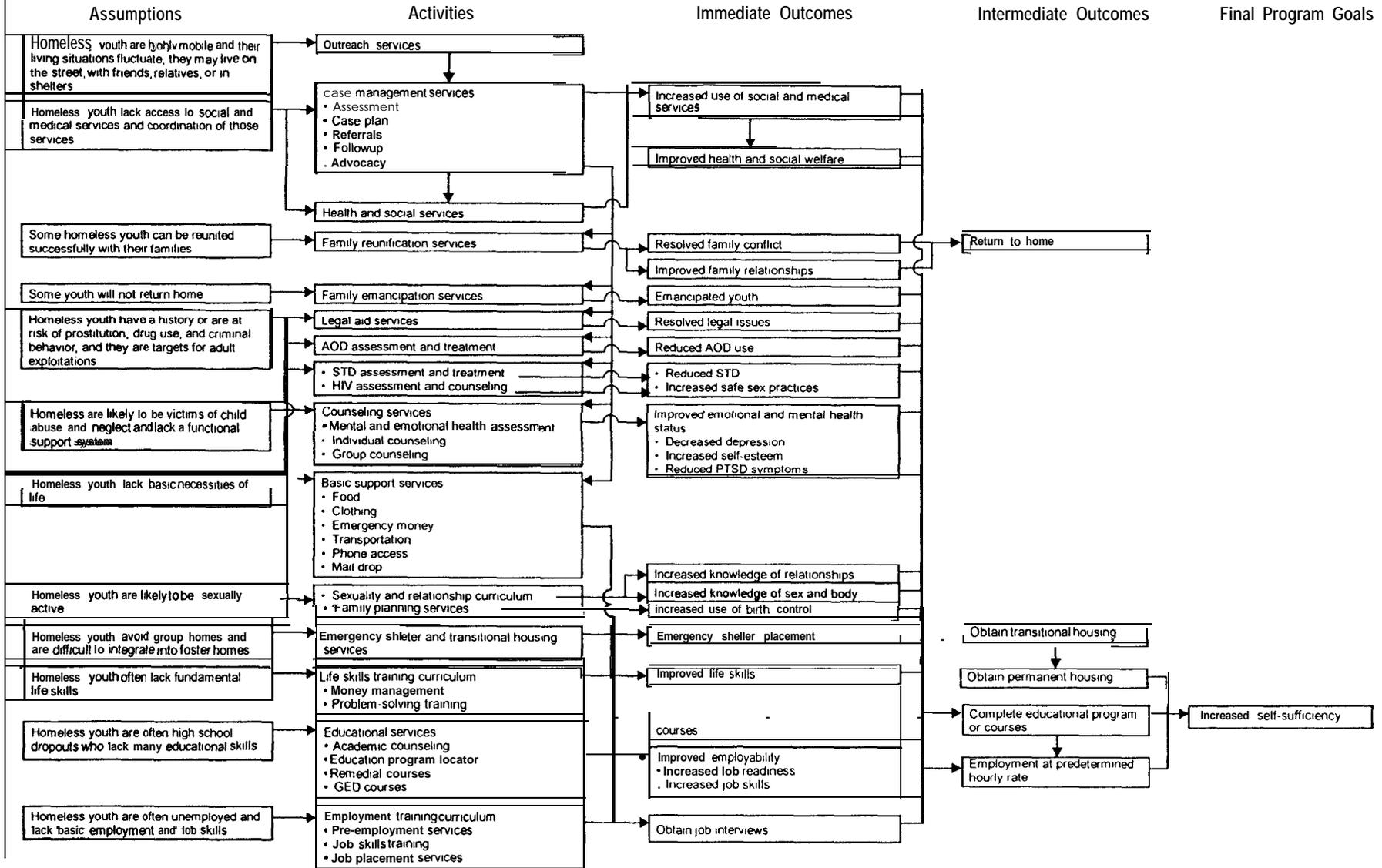
Support services are usually needed by youth targeted by employment training programs. These youth are likely to need help with items such as transportation, child care, work clothes and tools, and housing. Lack of these supports may result in youth dropping out of the program. Once a youth has completed the program, it is important to continue providing support through *transitionalservices.* Many program graduates can be expected to experience unanticipated events after they find work that will put them at risk of losing their jobs or that actually result in job loss. Employment training programs cannot abandon program participants after graduation Counseling, social support services, and life skills training may be needed to help reduce employment problems. Services for these youth must taper off gradually, not be cut off suddenly.

VI-A6. *Logic model for a homeless youth program-Exhibit VI-4* is a logic model for a homeless youth self-sufficiency project. Programs targeting homeless youth face difficult challenges and require a complicated array of services to achieve the desired program outcomes. These programs attempt to get youth to either return to their families or obtain some form of stable housing, complete an educational program, and/or obtain employment. These programs must provide for many basic needs before youth are ready to become involved in educational and employment training services. These programs often have to work with youth for weeks before they will avail themselves of basic program services such as case management.

Outreach services are necessary to engage youth and bring them to the program. Targeted youth are highly mobile, and their living situations fluctuate. Many of these youth do not want to get off the streets and may not be interested in program services. Outreach services are intended to channel the youth into other program services, especially case management.

Case managementservices are a key component designed to help youth access other services and then coordinate those services. Because of high mobility, follow-up services are very important to maintain contact with youth and to retain them in the program. Referrals to *health and social services* are part of case management. Because these youth are usually ineligible for welfare or Medicaid, programs have to arrange for health and social services, often through program partners. Immediate outcomes expected from case management and health and social services are increased use of those services and the improved health and social welfare of the

Exhibit VI-4
LOGIC MODEL
Youth at Risk "Homeless Youth" Program

Assumptions	Activities	Immediate Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Final Program Goals

Assumptions

- Homeless youth are highly mobile and their living situations fluctuate, they may live on the street, with friends, relatives, or in shelters
- Homeless youth lack access to social and medical services and coordination of those services
- Some homeless youth can be reunited successfully with their families
- Some youth will not return home
- Homeless youth have a history or are at risk of prostitution, drug use, and criminal behavior, and they are targets for adult exploitations
- Homeless are likely to be victims of child abuse and neglect and lack a functional support system
- Homeless youth lack basic necessities of life
- Homeless youth are likely to be sexually active
- Homeless youth avoid group homes and are difficult to integrate into foster homes
- Homeless youth often lack fundamental life skills
- Homeless youth are often high school dropouts who lack many educational skills
- Homeless youth are often unemployed and lack basic employment and job skills

Activities

- Outreach services
- case management services
  - Assessment
  - Case plan
  - Referrals
  - Followup
  - Advocacy
- Health and social services
- Family reunification services
- Family emancipation services
- Legal aid services
- AOD assessment and treatment
- STD assessment and treatment
- HIV assessment and counseling
- Counseling services
  - Mental and emotional health assessment
  - Individual counseling
  - Group counseling
- Basic support services
  - Food
  - Clothing
  - Emergency money
  - Transportation
  - Phone access
  - Mail drop
- Sexuality and relationship curriculum
- Family planning services
- Emergency shelter and transitional housing services
- Life skills training curriculum
  - Money management
  - Problem-solving training
- Educational services
  - Academic counseling
  - Education program locator
  - Remedial courses
  - GED courses
- Employment training curriculum
  - Pre-employment services
  - Job skills training
  - Job placement services

Immediate Outcomes

- Increased use of social and medical services
- Improved health and social welfare
- Resolved family conflict
- Improved family relationships
- Emancipated youth
- Resolved legal issues
- Reduced AOD use
- Reduced STD
- Increased safe sex practices
- Improved emotional and mental health status
  - Decreased depression
  - Increased self-esteem
  - Reduced PTSD symptoms
- Increased knowledge of relationships
- Increased knowledge of sex and body
- Increased use of birth control
- Emergency shelter placement
- Improved life skills
- courses
- Improved employability
  - Increased job readiness
  - Increased job skills
- Obtain job interviews

Intermediate Outcomes

- Return to home
- Obtain transitional housing
- Obtain permanent housing
- Complete educational program or courses
- Employment at predetermined hourly rate

Final Program Goals

- Increased self-sufficiency

youth. These outcomes are expected to contribute to obtaining transitional or long-term housing, completing an educational program or courses, and eventually attaining employment. Homeless youth often have a history of prostitution, drug use, and criminal behavior. These youth are also targets of adult exploitation. Consequently, programs often provide *legal aid services* to help resolve legal issues, ***alcohol and other drug assessment and treatment services*** to reduce substance use, ***assessment for sexually transmitteddiseases and treatmentservices*** to reduce these diseases, and ***HIV assessment and counseling*** to ensure safe sex practices. Because these youth are assumed to be sexually active, programs may also include a ***sexuality and relationship curriculum*** and ***family planning** services* to increase their knowledge of relationships, sex, and their bodies, as well as provide information about birth control. All of these immediate outcomes are expected to eventually contribute to obtaining housing, completing an educational program, and finding employment.

