

Youth Resource Connections

NEWSLETTER

Youth Resource Connections

is a monthly newsletter that provides information, resources, and tools to workforce professionals who work every day to impact the lives of youth and young adults.

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Headlines

DOL Announces New Communities in Initiative to Improve Workforce Opportunities for Young People. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) announced the second cohort of its Youth Systems Building Academy, an innovative effort to increase and enhance employment opportunities for youth. The 10 additional communities and their partners will receive individualized training and tailored technical assistance from the department to help develop, test, implement or scale systems that engage and support young people entering the workforce. Click here to view the [press release](#).

ED Releases 2024 National Educational Technology Plan. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) released the 2024 National Educational Technology Plan (NETP): A Call to Action for Closing the Digital Access, Design and Use Divides. First released in fulfillment of the 2000 Educate America Act, NETP has been updated multiple times since its original release, most recently in 2016. The 2024 National Educational Technology Plan is a forward-thinking approach to reframing and realizing the potential of educational technology to enhance the instructional core, reduce achievement gaps, and improve student learning in our schools. Click here to view the [press release](#).

Looking for more information and resources to support your youth program?



Visit the [Youth Connections Community of Practice](#) for the latest training, promising practices, and technical assistance tools.

Headlines

(continued)

ED Invites Applications for its Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities Program. The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services within the U.S. Department of Education (ED) has published a notice in the [January 3 FEDERAL REGISTER](#). This notice Invites applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2024 for their Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities Program. This program is designed to improve results for children with disabilities by (1) promoting the development, demonstration, and use of technology; (2) supporting educational activities designed to be of educational value in the classroom for children with disabilities; (3) providing support for captioning and video description that is appropriate for use in the classroom; and (4) providing accessible educational materials to children with disabilities in a timely manner. **Deadline: March 4.**

ED Seeks Comments Regarding Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Needs in Higher Education. The Office of Postsecondary Education within the U.S. Department of Education has published a notice in the [January 26 FEDERAL REGISTER](#). The notice is requesting information in the form of written comments that may include information, research, and suggestions regarding supporting student mental health and/or substance use disorder (behavioral health) needs in higher education. **Comments due: February 25.**

Biden-Harris Administration Announces More Than \$6 Million in New Grants to Address Community Violence and its Impacts on Student Mental Health. Vice President Kamala Harris announced \$6.4 million from the U.S. Department of Education to address community violence. The funding is being awarded to seven school districts across the country as part of the Project Prevent grant program. The Vice President will make the announcement in Charlotte, North Carolina, where she will be joined by U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona to highlight the Biden-Harris Administration's efforts to reduce gun violence and expand access to mental health services for students. Click here to view the [press release](#).

Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$25M in Grant Awards to Advance Career Connected High Schools. The Biden-Harris Administration is announcing 19 new grant awards totaling \$25 million through the first-ever Perkins Innovation and Modernization, Career Connected High Schools (CCHS) grant program. This investment, issued by the U.S. Department of Education (Department), builds the capacity of education and workforce systems to partner with business and industry, to develop new high-quality career-connected high school programs for more students. Grantees will leverage four evidence-based strategies, or "keys," to help students in unlocking career success including: providing postsecondary education and career guidance; increasing access to dual or concurrent enrollment programs; increasing work-based learning opportunities; and providing industry-recognized credentials. Click here to view the [press release](#).

Headlines

(continued)

Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$4.9 Billion in Funding for Transformational Infrastructure Projects. President Biden and U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg announced more than \$4.9 billion in funding from President Biden's Investing in America agenda to 37 projects through two major discretionary grant programs, the National Infrastructure Project Assistance (Mega) grant program and the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program. Click here to view the [press release](#).

Biden-Harris Administration Awards \$3.16 Billion in Homelessness Assistance Funding to Communities Nationwide. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced nearly \$3.16 billion in Continuum of Care program awards for over 7,000 projects that provide housing assistance and/or supportive services to people experiencing homelessness, as well as costs related to planning and data collection. HUD Secretary Marcia L. Fudge made the announcement with the Chatham-Savannah Interagency Council on Homelessness in Savannah, Georgia. Click here to view the [press release](#).

HHS Releases Guidance to Help Prevent Homelessness for Youth Who Have Transitioned Out of Foster Care. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), released new guidance to grant recipients regarding the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) [Foster Youth to Independence \(FYI\) program](#). The FYI program is a dedicated resource that provides rental assistance and supportive services to young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 who have left or are transitioning out of foster care, who are experiencing homelessness, or are at risk of experiencing homelessness. This important guidance, developed in partnership with HUD, will help ensure eligible young adults gain access to these resources. Click here to view the [press release](#).

