



King County

**Task Force on Regional Human Services (TFRHS)
Regional Services to be Provided Through a Countywide Partnership**

**Basic Service Level Qualitative Analysis
8-6-04**

#5 Education And Job Skills to Lead an Independent Life		
REGIONAL SERVICES Recommended for a Countywide Partnership	OTHER REGIONAL SERVICES (primarily funded by state and federal governments)	LOCAL SERVICES (funded by local or municipal governments)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational Instruction for Out of School/At Risk Youth (GED preparation classes, tutoring and career education programs, (pre) employment training, work-based learning and internships) • Services for Learning Disabled • English-As-Second-Language (ESL) Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment assistance, including job skills training, placement, retention support and day labor, for persons with barriers to employment and persons with disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support services, including transportation, tuition assistance and life skills training • Literacy services for functionally illiterate • Vouchers for support services to help students stay in school

The Regional Policy Committee (RPC) Task 2 Report has been the structural basis for the work of the Task Force—the focus has been on the *Regional Services to be Provided through a Countywide Partnership* defined in the report. Throughout Task Force materials, reference to Regional or a Regional System is a reference to a countywide effort, not necessarily to King County government. Reference to a region (sometimes called sub-region) within King County (North, East, South, Seattle) is a reference to the geographic area and the people who live there, not necessarily to the jurisdiction(s) located there.

Educational Instruction for Out of School/At Risk Youth

Summary of research, best practices, promising practices

- In Texas, the Gulf Coast Training Center for serious juvenile offenders makes education and career preparation the cornerstone of its treatment and rehabilitation philosophy. It provides academic and vocational training, work experience, counseling and aftercare. Participants spend 2 hours every day working on basic academic skills or studying for the GED; in addition there are nine vocational programs, each with a customized workshop, and a 915 hour vocational curriculum (e.g., building trades, automotive technology). In each vocational track, participants must demonstrate mastery of several dozen competencies in order to earn a vocational certificate, which is achieved by 80-90% of the youth. Real-world work experience includes participation in the YouthBuild program, Gulf Coast’s HUD sponsored new housing construction effort. The agency provides extensive aftercare support including job search and placement assistance. According to the Texas Youth Commission, only 15.7% of youth who graduated from Gulf Coast in the years 1995-1999 were incarcerated within

one year of release, compared to 37.6% of youth released from other moderate security facilities during the same period. Roughly 60% of graduates complete their GEDs and 60% find employment in their chosen occupational field.ⁱ

- Gulf Coast is one of the sites mentioned in an overview of promising approaches in workforce and youth development. Among 15 exemplary programs these commonalities were identified: commitment to rehabilitation; continuum of care; integrated education; collaboration; support structures; accountability; outcome measurement; and policy initiatives.ⁱⁱ
- A youth's attachment to work will influence his or her likelihood of success in the labor market. It is critical that a youth have: at least one adult who has a strong interest in his/her success; awareness that the program has a strong and effective connection to employers; placement in a paid position as soon as possible; understanding of the initial job placement as a first step toward advancing career and income potential; recognition of the need for educational skills and credentials and frequent opportunities to improve these skills and credentials.ⁱⁱⁱ

Prevalence or utilization data

- Completion rates in King County school districts (includes graduates, those with GED, adult diploma, or special education students who complete their individual education plan [IEP]) for the class of 2001 range from 62.7% (Highline) to 95.5% (Mercer Island).^{iv}
- Nine of the nineteen districts reported 2001 completion rates of less than 80%. These districts are located in all regions of King County (Highline, Tahoma, Tukwila, Skykomish, Snoqualmie Valley, Shoreline, Federal Way, Seattle, and Renton).^v
- Poverty, or low socio-economic status, directly increases the likelihood both for general school failure and for early high school dropout.^{vi} The highest dropout rates are in Seattle (20.6%) and Skykomish (16.7%); highest indicators of poverty/school lunch eligibility are in Tukwila (61.5%), Skykomish (61%), Highline (50.5%) and Seattle (41.9%); lowest percentage of students passing the WASL 10th grade reading test are in Tukwila (30.2%), Seattle, (53.1%), Highline (53.9%), and Renton (54.1%).^{vii}
- The King County Work Training Program serves youth predominantly from South Region (45%) and Seattle (44%).^{viii} The program prioritizes services to at-risk and out of school youth. 76% of youth served are people of color. 30% have been involved in the juvenile justice system; some of the youth ages 18-21 have had involvement with the adult justice system.^{ix}
- Access barriers for youth in programs such as the Work Training Program are a combination of funded capacity and eligibility criteria that exclude or make it difficult to apply for services. The result is that a fraction of youth is served and the group that is most at risk is left behind. In 2003, the Workforce Development Council served 2,786 youth, out of a possible 35,000 King County youth under the Federal Poverty Level.^x