For some youth, it is appropriate for programs to provide *family reunification services* that attempt to improve relationships with other family members and eventually help youth return home. However, some homeless youth have left violent and unsafe homes and have no desire to be reunited with their families. For these youth, *family emancipation services* may be helpful. These services are expected to result in decreased family problems and conflict by emancipating youth from the authority of their parents.

Counseling services should be made available to homeless youth. Many of these youth have been victims of child abuse and neglect, and they often lack functional support systems. Some of these youth suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a result of past abuse and violence. Common counseling services include mental and emotional health assessments and individual and group counseling. Indicators of improved emotional and mental health are outcomes of these services. Such indicators include decreased depression, fewer PTSD symptoms, and increased self-esteem.

Homeless youth almost always lack the common necessities of life and must constantly hustle to survive on the streets. Programs serving these youth must provide ***basic support services*** such as food, clothing, emergency money, transportation, phone access, and even a mail drop. These services function to attract youth and engage them in the overall program. These services also help to keep youth in the program so that they can take advantage of other services and achieve the desired outcomes.

Emergency shelter and transitional housing services is another key program component. These youth often have been living on the streets, in emergency shelters, and with extended family members, friends, or acquaintances. They are highly mobile, moving from one living arrangement to another. Also, they avoid group homes and are difficult to integrate into foster homes. As with the basic support

services, youth may be attracted to the program through its emergency shelter services. Programs need to provide emergency shelter to get youth into a safe living arrangement and help stabilize them, so they can participate in other program services. The shelter is also a stepping stone to transitional housing, which is used while youth continue to participate in other program services.

Many of the youth served by these programs lack fundamental life skills needed for independent living such as budgeting money, housekeeping, and problem solving. A *life skills curriculum* may be part of the program, so they can obtain housing, complete their education, and/or obtain employment.

Another key component of these programs is *educational services.* Many of these youth have dropped out of high school and lack basic educational skills. Some homeless youth have competed high school and are interested in post-secondary education. Common educational services include academic counseling, education program locators to help youth findappropriate programs, remedial courses in English and math, high school diploma programs, and GED courses. Because of the many issues confronting homeless youth, they often need to participate in other program services for a period of time before they are ready to enroll in an education program. Once they enroll in a program, it may take a long time for them to complete their education. Educationalprogram services should be linked with employment services for homeless youth.

An *employment training curriculum* is also an essential component of a homeless youth program. Some homeless youth already have a job. Many have made money in the "underground economy" through prostitution, drugs, begging, or theft. Once youth have become stabilized through the use of other program services, they need employment services to prepare them for work. These services often include pre-employment services such as aptitude testing and skills assessment, job skills training, job placement services, and "first-time" work experience to give them an employment history. Participation in employment services may occur at the same time as involvement with an educational program. Some youth may opt not to participate in any educational services and may use only the program's employment services. Use of these services should result in improved employability by increasing the youth's job readiness and skills and helping the youth obtain job interviews. Combined with all other program services, the employment training curriculum is expected to lead to employment and ultimately increased self-sufficiency.

VI - B.   YOUTH AT RISK PROJECT DESIGN LESSONS

VI-B1.   Apply youth resources-Targeted youth bring many resources to these programs, such as high motivation, creative ideas, strong desire for self-improvement, and individual skills. Programs should be designed to work with these resources and

use them to engage the youth, help keep them in the programs, and achieve desired program outcomes. Opportunities for community service build on the strengths of youth and should be considered part of the program design. Youth leadership programs draw on the resources of youth and help empower them to participate in educational and community systems.

VI-B2. Let youth and theirfamilies identify needs-In planning programs for youth, agencies cannot assume they know the needs of targeted youth. Youth must be involved in identifyingtheir "families" and omitting and/or including family members according to their level of involvement and/or support. Youth and their families should be involved in the program planning phase so that the program is relevant and acceptable to youth. Youth should help establish the program goals and define program services. What youth want and need may not match adult assumptions.

VI-B3. Take all risk factors into account-Youth served by these projects have multiple risk factors. They often have fragmented support structures (dysfunctional families and neighborhoods)and need a range of supportive services to help them stay in educational and training programs. Many youth have been exposed to family violence and have been the victims of violence and abuse themselves. They may need counseling and mental health services to help deal with these experiences. Programs should anticipate that the youth they serve are sexually active and can benefit from family planning services. These youth are also at risk for alcohol and other drug (AOD) use and need AOD assessment and, when appropriate, referral to AOD treatment services along with follow-up services.

VI-C. YOUTH AT RISK PROJECT START-UP LESSONS

VI-Cl. Develop a committee ofpartners-An oversight committee representing key program partnerships is helpful to deal with the numerous start-up (and operations) issues. This committee needs to meet monthly during the start-up phase. Many start-up problems will be related to "turf' issues among partners.

VI-C2. *Define partners'* responsibilities-Responsibilities of each program partnership agency must be clearly defined from the outset of the project, and there must be agreement among all partners on project goals and objectives. These issues will need to be clarified continuously throughout the program.

VI-C3. Conduct orientation and team building-The grantee agency needs to conduct orientation and team-building activities. An orientation manual for the partnership agencies is helpful. Team building, although most critical during program start-up, needs to be maintained throughout the life of the grant. The role of each

partner needs to be clearly defined at the beginning, and any role changes need to be made early in the grant cycle.

VI-C4. Develop job descriptions-staff job descriptions are an important management tool and should be developed before staff are hired. However, these descriptions often need to be rewritten to match the people who are actually hired.

VI-C5. Address confidentiality issues--Confidentiality issues among partnership agencies can be expected when working with youth. Agencies may not be willing to release information considered to be confidential because of the minor status of the client. A memorandum of agreement or understanding should be written for each agency to ensure that information needed to provide program services and to evaluate the program will be transmitted between agencies. An increasingly complex confidentiality issue concerns child support payments. Although the birth rate in the United States has steadily declined over the past two decades, the proportion of out-of-wedlock births has risen. Accompanying this latter trend has been the problem of absentee fathers and non-payment of child support. The difficulty that arises for government sponsored employment and job training programs is that potential participants who are delinquent in their child support payments may be reluctant to enter the program for fear of being identified to the court system. Young males who have child support obligations are also most likely to be in need of employment training assistance. The program must develop partnerships and policies which support recruitment of young absentee fathers and encourage them to pay support within their means.

VI - D. YOUTH AT RISK PROJECT OPERATIONS LESSONS

VZ-Dl. Recruitpatient, persistent case managers-Due to the multiple risk factors faced by youth in these programs, case managers need to be patient and persistent. Problems that youth bring to these programs are long-standing and cannot be resolved easily. Caseloads need to be low enough to allow case managers to give individual attention to each youth. Case managers need to be proactive by getting to know each youth's needs, monitoring his or her progress, and advocating on his or her behalf. In addition, youth need to see that his or her case manager is personally interested in them, cares about their welfare, and is concerned about their progress in the program. Because of past unhealthy relationships with adults, it often takes time for these youth to develop trust in the case manager. Case managers can expect an initial period of boundary testing by the youth.