HHS Seeks Comments for its Runaway and Homeless Youth - Homeless Management Information System. The Family and Youth Services Bureau, Administration for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has published a notice in the [January 18 FEDERAL REGISTER](#). This notice is requesting a 3-year extension of the Runaway and Homeless Youth—Homeless Management Information System (RHY-HMIS) data collection efforts. **Comments due: March 18.**

Headlines

(continued)

National Governors Association Convenes Ten States to Explore Service as a Pathway to Economic Opportunity.

As Governors implement their workforce development policy agendas in the face of labor shortages in nearly every sector of the economy, state and national service programs offer a promising strategy to reduce barriers to workforce participation and meet community and employer needs. Intentionally designed “service-to-career pathways” embed career development opportunities into a term of service – incorporating career exploration, coaching, work-based learning, skills training, and credential attainment as part of the service experience. This month, the National Governors Association’s Center for Best Practices (NGA Center), with support from the Schultz Family Foundation, brought together 10 state teams comprised of Governors’ advisors, state workforce development system leaders, and state service commission leaders to explore service as a pathway to economic opportunity. Click here to obtain additional [information](#).

Six States Selected to Participate in NGA Disability Inclusive Workforce Policy Learning Collaborative.

Maryland, Minnesota, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, and Vermont have been selected to participate in the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) Disability Inclusive Workforce Policy Learning Collaborative. Through the Learning Collaborative, the NGA Center will support participating states as they develop plans to expand employment and training opportunities for people with disabilities. The Learning Collaborative is supported through the NGA Center’s participation in the U.S. Department of Labor’s [State Exchange on Employment & Disability](#) – a unique state-federal collaboration that supports state and local governments in adopting and implementing inclusive policies and practices that lead to increased employment opportunities for workers with disabilities. Click here to obtain additional [information](#).

Featured Programs

Food as a Supportive Service in the WIOA Youth Program

The Employment and Training Administration has developed this technical assistance tip sheet for Workforce Innovation Opportunity (WIOA) Youth programs. This tip sheet provides answers to some common questions related to food as a supportive service in the WIOA Youth Program.

Also included is information on Guidance concerning costs for Federal Awards which are outlined in what is called [Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200.403](#). The guidance provides details and questions that must be considered when determining whether it would be reasonable, necessary, and allocable to use funds to pay for food for youth participants. Click here to view the [tip sheet](#).

Interested in sharing a new practice or innovative approach that you're trying in your area?

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) is interested in sharing strategies from across the country to promote peer learning and replication. If you would like to be considered for featuring in an upcoming newsletter, please email your organization, program name and brief description of the practice or approach to the ETA Division of Youth Services at: youth.services@dol.gov.

Funding & Other Opportunities

NYEC Invites Applications for its Youth Advisory Council. The National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC) is accepting applications AND referrals for the 2024 term! NYEC is particularly interested in uplifting applicants who are current or former opportunity youth. Whether you are a young leader or know someone who is, you can follow the link below for more details! Don't miss out on this **paid leadership opportunity!** All meetings are virtual with some opportunities for in-person events. Click here to [apply](#).

Dollar General Literacy Foundation Invites Applications for its Family Literacy Program. The Dollar General Literacy Foundation is accepting applications for its Family Literacy Program. The program will award grants of up to \$10,000 to organizations that support the whole family in literacy in one of the following areas: adult education instruction, children's education, or Parent and Child Together Time (PACT). Applicants must be a nonprofit organization as determined by the IRS; a public library, school, or college providing direct literacy services in a state where Dollar General Corporation operates; and within 15 miles of a Dollar General store. [read more...](#) **Deadline: February 15.**

Funding & Other Opportunities

(continued)

The Opioid Affected Youth Initiative (OAYI) Invites Applications for its Youth National Opioid and Wellness Task Force. The Opioid Affected Youth Initiative seeks applications for its [Youth National Opioid and Wellness \(YNOW\) Task Force](#) from applicants ages 18-24 with certain lived experience to join this youth advisory board. **Deadline: February 16.**

SAMHSA Announces FentAlert Youth Challenge. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is accepting applications for its [FentAlert: Empowering Youth for Safer Choices–SAMHSA Fentanyl Awareness Youth Challenge](#). U.S. youth ages 14–18 is invited to propose community strategies addressing fentanyl and fake pills to prevent youth drug overdose deaths. Ideas can include social media posts, vlogs, podcasts, and video journals. The top six submissions will be awarded \$5,000, and up to 25 youth will receive a \$2,000 honorable mention. Winners will be announced April 2024. **Deadline: February 26.**