Relationship to other goal areas, regional services, local services, other systems

- The 2003-2005 DDD budget does not include any new transition funds for employment or day programs for developmentally disabled students who graduate in 2003 or 2004, nor does it include family support funds for those who remain living at home.^{xi}
- The majority of jobs in Washington require some level of post-secondary education.^{xii}

Local planning initiatives

- The King County Out-of School Youth Consortium builds on the strengths, service delivery strategies and communities served by each of the 19 partner agencies in 15 training sites located throughout the county. Partner agencies include community colleges, school districts, YWCA, YMCA, Neighborhood House and other community based agencies. This is a regional strategy to locate learning centers for out-of-school youth, ages 16-21, to re-access education and job training. Built on national best practice models, the primary goal is to provide individualized support to youth to enable them to complete training and to secure and retain employment. The learning centers provide geographical and culturally relevant access points, and comprehensive/coordinated services throughout the county. Services include reading and math remediation, ESL, computer skills, job readiness, job placement assistance, and other services based on the assessment and training plan put together with the case manager. Other services that are integrated may include: mental health/substance abuse counseling, leadership development, vocational training, and services to youth with learning disabilities.^{xiii}
- The Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council (WDC), a non-profit organization, was established in response to the mandate of the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) to implement an integrated workforce training system serving both employers and job seekers. WIA funds two separate program strands: the in-school program and an out-of-school program. The WDC contracts with three consortia that include educational institutions (Seattle In-School Youth Employment Consortium, King County Stay-In-School Youth Consortium, and King County Out-of School Youth Consortium) to provide a range of youth development services throughout the county in a variety of school and community based sites. In a study of the program from July 2000 to June 2002, the WIA programmatic barriers identified were: documentation requirements, income criteria, and pre-enrollment policies and practices. Additional issues within the WIA model and local system factors were also identified. Recommendations focused on coordination with probation, in-school program enrollment, approaches to outreach/intake and follow-up, and data collection and analysis.^{xiv}

The WDC strategic plan includes as a goal: Build a Comprehensive Youth Development System. In addition to building additional capacity, the plan notes that current capacity is hampered by the fact that systems and stakeholders do not talk to each other in a systematic, streamlined way. Among the strategies is the development of agreements between educational institutions and other aspects of the system, establishment of core indicators of successful case management and professional development for youth workers, and cross-system training^{xv}

- South Region plans to increase the number of individuals who are successful in education and to increase opportunities in South Region for adult education in order to achieve a higher level of employment.^{xvi}

Issues identified by presenters to TFRHS

- Public investment in training for young and adult workers has been declining over the last 2 decades
- Other than community colleges, no GED program exists for at-risk, out of school youth in North Region

Examples of current outcome measurements and performance

- 63% of the youth served in the Work Training Program increased their job skills or were employed at some point during 2002.^{xvii} Some sites have GED attainment rates in excess of 70%^{xviii}

- 370 educationally at-risk youth made academic progress^{xix}

Recommendations regarding future indicators

Process indicators

- Number of persons served in the program, demographics
- Amount, type and duration of services provided

Outcome indicators

- Percent of cohort of students completing high school (e.g. Class of 2001)
- Percent of youth prepared to obtain and sustain employment
- Percent of educationally at-risk youth that make academic progress
- Percent of youth completing GED
- Percent of youth obtaining employment

Services for Learning Disabled

Summary of research, best practices, promising practices

- Individuals with disabilities are disproportionately under- or unemployed. In Washington: 58% of individuals with disabilities are employed compared to 78% of the general population. Learning disabilities are a severe barrier to unemployment as they remain largely undiagnosed in adults—roughly 15% of adults have learning disabilities.^{xx}