VZ-D2. Develop a shared understanding of the project-These projects often involve staff from varied professional backgrounds who are employed by different

organizations. All program staff need to share an overall picture of the program so that each person understands how his or her work fits into the total program; otherwise, participant needs will go unmet because of a lack of coordination between program components. Joint planning, staff meetings and workshops are effective methods to achieve a shared perspective of the project.

VI-D3. ***Support and monitor outstationed*** staff-Outstationed staff (staff of one agency located at another agency such as school-based case managers) contend with many control issues. These individuals must be mature, responsible, knowledgeable, and have good communication skills. They represent the project and must work effectively without imposition by the host agency and its staff. Clearly defined roles help protect outstationed staff from being absorbed by the host agency.

VI-D4. Mainstream at-riskyouth-When possible, programs should try to integrate the at-risk youth with other youth. This helps neutralize negative images of program services, pulls youth into the program, and allows at-risk youth to learn from the other youth.

VI-D5. Involve families-Programs serving youth should involve the parents and families of clients. Working with youth in isolation is not effective. Programs should build on family strengths whenever possible.

VI-D6. Develop links with child protective services*—*Programs serving youth should maintain an established linkage with child protective services. Protective service workers are often overloaded and focus their efforts on younger children. Programs serving teens often need to advocate for them to get needed protective services.

VI-D% Make emergency funds available--These programs often have to provide youth with things such as emergency transportation, clothing, and food. Program budgets should include resources for these emergencies.

VI-D8. Develop win-win referral arrangements-Programs designed to provide integrated (horizontal) services among partnership agencies need to guard against individual agencies competing for clients and developing a vertical service structure in which there is service duplication. Cross-referringclients among agencies may be perceived as a threat because of the possibility of client and revenue loss. Trust building among partnership agencies takes time and is a continuous task throughout the life of the program.

VI - E.   YOUTH AT RISK EVALUATION LESSONS

VI-E1. Involve the evaluator-The evaluator needs to be involved in the program from the planning stage through the completion of the project. The evaluator should be a member of the project's oversight committee. As a neutral person, the evaluator can help keep the committee focused and work to keep the project on track. Also, the evaluator may be a resource for project management technical assistance.

VI-E2. Evaluate information systems—The information systems of partnership agencies must be assessed when developing the evaluation plan to determine if they can actually provide evaluation data. Agencies without integrated information systems may have difficulty providing both services and outcome data.

VZ-E.?. Znvolveyouth in the evaluation-when developingthe evaluation plan, youth can help define indicators of progress and success. They can also help the evaluator develop data collection instruments for youth to complete. Youth can also be trained and paid to conduct intake and follow-up interviews. This provides the youth with work experience and income and involves the youth more fully in the program.

VI-E4. Develop common understanding about interventions-There must be agreement among partner agencies on the operational definitions of program interventions and outcomes so that the responsible partners will provide the necessary evaluation data. Responsibilities for data collection and transmission should be specified in a memorandum of agreement or understandingwith each partner agency.

VI-E5.   Consider a comparison group design-A matched pairs study design is problematic for youth at risk programs. These programs usually do not have a sufficiently large population of potential comparison subjects to obtain satisfactory comparison matches. Also, these programs often have high attrition rates that result in an unnecessary loss of study subjects when using matched pairs. A comparison group design is usually more appropriate for these programs.

Other designs that should be considered are repeated measures designs, which have the distinct advantage of allowing the analyst to use the experimental group as its own control. Repeated measure designs reduce the that social service staff may feel when they are not allowed to serve all individuals equally. The only caveat is that this kind of design is difficult to implement and requires considerable analytical skills. If it is to be used, planning should start early in the project, preferably at the project design phase.

VI-E6. *Take time to establish relationships with clients-At* the beginning of their program involvement, youth may be reluctant to provide information about themselves. Programs often need to establish a relationship with the youth before baseline evaluation data can be collected. This may be particularly true in those cases

where a young male has fathered a child and is reluctant to acknowledge it or where drug abuse is involved.

VI-E7.   ***Plan for tracking and follow-up***—Problems in obtaining follow-up data need to be anticipated. Tracking youth through the program is not easy. Often there are many program components, services, and provider agencies. Youth at risk are highly mobile. Once youth leave a school system, they are difficult to follow. Also, youth served by the program do not always agree to participate in the evaluation and may refuse to provide follow-up information. Sufficient resources need to be designated for tracking and follow-up activities.

VI - F.   LESSONS FROM SCHOOL - BASED PROGRAMS

VZ-Fl. Determine the need to address schoolpolicies-Some school policies work against youth at risk and are barriers to program goals. Programs should anticipate the need to work for changes in school policies and to advocate for exemptions for individual students.

VI-F2.   ***Enhance basic client*** skills-Youth in school-based programs often lack adequate educational skills to stay in school and find employment. At a minimum, remedial reading and math courses are needed by most program participants. Also, these students often need language skill development. Depending upon the geographic location and school district, English may be a second language for targeted youth.

VI-F3. Consider whether self-esteem curricula provide meaningful results— Although a self-esteem building curriculum is often part of these programs, this does not seem to be a critical component. There is little evaluation evidence that program outcomes are the result of improved self-esteem. A considerable body of existing research evidence suggests that self-esteem is a dependent variable and is not teachable. Barriers to self-esteem must be attacked obliquely rather than directly. Program resources may be better spent on strengthening case management and supportive services. Nevertheless, it may be useful to measure self-esteem at the start and end of the program to see if the program had an impact on self-esteem and if changes in self-esteem correlate with progress to self-sufficiency. There are indications that low self-esteem is associated with mental health problems and reduce individual capacity to resist involvement with drugs, alcohol and teenage pregnancy.

VI-F4.   ***Consider a counseling-based classroom model-A*** counseling classroom model seems more effective than the traditional instructional model. In a counseling classroom model, case managers take an active role in the classroom and may even

teach or co-teach courses. Case managers communicate on a daily basis with each student's teachers to monitor the progress of the student and to intervene as soon as possible when problems arise.

VI-F5. Make home visits available-Home visits are an important program component. These visits provide parents with a link to the school. One project found this to be especially true for Hispanic families.

VI-F6. Consider the high school diploma as compared to the GED-Although many youth desire a GED and perceive it as an educational shortcut, a high school diploma or equivalency diploma provides more opportunities for employment. A GED is not accepted by some employers and branches of the military. Programs should be structured to encourage youth to obtain a diploma. A GED program is a viable program component but needs to be linked to specific employment options.

VI-F7. Offer a benefit to the school—Schools often need the social support services that Community Action Agencies can provide (e.g., social work services, family planning), and these services can be an incentive to maintain school participation in programs for targeted youth.

VI - G.   LESSONS FROM TEEN PARENT PROGRAMS

VI-G1. Offer a wide range of services-Programs serving pregnant teens face unique challenges. To be effective, these programs must provide or arrange for a wide spectrum of services. All program participants should receive prenatal care to minimize infant morbidity and reduce the number of low birth weight babies. Teen mothers who have unhealthy infants are usually unable to participate fully in the program. Few teenage mothers or fathers have strong parenting skills. Programs that work with teen parents must develop and implement effective "courses" in parenting that assist new parents to understand the physical and emotional needs of their newborns. Because teen mothers have often been the victims of physical and sexual abuse and violence, they may exhibit symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and may need supportive services and counseling. Many of these young women lack basic life skills, such as housekeeping and money management. They need help in these areas, especially if they are living independently from family or relatives. Affordable, safe, and secure housing is needed by some of these teens if they are to remain in an educational or employment training program. A formal program linkage with the local housing authority is helpful in addressing the housing needs of older program participants. Also, youth served by these programs often have emergency financial needs such as housing, food, utilities, transportation, textbooks, tuition, child care, diapers, baby formula, and household items.

VI-G2.   Understand unconventional teen values-For some teens, being pregnant is highly desirable. It may be a safe time for them when they do not have to worry about violence and being assaulted. Boyfriends and family may be more protective than usual and may give the teen additional attention. Becoming pregnant also makes the teen eligible for medical care, welfare support, Food Stamps, and other desired services. Also, pregnancy may be perceived as a step toward emancipation and out of a violent family situation. Becoming a mother may be a rite of passage between child and adult status within the youth's community. Alternatives offered to these teens must be powerful.