Action for Nature Invites Applications for its International Young Eco-Hero Award. Action for Nature is accepting applications for its International Young Eco-Hero Award. This award honors the work of young people between the ages of 8 and 16 all over the globe who have done creative environmental projects. Awardees will receive a cash prize of up to \$500, certificate of achievement, and public recognition. [read more...](#) **Deadline: February 28.**

Children's Environmental Health Network Invites Applications for its 2024 NOW Youth Leadership Awards. The Children's Environmental Health Network invites nominations for its Annual NOW Youth Leadership Awards! This award honors outstanding youth ages 10-21 for their leadership in children's environmental health, equity, climate action, and justice. [read more...](#) **Deadline: February 29.**

YSA Invites Applications for its Hershey Heartwarming Young Heroes Grants. Youth Service America (YSA) is searching for Heartwarming Young Heroes with creative ideas for its Global Youth Service Day projects. The GYSD projects are designed to help youth volunteers create meaningful connections with their peers, caring adults, and community partners. Awardees will be awarded \$50,000 in \$250 and \$500 grants. [read more...](#) **Deadline: March 10.**

Funding & Other Opportunities

(continued)

AccessLex Institute invites applications for its Diversity Pathway Intervention Grant Program.

AccessLex Institute is accepting applications for its Diversity Pathway Intervention Grant Program. The program provides funding to programs and initiatives aimed at helping college students and/or college graduates from historically underrepresented groups successfully matriculate into law school and the legal profession. The central goal of the program is to increase the knowledge base around effective methods for increasing the enrollment and success of law students from historically underrepresented racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Grants will range between \$200,000 and \$300,000 for 12 to 24 months in support of programs focused on college students and/or college graduates from underrepresented racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic backgrounds. Eligible applicants must be: members who are member law schools and other U.S.-based nonprofit and public organizations that are classified as tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and as "public" charities under section 509(a)(1), (2), or (3) or to public organizations that are designated under section 170(c); faculty, practitioners, and researchers who are U.S. citizens or residents are eligible for grants through their affiliated organization, provided it maintains a qualified tax-exempt status as described above. [read more...](#) **Deadline: March 1 letters of inquiry; July 26 full proposal.**

Resources

National Apprenticeship Week Report 2023. The [report](#) released by the Employment and Training Administration highlights events and activities that took place throughout NAW 2023. It also includes historic highs and showcasing the impact of Registered Apprenticeship in meeting the nation's workforce challenges.

VRTAC-QM New TA Tool- Contracting Guide for State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies (SVRAs). This [contracting guide](#) released by the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management (VRTAC-QM) was developed to assist with contract development and monitoring for RSA-funded programs. The guide will walk the user through the contract process step-by-step and identify key considerations throughout each critical phase. It will also help SVRAs with contract monitoring and includes all actions after the award is made.

Students Helping Students. This [issue brief](#) from the Child Health and Development Institute examines peer support models as an innovative strategy schools can use to support student behavioral health and improve school climate within a Comprehensive School Mental Health Approach.

Resources

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Social Media & Adolescent Health. This [report](#) released by the National Academies committee explores the effect of social media on the lives of adolescents in the U.S. The report offers recommendations for policymakers, regulators, industry, and others.

Centering Students in Employer Engagement: An Equity-Focused Field Guide for Community Colleges and Intermediaries. This step-by-step [guide](#) released by Jobs for the Future serves as a resource for colleges and intermediaries looking to adopt an equity lens for employer engagement efforts. The guide proposes a new approach for industry partnerships that centers student needs and outcomes, emphasizing job quality and equitable economic advancement above all else. Additionally, the guide includes reflection questions, and a fillable action plan as supports for institutions implementing an equity-focused employer engagement strategy.

Strategies for Increasing Inclusivity for LGBTQ+ Youth in Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education (HMRE) Programs. This [brief](#) released by the Office of the Administration for Children and Families highlights strategies HMRE programs can use to improve their inclusivity for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, or another sexual or gender minority (LGBTQ+) youth in the areas of (1) recruitment, outreach, and initial engagement; (2) program content and delivery; and (3) staff hiring and training.

Amplify Youth Voice. This [collaborative](#) developed by the National Training and Technical Assistance Center for Child, Youth, and Family Mental Health is a platform for young people with lived experience of mental health challenges to express their unique stories in their own words.

