
EVALUATION AND DATA COLLECTION WORKGROUP UPDATE

September 30, 2019

The Evaluation and Data Collection Workgroup has met several times since the March 2019 b2i Advisory Committee Meeting in order to facilitate the completion of the external evaluation by Child Trends.

B2I EVALUATION

FOCUS GROUPS AND INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

The initial evaluation proposal included four focus groups – two in Omaha and two in Columbus – in order to ensure rural and urban experiences were included. Recruitment and scheduling for focus groups was difficult, and the evaluation had to be adjusted. With guidance from the Evaluation and Data Collection Workgroup members, the research protocol was adjusted. Child Trends conducted one focus group and seven individual interviews in order to gain a broad range of perspectives. The focus group and interviews included current b2i participants, former b2i participants, and young adults who did not participate in b2i who lived in both urban and rural settings.

REVIEW OF PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

The Evaluation and Data Collection Workgroup reviewed the preliminary findings from the quantitative and qualitative analyses by Child Trends in June 2019. During this review, the workgroup identified areas for further exploration in both the quantitative and qualitative data. Additionally, the workgroup assisted in identifying where distinctions between current and past experience in b2i would be critical for analysis.

In August 2019, the Workgroup convened to review the draft of the evaluation. During this review, the workgroup identified key contextual information necessary for interpretation of the results, provided clarifying information on the sample of young adults in the quantitative data and the programs associated with those data sets, and assisted with editing of report language and layout.

FINAL EVALUATION- HIGHLIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE WORKGROUP

The final evaluation, attached, was reviewed by the Workgroup in September 2019. The Workgroup thanks Child Trends for their thorough analysis and thoughtful recommendations. The Workgroup would like to specifically highlight the following:

- **Definition of Success.** The young people who participated in the qualitative component of the evaluation offered an insightful definition of success that lead to inclusion of new data points in the quantitative analysis. Importantly, this definition of success – which centers on goal-setting, self-regulation, and self-advocacy – can and should be measured. Child Trends is currently working on a technical assistance component of the evaluation that will highlight what a success measurement tool should include and when it should be administered to b2i participants (for example, pre- and post-tests).
 - **The Evaluation and Data Collection Workgroup recommends the b2i Advisory Committee explore implementation of a success measurement tool, following the technical assistance provided by Child Trends.**
- **Outcome measures.** The evaluation identified several improved outcomes for young people who participate in b2i, including post-secondary education experience, safe, stable, and affordable housing, being able to cover monthly expenses, and having adults to turn to in a crisis.
- **Benefits of Multiple Resources.** When young adults receive services through b2i and the Connected Youth Initiative (CYI) with asset matching (Opportunity Passport®), they score higher on hope and self-regulation scales.

- **Exiting b2i.** Young adults approaching program exit expressed concerns about covering future expenses, and the quantitative data validate some of those concerns. Homelessness and couch surfing decrease while a young adult is enrolled in b2i, however there is no significant effect on homelessness and couch surfing after a young adult exits b2i. Similarly, young adults who exited b2i are no more likely to be able to cover their monthly expenses.
 - **The Evaluation and Data Collection Workgroup recommends targeted follow-up surveys or interviews with young people who have exited the program to better understand the primary reasons for post-b2i housing instability.**
 - **The Evaluation and Data Collection Workgroup recommends the b2i Advisory Committee consider the recommendations from Child Trends regarding increased program requirements (required savings accounts, required trainings, tapered stipend amounts), including whether or not those recommendations coincide with the youth-driven principles of the program.**