VI-G3. Address retention issues-Retaining teen parents in these programs is difficult. These youth require highly individualized assistance. Intensive contact in both the home and school seems to help maintain teen parents in the program. Child care is a major service need if these youth are to remain in school and employment training. Usually, these youth continue to be sexually active. Additional pregnancies almost always result in dropping out of the program, so family planning services must be provided to help retain these young women. The use of rewards seems important to teen parents and encourages their participation and retention in the program. Ceremonies and celebrations that involve both mother and child, as well as gifts of baby items, are effective incentives.

VI-G4.   *Offer intensive case management-A* critical program component that contributes to participant progress is intensive case management. One of the most important aspects of these programs is the one-to-one relationship between the case manager and the young woman. Case managers must be proactive in establishing a close relationship with the client so that needs can be identified as they occur. Small caseloads are necessary. Biweekly or monthly meetings of program case managers and representatives from partnership agencies help ensure that teen parents get services necessary to retain them in the program.

VI-G5. Address the involvementofteenfathers-Although the relationship between teen mothers and the fathers of their children may not be strong or long lasting, it is important to include the teen fathers in these programs. The involvement of the father can provide emotional and social support to the teen mother, nurture bonding between the father and child, contribute to improved parenting, and result in the financial support of the child by the father.

VI-G6. Plan for appropriate time frames-There may be an optimal length of **project participation of 12 to 18 months of intensive case management, followed by** 6 to 12 months of maintenance and problem solving. During the first 6 months of programparticipation,enrollment in educational programs is the highest, employment

levels increase the most between 6 and 12 months, and use of birth control is highest and pregnancy rates are lowest during the first 12 months.

VI-H. LESSONS FROM EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PROGRAMS

VI-HI. Understandthe specifics of the local job market-Youth should be trained for specific career options for which jobs are readily available, not for general employment. Programs need to assess the employment marketplace to determine which jobs have real potential within the local economy, and train program participants for them.   Youth who are trained for general employment will have higher attrition rates and will experience poorer employment outcomes than youth trained for specific career options.   The latter point is particularly important. Traditional job training programs have not been particularly successful in improving life cycle earnings of participants. There appear to be three reasons for this outcome: (1) many of the programs are too short, general anddiffuse to impact significantly on the economic behavior of the participants; (2) many of the programs were designed from a national economic perspective rather than a local perspective leading to mismatches between newly acquired skills and local labor market conditions; and, (3) few programs focused on the development of a career perspective. DPP programs that have adopted a careerprespective have tended to be more successful in recruiting retaining and placing their teenage participants than more traditional programs.

VI-H2. Address appropriate workplace behavior-Targeted youth usually need to be trained in work ethics (e.g., showing up for work on time, not leaving work early, not having friends visit them on the job, using sick leave appropriately). This training should be part of the pre-employment training, and the ethics need to be reinforced after youth have been placed in work experience or on-the-job training positions. Youth need to be informed of exactly what is expected of them in the workplace in terms of dress, attitudes, and behavior.

VZ-H3. Offer a "try-out work" option---"Try-out work" experiences allow program participants to find out if they are suited for certain types of employment. Try-out work also gives youth work experience that they can list on future job applications.

VI-H4.   Plan for follow-up-Individualized assistance by case managers and workplace visits help keep youth in these training programs.

VI-H5. Consider building socialsupports-Youth often need social support to help motivate them to stay in their program. Mentors, either at work or in the community, are one way of providing this support.   Support groups composed of other program youth are another way of providing support and motivation.

VI-H6. Plan for transition services—Within months after completing their training, many youth will experience a setback in their progress toward self-sufficiency. After about six months, the number of hours worked, wages, and annual incomes will likely decrease; also, the reliance on public assistance as a main source of financial support may increase. Program graduates need continued case management and other transition services to help overcome these setbacks. Continued case management may need to be provided for a year or more after program completion. Programs need to budget for transition services, even if it means serving fewer clients.

VI-I. LESSONS FROM HOMELESS YOUTH PROGRAMS

VI-I1. Develop a realistic understanding of homeless youth motivations--Youth targeted by these programs face severe barriers to self-sufficiency. They are often disconnected from normal social structures, and outreach services are necessary to bring youth into these programs. Because these youth often have no support structures (family, relatives, friends) to rely on, a program must anticipate a period of providing for very basic living needs before the youth can even begin to participate in other program services or training curricula. Many targeted youth may not want to get off the streets and will decide not to participate in the program.

VI-I2. Prepare to meet overwhelming needs-Homeless youth often have a history of drug use, prostitution, and criminal behavior. In addition, they are often targets for adult exploitation. They need assessments for AOD use, sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis, and HIV infection, as well as appropriate treatment and counseling services. They may also need access to legal aid services. Compounding all of this is the fact that many of these youth have been victims of neglect, physical and sexual abuse, and family violence. They may exhibit PTSD symptoms and may need supportive services and counseling. Confidentiality protection is a major issue for homeless youth. Often, these youth do not want information about them given to other providers. It is difficult to get these youth to agree to information sharing between partnership agencies.

VI-13. *Prepare for difficulty in transition of* norms-Behaviors that kept youth alive on the street no longer work after they have been in the program for a while. Many will go through an in-between period of not knowing who they are. Consistency of program staff during this transition time appears to be very important if the project is not going to lose participants. Conversely, staff turnover in these programs directly results in program dropouts.

VI-I4. Prepare for the difficulty of locating transitional housing—Getting homeless youth into transitional housing takes time. They may need to stay in a shelter for

several months before they can qualify for transitional housing. These youth often will not stay in group or foster care homes. Housing placement services should try to avoid placing these youth in such homes.

VI-IS.   Offer basic life skills training or counseling-Homeless youth often lack basic life skills, such as housekeeping and money management, and need help in these areas if they are expected to achieve independent living.

VI-16. ***Prepare for difficulty in locating appropriate permanent housing*—*** Homeless youth need access to affordable apartments located close to bus routes. Apartment owners/managers will have negative perceptions of "street kids" and may not be willing to rent to program participants. Destructive behavior by some youth will result in apartments owners/managers deciding not to rent to program participants. Programs need to work with youth to avoid or minimize the destruction of property and with property owners to change their attitudes toward homelessyouth.

VI-J.   CONCLUSIONS

Self-sufficiency projects targeting youth at risk have varied considerably in their design and the sub-populationserved. Although a large number of lessons have been learned from these demonstrations, it is difficult to draw general conclusions that cut across programs because of the diversity in designs. Also, there have been few efforts to replicate any of the programs.

As noted earlier, these programs tend to be complicated and challenging to implement and operate. These programs usually involve numerous services and many partnerships with local agencies. Despite their complexity, these programs appear to have four core service components: case management, support services, educational services, and employment training. Given the complexity of services, program evaluations have yet to determine the efficacy of individual service components. It is currently assumed that each component contributes to positive outcomes. There is a need to test the efficacy of core components as well as secondary service components such as self-esteem building curricula, life skills training, parenting curricula, mentoring services, and sexuality and relationship curricula.

These programs have been designed by adults based upon their assumptions about the needs and behavior of youth. However, program staff report that adult assumptions about youth are often incorrect. There was general consensus among the cluster meeting panelists that in order for programs to be successful, program planners and managers must be responsive to how youth define their needs and future goals. Youth should be involved in the design and the oversight of a program's to help ensure the program is relevant to their needs.

The panelists also emphasized the need to structure programs to capitalize on the strengths of youth. Most of the programs have been designed to provide services that address *riskfactors,* such as incomplete education, inadequate employment skills, and early parenthood. Youth bring to these programs many *resiliency* factors that can be nurtured and built upon. Targeted youth are often highly motivated and creative; they desire social involvement and have dreams and aspirations for the future. Program planners and managers should view these resiliency factors as resources that can be used to help youth complete their education, obtain employment training, become good parents, and make contributions to society.