Prevalence or utilization data

- It is not clear whether this service area is intended to focus on adults with learning disabilities or include youth as well. King County funds a small program through one of the District Courts that provides assessment and other services to adults appearing in that jurisdiction. The King County Child and Family Commission funds a Safe Communities project through the Learning Disabilities Association. That program focuses on reduced rates of youth recidivism with the juvenile justice system, improvement in positive social skills including problem solving, decision making, and stress management. United Way and East Region cities also spend a small amount of money on this service area. In total, all of these projects represent an investment of around \$150,000, with the bulk of that being the youth-directed program.

Relationship to other goal areas, regional services, local services, other systems

- Youth who have difficulties in school and/or drop out of school often suffer from learning disabilities. It is the responsibility of the school system to identify disabilities that interfere with learning and develop an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) to address the disabilities.

- It has been reported that many adults in the criminal justice system also have learning disabilities, in many instances undiagnosed and untreated.

Local planning initiatives

- None appear to be in place.

Issues identified by presenters to TFRHS

- No services available for learning disabled adults other than community colleges

Examples of current outcome measurements and performance

- 88% of youth with learning disabilities experience reduced rates of recidivism or avoided contact with the juvenile justice system; similar percentages were achieved in regard to problem solving, decision making, and stress.

Recommendations regarding future indicators

- Goals for the services and intended populations need definition before indicators could be established.

English-As-Second-Language (ESL) Training

Summary of research, best practices, promising practices

- ESL instruction is an integral component on the pathway to employment. While adult refugees are being placed in jobs at the most beginning English levels, maintaining a job often takes higher levels of proficiency. Many refugees initially placed in low- and non-skilled positions requiring little or no English have lost their positions as the economy has worsened. Employers are currently requiring telephone interviews as the first step in the job application process. Limited English prevents a person from performing well on the phone interview, reducing the possibility of employment.^{xxi}
- Making Connections, sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, convened resident groups of refugee and immigrant families in Seattle and White Center to engage them in efforts to strengthen families and neighborhoods. Since English is a necessity for people to get living-wage jobs, among the Foundation's findings were a set of specific issues related to ESL services:
 - Classes are too large, not enough one-on-one attention
 - Length of time provided too little to get mastery of language
 - Welfare reform cut funding for intensive ESL training
 - Many ESL classes are designed for those who are already literate in their traditional languages^{xxii}

Prevalence or utilization data

- ESL is provided by community-based organizations as well as local Community and Technical Colleges. It includes classroom instruction as well as tutoring. Some programs offer Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL).^{xxiii}
- ESL classes offered by Bellevue Community College had a waiting list of over 600 students as of June 2003.^{xxiv} Approximately 3,500 individuals were receiving basic literacy or ESL instruction through East Region providers as of October 2003. Another 962 were on waiting lists.^{xxv}

- Demand for ESL services in South Region is increasing, with the growth of refugee and immigrant populations.^{xxvi} North Region is also experiencing growing diversity and need for tutoring prior to ESL for people who are not literate in their native language.^{xxvii}
- Half of all ESL instruction is focused on students with the lowest levels of language proficiency who are typically learning survival English.^{xxviii}

Relationship to other goal areas, regional services, local services, other systems

- The need for information and services in languages other than English will grow. Culturally competent and language-specific programs will be required in all goal areas.
- The connection between a living wage and being able to find affordable housing has been made clear in Goal 1. ESL is the necessary component of making a living wage and being able to access housing.

Local planning initiatives

- The King County Refugee Planning Committee has 30 voting members including representatives from the voluntary resettlement agencies (Volags), community based agencies, educational and governmental organizations, The Refugee Federation Service Center (RFSC) and Mutual Assistance Associations (MAAs) such as:
 - Coalition of Lao Mutual Assistance Associations
 - Indochina Chinese Refugee Association
 - East European Association
 - Khmer Community of Seattle-King County
 - Eritrean Community of Seattle and Vicinity
 - Vietnamese Friendship Association
 - Ethiopian Community Mutual Association
 - Soviet Union Refugee Association
 - Somali Community Services Coalition