Fact Sheet: Scaling Up High-Dosage Tutoring Is Crucial to Students' Success. This [fact sheet](#) released by CAP20 outlines the state of learning loss in the United States and the necessity of implementing high-dosage tutoring programs to accelerate learning and ensure student success.

A Review of the Domains of Well-Being for Young People. This [report](#) released by the Urban Institute describes eight domains of youth well-being and considerations for their measurement. It summarizes both traditional and emergent approaches to measurement and notable gaps in each area. It also includes key themes relevant to all domains, notably the critical need to include young people in the process of developing well-being concepts and indicators and to improve understanding of how well-being dynamics differ across identities.

Resources

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Upcoming Webinars/Webcasts

On February 6th, the National Youth Employment Coalition will host a monthly Q&A session with the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Division of Youth Services (DYS) entitled: **Ask Away with the U.S Department of Labor**. During the Q&A session the DYS team will be there to answer questions attendees might have on policy, performance metrics, eligibility, waivers, and more. Click here to [register](#) for the webinar.

On February 8th, the National Youth Employment Coalition will host a webinar entitled: **College Isn't for Everyone" Braiding Educational and Workforce Programming**. During the webinar attendees will explore how integrating education with workforce training can completely reshape the future of education and employment. Discover the curriculum benefits of aligning with industry needs, building collaborations with local employers, and connecting young people with industry-recognized credentials. Click here to [register](#) for the webinar.

On February 12th the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform will host a webinar entitled: **Crossover Youth Practice Model Info Session**. This webinar will discuss how communities can improve outcomes for multi-system youth through implementation of the Crossover Youth Practice Model. Click here to [register](#) for the webinar.

On March 14th the DOL Women's Bureau will host a webinar entitled: **Best Practices for Recruiting, Training, and Retaining Young Super Women**. The webinar will share best practices for recruiting and retaining women in construction, manufacturing, and clean energy industries/jobs, with examples of work being done to reach young women and girls to introduce them to careers in these male-dominated fields. It will also include employer best practices for recruiting and retaining women. Click here to [register](#) for the webinar.

On April 11th the National Youth Employment Coalition will host a workshop entitled: **Empowering Youth for the Future Via Effective Mentorship**. The workshop will provide an innovative approach that combines technical skills and emotional intelligence, focusing on adaptability and resilience—essential in today's ever-changing job market. In addition, attendees will learn 5 tips to engage youth effectively in mentorship programs. Participants will leave with a comprehensive toolkit, including critical thinking, problem-solving, effective communication, and resilience skills, all geared toward preparing young individuals for success in their careers. This workshop will equip its audience to guide youth toward fulfilling careers while fostering meaningful mentorship connections. Click her to [register](#) for the workshop.

Resources

(continued)

Past Webinars/Webcasts

On January 10th Employment First hosted a webinar entitled: **Archive Available: Work-Based Learning and Work Experiences—Designing Optimal Transition Services**. The webinar highlights the need for providers offering Competitive Integrated Employment programs to include services that appeal to younger job seekers and transitioning youth. Presenters discussed why they find it necessary to focus on youth, the types of partnerships and services they have developed, and why those services are different from prior programmatic offerings. Click here to [watch the archive](#).

On January 25th, the Employment and Training Administration hosted a webinar entitled: **An Overview of Proposed Rulemaking 1205-AC13 National Apprenticeship System Enhancements**. This webinar provided an overview of the recently published notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) National Apprenticeship System Enhancements. In this webinar presenters covered a high-level summary of the NPRM itself, the NPRM process, and the process for submitting comments on the NPRM. Click here to [watch the archive](#).

Upcoming Events

February 10-17. [NatlEshipWeek](#).

April 3-6. Saint Paul, MN. [The National Service-Learning Conference - From Passion to Action](#).

April 12- May 12. [Global Youth Service Month](#).

April 26-28. [Global Youth Service Day](#).

March 4-6. [2024 NYEC Annual Forum](#).

May 5-11. [Youth Apprenticeship Week](#).

May 13-15. National Skills Coalition's [Skills Summit](#).

July 6-10. University of Connections School of Social Work [Innovations Institute](#).



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**We welcome your
input.**

Please let us know how these newsletters might be improved to better serve your needs. If you have comments, contact the Employment and Training Administration's Division of Youth Services at **(202) 693-3030** or e-mail: youth.services@dol.gov.

The Department of Labor (DOL), Employment and Training Administration (ETA) does not take responsibility for non-endorsed DOL/ETA resources included in the newsletter.