VII. Homeless Project lessons learned

VII-A. INTRODUCTION AND LOGIC MODEL

VII-Al. Introduction-The causes of homelessness and the characteristcs of the homeless population have changed a great deal in the last decade, and therefore the projects created to assist the homeless have had to change to serve those in need in an appropriate way. These changes are multidimensional and include the following factors:

- Increased levels of dysfunction among homeless populations-social, economic, physical, and emotional

- Increased incidence of substance abuse

- The disintegration of community and family institutions and the resulting lack of a stable environment for those least able to cope with instability

- New barriers to employment caused by too few well-payingjobs, too many marginal jobs, and a work force often unprepared for today's job market

- A growing lack of affordable housing to meet the needs of large numbers of Americans

These factors are all parts of the mosaic which constitutes the picture of homelessness. While these parts are interconnected, problems must often be separated and addressed one at a time if they are to be solved. Projects promoting self-sufficiency for the homeless have introduced a broad array of services, and the lessons learned while conducting DPP projects have been both positive and negative, instructing staff in what does not work as well as what does work. Both positive and negative lessons are important in determining how scarce resources can be used most effectively. By studying and evaluating previous DPP projects, we can avoid less successful practices and replicate the most effective ones. The lessons presented here come from a review and discussion of final evaluation report summaries and first-hand observations of DPP homeless projects. The projects reviewed took place in diverse geographical locations. Representatives from two DPP homeless projects

attended a 2-day cluster group meeting and provided additional insights into homeless programs. A multi-component service (MCS) model for homeless programs is presented, followed by lessons learned in four areas: project design, start-up, operations, and evaluation. The model is a conscious attempt to distinguish the components that are actually effective from the larger universe of what has been tried. Continuous program evaluation and policy analysis followed by systematic information dissemination and information sharing among Community Action Agencies (CAAs) and other service providers needs to be undertaken.

VII-A2. *Homeless MCS logic* mode&--The lessons learned from the DPP homeless projects should be examined in the context of the accompanying MCS model (shown as Exhibit VII-l) for homeless programs. The model itself assumes that homeless individuals are among the most destitute in American society. By the time one becomes homeless, housing is only one of many problems to be addressed. These often include:

- Behavioral and physiological problems related to substance abuse or mental illness

- An unstable environment typified by a lack of social structure

- Abandonment of, or by, one's family and community

- Exposure to violence and other forms of abuse

- A lack of adequate and regular employment

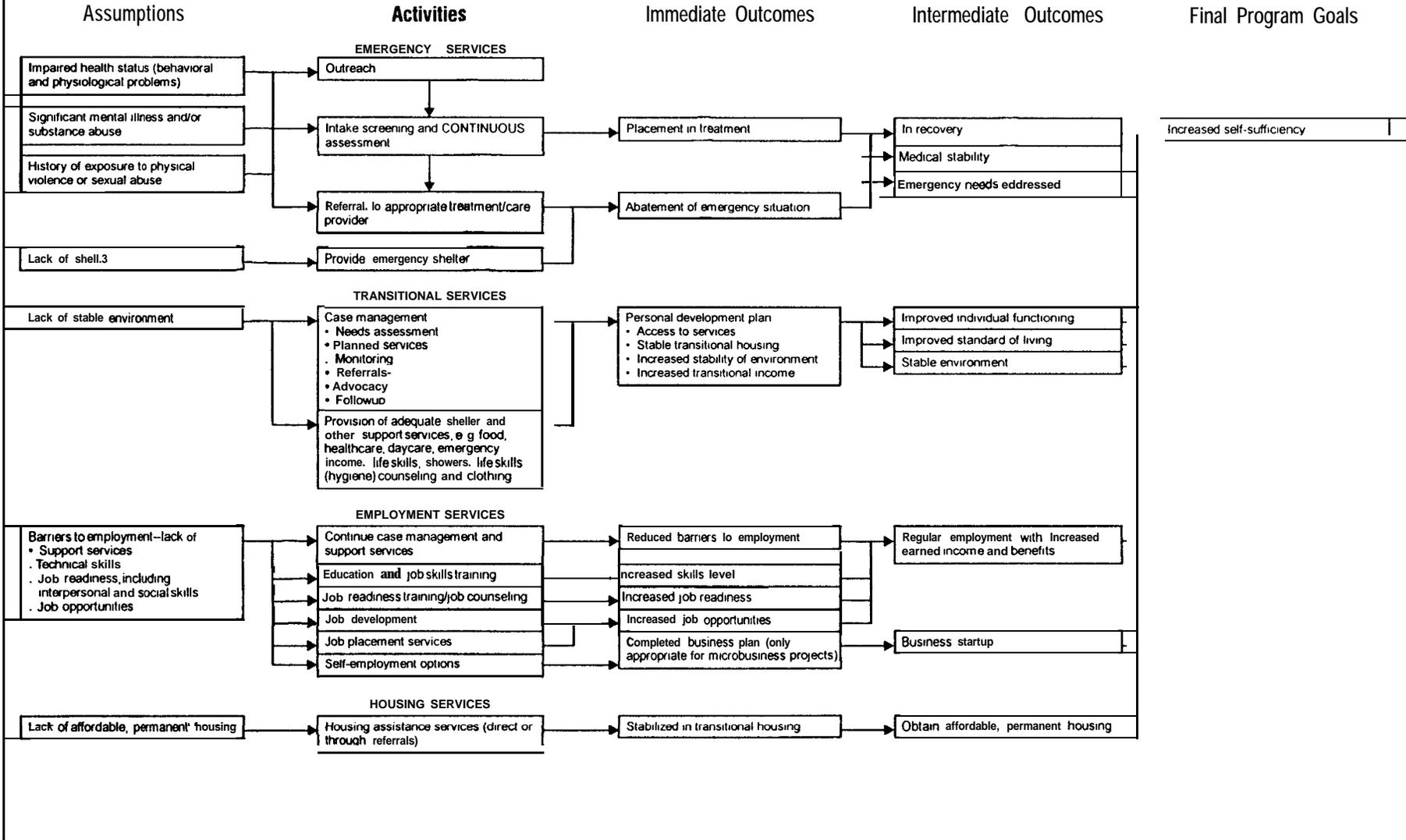- A lack of affordable and permanent housing

The MCS model that follows suggests that the problems of homeless people may best be addressed in the order described above. The purpose of the model is to provide CAAs and other community agencies with a structured way to examine the problems of homeless people and to devise cogent program strategies for assisting them. The authors realize that the actual projects, based on local circumstances, are often different and more complex. However, we hope that the MCS model will assist CAAs and other community agencies to examine the causes of homelessness and to develop effective strategies for addressing those causes.

VII-B. HOMELESS PROJECT DESIGN LESSONS

VII-B1. *Focusproject* objectives-Project goals and objectives need to be specific, clear, attainable, and quantifiable. This ensures that project resources-such as

Exhibit VII-I
LOGIC MODEL
Homeless Program

Assumptions	Activities	Immediate Outcomes	Intermediate Outcomes	Final Program Goals
	EMERGENCY SERVICES			
Impaired health status (behavioral and physiological problems)	Outreach			
Significant mental illness and/or substance abuse	Intake screening and CONTINUOUS assessment	Placement in treatment	In recovery	Increased self-sufficiency
History of exposure to physical violence or sexual abuse			Medical stability	
	Referral. to appropriate treatment/care provider	Abatement of emergency situation	Emergency needs eddressed	
Lack of shell.3	Provide emergency shelter			
	TRANSITIONAL SERVICES			
Lack of stable environment	Case management • Needs assessment • Planned services . Monitoring • Referrals- • Advocacy • Followup	Personal development plan • Access to services • Stable transitional housing • Increased stability of environment • Increased transitional income	Improved individual functioning Improved standard of living Stable environment	
	Provision of adequate shelter and other support services. e g food, healthcare, daycare, emergency income. life skills, showers. life skills (hygiene) counseling and clothing			
	EMPLOYMENT SERVICES			
Barriers to employment--lack of • Support services . Technical skills . Job readiness, including interpersonal and social skills . Job opportunities	Continue case management and support services	Reduced barriers to employment	Regular employment with Increased earned income and benefits	
	Education and job skills training	Increased skills level		
	Job readiness training/job counseling	Increased job readiness		
	Job development	Increased job opportunities		
	Job placement services	Completed business plan (only appropriate for microbusiness projects)	Business startup	
	Self-employment options			
	HOUSING SERVICES			
Lack of affordable, permanent housing	Housing assistance services (direct or through referrals)	Stabilized in transitional housing	Obtain affordable, permanent housing	

staffing, facilities, and partnerships-arecommensuratewith the goals and objectives. The range of problems among the homeless is too diverse for one project to address. An example of useful specialization is a project which targets only men, since resources might not be sufficient to provide day care (which is more likely to be necessary when women are included in the target group).