The Refugee Federation Service Center (RFSC) serves as a fiscal agent for MAA programs funded through the City of Seattle, King County, Washington State and the Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance. In addition, it works closely with the Volags and Neighborhood House low-income housing. The Committee is responsible for the design and implementation of refugee programs in Seattle area. The tri-county plan includes recommendations regarding the ESL program.^{xxix}

Issues identified by presenters to TFRHS

- Despite the low-income status of most students, the community college system has started charging tuition for ESL, once a no-cost federally funded program
- Need for more VESL

Examples of current outcome measurements and performance

- 86% of ESL students advanced on level after a 10 week course^{xxx}
- 100% of literacy tutoring students passed their GED test^{xxxi}

Recommendations regarding future indicators

Process indicators

- Numbers of persons provided with ESL services, by level
- Number of persons provided with VESL services
- Breakdown of services provided as classroom, individual tutoring, other methods

Outcome indicators

- Percent of persons advancing on level after course completion

ⁱ Mendel, R. Less Cost, *More Safety: Guiding Lights for Reform in Juvenile Justice*. American Youth Policy Forum. 2000.

ⁱⁱ Brown, D. et al. *Barriers and Promising Approaches to Workforce and Youth Development for Young Offenders*. Annie E. Casey Foundation. 2002.

ⁱⁱⁱ *Employment and Training for Court-Involved Youth*. OJJDP Report. November 2000.

^{iv} *Communities Count 2002, Social and Health Indicators across King County*. Public Health—Seattle & King County.

^v *Communities Count 2002, Social and Health Indicators Across King County*. Public Health—Seattle & King County.

^{vi} Mandell, D., et al. *The Impact of Substance Use and Violence/Delinquency on Academic Achievement for Groups of Middle and High School Students in Washington*. Human Services Policy Center. May 2002.

^{vii} Presentation to TFRHS, King County Department of Community and Human Services.

^{viii} Presentation to TFRHS, King County Department of Community and Human Services

^{ix} Summary materials submitted by George Dignan, Workforce Development Services Administrator. March 2004.

^x Presentation to TFRHS, King County Alliance for Human Services.

^{xi} *Human Services Needs Update, 2003-2004*. City of Bellevue, Parks and Community Services Department.

^{xii} Presentation to TFRHS, King County Alliance for Human Services.

^{xiii} Summary materials submitted by George Dignan, Workforce Development Services Administrator. March 2004.

^{xiv} Feldman, D. and Patterson, D. *WIA Youth Offender Study*. Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County. July 2003.

^{xv} www.seakingwdc.org.

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- ^{xvi} *Building Health and Human Services in South King County: A Business Plan for Our Community 2003-2005.* South King County Human Services Forum. Presentation, February 2004.
- ^{xvii} Presentation to TFRHS, King County Department of Community and Human Services.
- ^{xviii} Summary materials submitted by George Dignan, Workforce Development Services Administrator. March 2004.
- ^{xix} *Draft 2003 Regional Services Outcomes Baseline.* Seattle Human Services Department. April 2004.
- ^{xx} Presentation to TFRHS, King County Alliance for Human Services.
- ^{xxi} *Refugee Service Delivery Plan; King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties.* King County Refugee Planning Committee. FY 2003.
- ^{xxii} *Forgotten Voices, Untold Stories.* Seattle/King County Making Connections. Annie E. Casey Foundation. April 2001.
- ^{xxiii} *Refugee Service Delivery Plan; King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties.* King County Refugee Planning Committee. FY 2003.
- ^{xxiv} *Human Services Needs Update, 2003-2004.* .City of Bellevue, Parks and Community Services Department.
- ^{xxv} Presentation to TFRHS, Eastside Human Services Forum.
- ^{xxvi} *Building Health and Human Services in South King County: .A Business Plan for Our Community 2003-2005.* South King County Human Services Forum.. Presentation, February 2004.
- ^{xxvii} Presentation to TFRHS, North King County.
- ^{xxviii} Presentation to TFRHS, King County Alliance for Human Services.
- ^{xxix} Refugee Federation Service Center. www.rfsc.org.
- ^{xxx} Presentation to TFRHS, Eastside Human Services Forum.
- ^{xxxi} Presentation to TFRHS, Eastside Human Services Forum.