VII-B2. ***Conduct preliminary and ongoing client screening and assessment—*** Preliminary client screening and assessment is crucial if the appropriate services are to be prescribed, and they should be an ongoing feature of the project. Standardized and well-tested client assessment tools should be used. The project design must also be periodically reviewed to ensure that the project is continuing to offer services that meet the changing needs of the target community. Proper screening and assessment ensures that appropriate services are provided and improves the cost-effectiveness of the overall program..

Screening must be linked to project objectives. When it is determined that clients will not benefit from the program, alternative services such as referrals should be provided. For example, severe substance abuse or mental illness will render some homeless people ineligible to participate in a program until that condition is brought under control.

*VZI-B3. **Involve sponsoring agencies as partners in project design and implementation—**Strong partnerships among* community service agencies sponsoring the project should be established. This broad partnership structure will enable a homeless project to draw from the strengths and expertise of each partner agency involved and bolster the services provided. The roles of each partner should be clearly defined, with the lead agency ensuring that each partner has the appropriate training. The lead agency must also be willing to terminate a partner relationship if it is not working. It is particularly important that homeless projects include partners that have the capacity to locate housing for the homeless and low-income individuals

*VII-B4. **Plan to provide maintenance services as well as other developmental activities such as education or employment-Projects*** may refer clients to other service agencies or provide basic services in-house; however, it cannot be forgotten that the multiple problems of the homeless make basic support essential for stabilization. Highly successful programs typically provide intense case management for clients.

VII-C. HOMELESS PROJECT START-UP LESSONS

*VII-U. **Secure external resources in advance of operations-Agreements,*** financing, volunteers, etc., should be put in place upon notification of the grant award

to ensure a timely beginning. A strong working relationship should exist between the CAA and the funding agency so that channels of communication remain open and problems are solved quickly. Contracts should be clear, well-defined, and understood by all parties. There should be adequate flexibility to amend contracts to incorporate changes generated by start-up lessons. Current DPP grants assume a 6-month start-up period. The arrangements suggested here should be put in place during that period. However, programs that do not fall under the DPP grant procedures may find that they have to start working on these issues in advance of receiving their grant or other funds.

VII-C2. Secure internal resources in advance of operations--Staff recruitment, orientation, and training must occur before operations begin. It is imperative that staff be competent and qualified. Dealing with the problems of the homeless requires far more than just administrative skills. Sufficient time and resources need to be devoted to staff training and team building. Therefore, resources should always be set aside in the budget for staff training and development.

VII-C3. Plan and budget for required resources when project goals are set—Many issues in project resource planning are not obvious until start-up. The importance of referrals, transportation, day care, site location, and hygiene facilities are examples of factors that many agencies initially tended to overlook in the design of their projects.

VII-D. HOMELESS PROJECT OPERATIONS LESSONS

VII-D1. Conduct effective individual and community outreach-The people who are most likely to benefit from participation in the project must be reached. An appropriate communication channel should be employed.   Public service announcements on radio or television are not likely to be heard or seen by the homeless. One effective strategy is to use word-of-mouth among the homeless; another is to make presentations and distribute flyers at shelters; a third is to carry out street outreach.

The project should broaden community understanding. To foster a cooperative environment, the community must be made aware of the project goals, of how meeting these goals will affect the public, and of how they can contribute. The topic of promoting community participation has not been well developed and deserves concentrated attention.

VII-D2. Maintain frequent in-depth contact between staff (including volunteers) and clients, and between the community and Clients-These contacts can help to increase the client's social and emotional stability. For the client, contact with others

is a prerequisite for re-entry into mainstream society. There is a collateral benefit in that positive community involvement with the project and with the clients greatly enhances the environment surrounding the project.

VII-D3. ***Maintain frequent in-depth contact with partners-Contact*** with partners will serve to establish smooth working relationships and allay any misgivings among providers. Frequent contact also builds rapport and program investment which benefits this activity and future projects. The quality of services provided to the clients will improve if communication among partners is regular.

VII-D4. ***Plan for flexible program implementation--Projects*** for the homeless should maintain a flexible administrative and program structure. The circumstances contributing to and surrounding homelessness can change quickly in any given community. Projects, therefore, must respond quickly to demographic, geographic, and political forces.

VII-D5. Make job development and placement assistance the focal point of every employmentprogram-There is little difference in the level of self-sufficiency of an unemployed person who is skilled, and one who is unskilled. If a job cannot be provided or guaranteed at the end of a training program, the likelihood for employment should, at least, be great. Employer recruitment and job development may be as important a service, or for some projects a ***more*** important direct service, than job readiness or skill training.

VII-D6. ***Review the project design periodically-The*** project design should be continuously tested and refined to ensure that project goals are always in sight. Evaluation reports may indicate that a reconfiguration and adjustment of the project is required. Therefore, it is important and cost-effective to make adjustments as early as possible. Design flaws will not go away if they are ignored; they get worse, not better.

VII-E. HOMELESS PROJECT EVALUATION LESSONS

VII-El. The evaluationplan and data collection system should be establishedprior to operation-Evaluation should begin on the first day and continue throughout the project's duration. Evaluation reports should be made at specified intervals in order to monitor progress. Information garnered from evaluation reports should be accessible and relevant to making adjustments in project plans. Training sessions should be held on developing file structures and/or data input forms, etc.

Selection of the evaluator is critical. The Evaluators should have the training, technical competence, substantive knowledge, and experience necessary to perform this important function.

VII-E2. Unintended consequences can be significant-Consideration should be given to the positive and negative outcomes of the project that fall outside of its objectives. Strengthened community partnerships, opportunities for new alliances, improved CAA responsiveness, and impact upon the morale or views of other CAA staff were often reported as positive, unintended results of a successful homeless project.

VII-E3. Extensive follow-up is needed to ensure successful replication— Examination of the program must extend well beyond the program termination date. The needs of clients and the gains made by them go beyond immediate program participation. Extended case management is desirable. Case managers should assume more responsibility for tracking clients.

VII-E4. ***The evaluation should not drive the program-4*** is important to attempt to maintain the integrity of the project (e.g., well-targeted hypotheses and well-timed interventions)and to avoid modifying the project merely to pursue a different research interest or a different set of goals and objectives which are of concern to the evaluator. Lastly, the evaluation should be designed and performed in a manner that is effective in supporting management decision-making and project evolution.

VII-F. CONCLUSION

Finally, a note about perhaps the most essential ingredient for a successful program. The staff, from bottom to top, must:

> Be committed to the organization

> Be dedicated to the program goals and objectives

> Possess the skills and flexibility necessary to provide the appropriate services
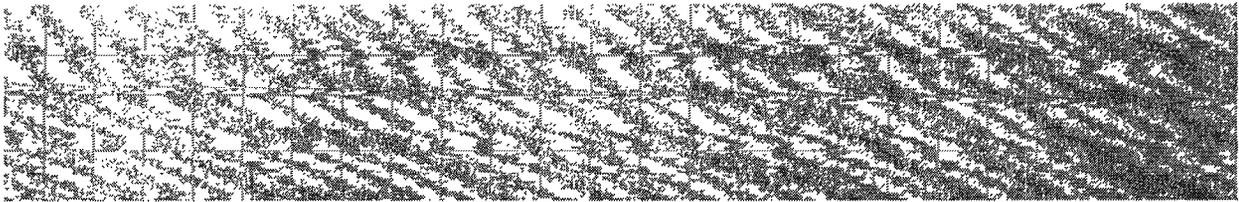
VIII. Overall Conclusions

VIII-A. INTRODUCTION

The experiences of 8 years of Demonstration Partnership Program (DPP) projects amply document the fact that these are complex projects, often with multiple activities occurring simultaneously. The tips and recommendations in this report are offered to help new projects get off the ground more smoothly. This chapter pulls together some of the major overall themes from this report into generic strategies for self-sufficiency project development and delivery.

These "lessons" are drawn primarily from the experiences of DPP Project Directors, not necessarily from their empirical data collection and analyses. It is important for users to keep in mind that not all these ideas are fully tested in multiple projects. The applicability of specific "lessons" may vary within the diversity of strategies being employed under this umbrella program. Additional evidence, including examples where these suggestions did not work, are invited and will be added to future editions of this Manual on project implementation.

VIII-Al. Each localproject is unique but will address common problems - Since DPP is a demonstration program, it is expected that the project components and assumptions will differ among sites in order to try out a diversity of strategies for attaining participant self-sufficiency. Further, the environments **from** which participants are recruited and which influence day-to-day project delivery will have a unique combination of physical, political, economic, and social structural elements that will affect the project. Project Directors should assume that unexpected developments will challenge their initial assumptions and their planned delivery strategies.

Nevertheless, the types of problems that each project will face are likely to be similar to problems in other localities. There were enough commonalities among the prior DPP projects for this report to indicate that many problems affecting self-sufficiency project implementation can be anticipated. If anticipated, they can be, planned for. If planned for, severe disruptive consequences might be avoided. As one experienced Project Director expressed her approach to problem solving, "It is

important to identify and treat those little hatchlings before they grow into big 'gators! '"

*VIII-A2. **Learn from prior projects and other*** sources-Self-sufficiency Project Directors and staff members face complicated situations, but they are not alone in solving them. A key aspect of starting up a new project is to allow time to:

- ▨ Learn about and from prior DPP projects (from this report and from the series of final evaluation reports issued by the DHHS Office of Community Services) and in meetings and other contacts with experienced DPP Directors. Project Directors are generally very enthusiastic about the program and are very willing to share their experiences-it is different from "service-as-usual"and provides clients with a hand up not a hand out.

- ▨ Learn from other types of literature and other sources about developing and implementing complex projects in community contexts.

- ▨ Learn from your own project experiences, by being alert to feedback from clients, partners, and staff and by ongoing use of data about your program delivery and results.

Frequently, start-up assumptions are revised as Project Directors learn what to expect in their self-sufficiency project in their community.

VIII-A3. Self-sufjciencyproject management involves multiple interactingstreams of actions-Project implementation in the current political and economic environment has been likened to launching a boat into the middle of a fast moving river which contains many rapids, rocks, and other moving objects. You can't stop the flow of the current. You must navigate the river so your project stays afloat and doesn't crash on any one obstacle. You need to interact smoothly with other boats (other projects in your environment) so that competing for the right of way doesn't create an impassable bottleneck.

Focus on Clients, Partner Relationships, Staff Support

This document has identified lessons learned concerning several of these interacting parts of a self-sufficiency project. A key focus must always be on the participating *clients* to ensure that the project elements are appropriate for their needs, status, and stage of development toward self-sufficiency. At the same time, *relationships with partners* require particular attention in order to establish and maintain good operational communications and coordinated actions. The projects' own *staff members are* a crucial ingredient to success; their selection, professional development, and internal communications cannot be neglected. Further, *project management systems* must be in place to attend to appropriate financial management, requirements

for space, supplies, and other resources, and to oversee operations within the standard regulations and procedures of the responsible agency. Other characteristics of the community's political, economic, and social *environments* are likely to impinge on the self-sufficiency project and should be monitored and, sometimes, maneuvered. Finally, the ongoing requirement for *program evaluation* means that data must be collected, managed, analyzed, and interpreted to provide feedback to the project itself This is particularly important in demonstration projects where evaluation data provides accountability to funding sources and their audiences.

The Project Director Should Have Multiple Skills

Managing this range of project components simultaneously means that the Director of a DPP project should have multiple skills. These include familiarity with the program components being developed and delivered, political skills to work with partners and other 'agencies, "people" skills to inspire and develop staff, an understanding of the data involved in program evaluation and feedback, and sufficient expertise to manage budgets and resources. Lots of patience and good humor help too!

VIII-A4. *Focus on stages of project development-One* approach to managing the complexity associated with self-sufficiency projects is to think and operate in terms of overall project stages. Not everything can be done at once. The prior chapters, which focus on the various types of DPP projects, are organized into the major project stages: design, start-up, operations, and evaluation. Past projects have learned that it takes substantial time to start up a self-sufficiency project and that enough time should be allowed for these start-up activities so that initial work with clients can be meaningful from the beginning. Furthermore, during initial and full-scale project operations, new circumstances may come to the fore that were not anticipated. For short-termprojects, another stage comes toward the end of sponsor funding, requiring attention to project continuation, close-down, or institutionalization. This document does not address these later stages, as the self-sufficiencyprojects whose experiences were the sources for this Manual were just arriving at this stage in their evolution. While program evaluation is not itself a project "stage," since it should continue through the project, major lessons learned revolve around this research-oriented aspect of self-sufficiency projects.

Additional overall conclusions are presented here for each stage of a project's development.

VIII-B. OVERALL STRATEGIES BY STAGE OF PROJECT

VIII-B1. Project design and start-up—The developmental period before starting to work with clients might consume as much as the first 6 months of the project, although some of these activities may have been completed during the proposal development period. A key activity at this stage is the technique of *logic modeling* to review the assumptions underlying the project plans and to link assumptions with activities, intermediate and longer-term outcomes. This iterative process helps to connect project tasks with their underlying rationale and with the plans for evaluation Working through the logic of the project as a whole also helps staff members to understand the nature of the clients' problems in attaining self-sufficiency and builds a team approach to developing the project.

Examination of the various types of DPP project models-whether case management, micro-enterprise, youth at risk, minority male, or homeless projects-reveals the likelihood of *multiple sources and aspects of client problems.* Therefore multiple, interrelated project components are needed, with appropriate linkages among them. At the same time, projects need to be realistic in planning the diversity of their activities, so that the impact of DPP efforts is not diluted by trying to do too much with limited resources. The idea of empowering clients pervades DPP experience, with all types of models focused on gradually increasing participants' capabilities to direct their own lives toward self-sufficiency. Progressive empowerment is fostered by incorporating frequent and visible "markers" of progress, so the work of both clients and staff members is reinforced by indications of success. Thus, project plans should include sufficient time for clients and staff members to get to know each other, with the specific mix of activities offered to each client tailored to that person's "readiness to benefit."

Developing the project's *organizational underpinnings* should be a primary concern during the start-up period, including establishing the project within its organizational home, developing staffing plans, recruiting and hiring qualified staff members, obtaining appropriate space for the activities to be conducted, and setting up and learning financial management procedures. All of these activities take time for project leaders; yet, if these "bureaucratic" aspects are neglected in a rush to get underway with participant-focused activities, the lack of smooth organizational management is likely to create continual dysfunctions for the project. With the diversity of components in DPP projects, it is particularly important that staff members are recruited who have appropriate skills and prior experience (e.g., small business background for micro-enterprise development or interpersonal counseling experience for case management projects). Collectively, the staff should have the experience and diversity of backgrounds to build rapport with clients. The

developmental period is also an important time for staff members to get to know each others' perspectives in order to "gel" into a smoothly functioning project team.

The start-up period is also a key period in the development of *partnership understandings* and relationships, both formally and informally. Agreements made during the development of the application may need to be formalized within memoranda of understanding. The leaders of the partner organizations need to invest time to understand each others' cultures and operating procedures. When the partners have little prior experience in interacting with each other, assumptions about how to get things done may differ. All partners should be involved in developing the project's logic models and activities, so that agreement and shared understanding develops about the roles of each partner. Finally, other aspects of the project's *environment* may need attention during start-up. The rules and regulations that affect welfare recipients may conflict with project plans. For example, in some micro-enterprise projects, normal regulations limited the amount of assets allowed to welfare recipients which prevented them from obtaining a loan to start up their business. Obtaining a waiver of this regulation delayed the start-up time. Other aspects of the environment that should also be monitored during this period for their potential impact on the project include:

  * Physical environment-Is the location of project facilities reasonably safe and convenient for both clients and staff!

  * Political environment of competing groups or programs-What is the history of relationshipsamong potential groupings of clients (e.g., cultutral conflicts, power imbalances)? Do political leaders support the project and help it gain access to human and other resources?

  * Inter-organizationalenvironment of other agencies or programs that may be serving the same client group or working with the same partners-Can relationships be set up to encourage the efforts of different agencies to support each other rather than to compete?

  * Finally, *evaluation* cannot be neglected during the start-up period, as it is always necessary for proper project management and is increasingly required by funding sources. It is essential to include the evaluator in the development of the details of a logic model to begin good communications between people who often come to the project with different perspectives. Further, it is crucial that key outcomes be framed in measurable terms, a task where the evaluator should be a key player. Multiple project components usually require a multifaceted evaluation plan, so that appropriate data is collected to document client participation in specific activities and to measure project outcomes. Evaluation and project

management plans should include the time points at which data summaries will be available (such as in quarterly review meetings attended by all relevant partners and staff). Frequent feedback and review of data can be a vehicle for developing joint understanding of the meaning and implications of various types of data results.

VIII-B2. *Initial project operations—verifying the Logic* Model--During the first cycle or two of actual operations, project staff gain an on-the-ground test of the feasibility of their design assumptions Yet this "first time" experience may involve a long time frame (even more than a year), when the project's activities are oriented toward helping clients engage in a long-term process of change toward self-sufficiency or enterprise development. After the initial experience with project activities, including client recruitment, it is wise to revisit the logic model to see if its assumptions are verified. Are the client characteristics those assumed by project designers and appropriate for this project? For example, do clients interested in joining a micro-enterprise project have sufficient stability, motivation, and skills to be good candidates for this type of program? Do the activities provided lead to the immediate outcomes projected in the logic model? Further, does initial delivery suggest that additional components or services are needed? Even small things, such as job-training participants' need for alarm clocks can become major obstacles to program success. A step-by-step tracing of actual project activities may be needed in multiple component projects in order to determine whether project resources are being used as expected.

Test and Review Expectations-Yours and Your Clients'

During early program operations is a good time to review expectations about the recruitment of *clients and their characteristics.* Clients should be included in this process. Are recruitment mechanisms generating an appropriate flow of clients (i.e., clients who "match up" with this project's services)? When these clients participate, are they getting immediate positive benefits and successes, such as movement through a continuum of self-sufficiency, joining a new and positive peer group of people like themselves, increased self-respect, or beginning to earn money while training? Are there any disincentives for clients, such as loss of some types of benefits, being asked to give up their current peer group or "gang," or having to fit into a pre-set schedule of job training activities? Focusing on the diversity of clients' needs also leads to strong communications between staff members and participants, as both get to know each other as individuals.

The *organizational management* aspects of the project are likely to need additional attention, even during initial delivery. Building the staff structure for the project is key during this period—as they start activating the project's components, prior staff skills are chllenged, and the actual time needed for high quality activities

becomes apparent. Plans for staff-to-client ratios may need re-examination, particularly in intensive case management approaches. Initial delivery is also the period when agreements among partners get tested; established agreements may need renegotiating and further communication may be needed to work out operating details. Other requirements may come to the fore, such as procuring unusual supplies, hiring additional staff members in time, or keeping tabs on the expenditure of available finances.

Start Data Collection at the Beginning

Data collection for *evaluation* purposes should also start up with the beginning of client-oriented activities, at least to pilot test and "debug" data collection procedures. Most projects will have a system for tracking client characteristics and their activities which needs to become fully operational during this period. Measures of immediate, intermediate, and long-term outcomes are likely to require pilot testing or even basic measurement development. This is also the most useful period for formative evaluation techniques to provide feedback on how well the initial activities are working for clients or participants. A small evaluation investment in intensive, qualitative data collection, such as focus groups with clients or open-ended telephone interviews with partners, can provide valuable feedback about initial project delivery. By the end of the initial delivery period, all measuring tools should be in place so that data collection will be ongoing for the outcome evaluation.

VIII-B3. ***Ongoing operations-In*** an idealized vision, this is a period of "steady state" operations, during which the project is at its maximum of client participation and staff activity, within a well-defined conception of the program activities and intended outcomes. In reality, since the DPP projects are still demonstrations, even ongoing operations are likely to raise new challenges. These challenges may call for further modifications in the program components, although at some point the program ought to be held stable enough for meaningful outcomes to be tested by the evaluation design. With process and outcome data becoming fully available, this period may allow data-based verification of project assumptions. In this step, the status of the project's logic model can move from a planning document to a summary of project reality.

Be Flexible

Even in a period of ongoing operations, *clients* may present new needs, or clientele with a different mix of characteristics may present themselves. Outreach may need to be increased if recruitment for the later years of a project slows down. As clients gain capabilities and skills, the types of services they need through the DPP project may change, perhaps calling for new types of staff skills. Clients may progress more quickly or more slowly than anticipated through the intended sequence of activities, but attention to individual client needs is still vital. The project should be sure to

build in opportunities for recognizing participant accomplishments, so they continue to see concrete results for their efforts.

Nurture the Staff

New types of *staffing needs or problems* may come to the fore during ongoing delivery. As the excitement of developing a new and challenging project wears off, staff burnout may become a problem. This is particularly true if staff resources are stretched thin requiring staff to work extensive overtime, if clients' problems are not resolved by the DPP project, or if staff are not provided with the kinds of growth opportunities their clients are offered. Experience with both case management and micro-enterpriseprojects indicate that the use of volunteers as mentors or counselors may lead to problems over time. These projects found that volunteers require considerable continuing staff time for recruitment, training, and support. Relationships with partners may need more attention than anticipated as their capacities to contribute to the self-sufficiency project may be altered by changes in their finances, staffing, or political status. In short, "stability" is relative.

Learn the Evaluation Data

Evaluation becomes prominent during the period of ongoing operations, as data become available for monitoring and feedback. While the overall outcome results may not be known until the closing months of the project, interim data can provide comparisons between clients receiving a different mix of services, in different project locations, or between different staff members such as individual case managers. Both evaluators and Project Directors should collaborate in examining data results for a variety of subgroups in order to assess which types of clients or what mix of services lead to the best results. Such analyses can then lead to a new application for a revised or renewal project.

VIII-C. A FINAL SUMMING UP

By their nature, self-sufficiency programs are complex. They assist individuals and families who face multiple problems in their lives and who have few resources to overcome them. The necessity to treat problems at an individual level makes it difficult to develop programs that can serve everyone and be successful with all program participants. Programs that are successful have a rich array of procedures, resources and partnerships at their disposal. This manual has presented a set of ideal program models that combine the most successful elements of many Demonstration Partnership Programs. Over time, and with new information from many other projects, these experiences will deepen into new knowledge about how to make progress with participants who have nearly given up hope of achieving an

independent life. In turn, the results will lead to new questions about the specific mix of services and support structures that can be most effective and focus evaluation research on more targeted questions for improving the projects.

The DPP's program design of combining innovative strategies for achieving self-sufficiency with strong evaluation to know what works has generated increasing cycles of better projects and clearer understanding. This manual is a product of that process. Without the process and the remarkable commitment of the DPP projects to examine their own practices and procedures to assess their impact and to try new and innovative approaches, the development of this manual would not have been possible. The lessons that are contained in it were hard earned. They raise important challenges to the way that we have thought about service delivery to low-income individuals. Whether the lessons contained in this manual stand the test of time, are modified, or found wanting depends on whether programs take up the very difficult task of implementingthem and further evaluating them. In the long-run, we will be unable to address complex social problems if we do not support research programs of this kind and move forward to examine our assumptions and acts. The Community Action Agencies who participated in the DPP program have met the challenge of self-examination, flexibility, and innovation. The authors of this manual hope that others will use it to extend that challenge and continue the process.