



U.S. Conference of Mayors Winter Meeting

Changing Minds-Changing Lives:  
Reconnecting At Risk Youth to Positive Pathways

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## Changing Minds-Changing Lives: Reconnecting At Risk Youth to Positive Pathways

### YO! Baltimore Participant Demographics at Initial Registration

- 16-22 years of age
- 86% unemployed
- 76% high school drop out
- 28% history with the juvenile justice system
- 25% teen parents
- 20% in foster care system
- 7% unstable housing/homeless
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade average reading level
- 6<sup>th</sup> grade average math level





## Changing Minds-Changing Lives: Reconnecting At Risk Youth to Positive Pathways

### Essential YO! Baltimore Program Components

#### ❖ Youth Friendly, Safe Spaces

- Two large YO! Centers are anchored in neighborhoods familiar to youth in East and West sides of the city
- Comfortable, family-like environments, computer labs, classrooms and meeting rooms, private counseling offices, youth lounges, libraries – and a fitness center and recording studio at the Westside Center





## Changing Minds-Changing Lives: Reconnecting At Risk Youth to Positive Pathways

### Essential YO! Baltimore Program Components

#### ❖ Youth Development Philosophy

- YO! Baltimore believes every youth wants to and can succeed
- Meets each youth “where they are” and develops a personalized “success plan” based on strengths, interests and aptitudes





## Changing Minds-Changing Lives: Reconnecting At Risk Youth to Positive Pathways

### Essential YO! Baltimore Program Components

#### ❖ Caring Adults

- YO! Baltimore's Employment Advocates are highly trained, professionals
- Understand obstacles at risk youth are facing
- Genuinely care about helping youth access resources and stay on track in their classes and training courses





## Changing Minds-Changing Lives: Reconnecting At Risk Youth to Positive Pathways

### Essential YO! Baltimore Program Components

#### ❖ Comprehensive Academics

- Mandatory academic component for all YO! participants
- On-site classes in Adult Basic Education, Pre-GED, GED
- Assistance for graduates to connect to college





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### Essential YO! Baltimore Program Components

#### ❖ Continuum of Work-Based Learning & Career Preparation

- Resources leveraged through our workforce system
- Exposes young people to a broad range of experiences to prepare them to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century work place
  - Job shadowing
  - Internships
  - Summer jobs
  - On-the-job and customized skills training





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### Essential YO! Baltimore Program Components

#### ❖ Life Skills and Counseling

- Wrap-around support helps youth address and resolve personal challenges
- Workshops and coaching sessions focus
  - Self awareness
  - Personal responsibility
  - Problem solving
  - Communication skills
  - Anger management
  - Health and fitness
  - Financial literacy
- Professional mental health and substance abuse counseling







# Changing Minds-Changing Lives: Reconnecting At Risk Youth to Positive Pathways

Weinberg Foundation

Workforce Investment Act

## YO! Baltimore Funding

Burger King

**\$9.7 million**

Family League

DOL: Civic Justice Corps

State Crime Prevention: PACT

City Transportation/  
Federal Highway: Urban Youth Corps

DLLR/DHR: Foster Care Transition

School System: YO! Academy

School System: Gang Reduction



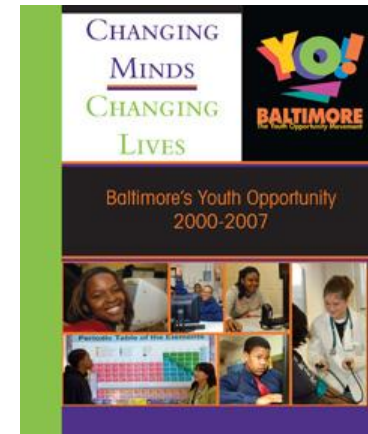


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### YO! Baltimore Works

#### ❖ Evaluation Results at end of D.O.L. Grant

- YO! participants earned 35% more than their comparison group and had a 42% higher increase in labor market attachment
- 90% of employers who hired YO! participants reported they would recommend hiring YO! participants
- YO! participants obtained their GEDs at a rate double that of youth who did not participate
- YO! female participants were 25% less likely to become pregnant than the young women in the comparison group
- YO! participants were 33% less likely to be engaged in criminal activity than the non-participant group





## Changing Minds-Changing Lives: Reconnecting At Risk Youth to Positive Pathways

### YO! Baltimore Works

#### ❖ YO! Baltimore Participant Positive Outcomes

- 7,500 out-of-school, out-of-work youth connected to positive pathways
- 3,200 successfully connected to work with 12 months of program participation
- 1,100 high school dropouts have earned their diplomas with many attending post-secondary education





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For more information, contact Karen Sitnick at 410.396.1910 or visit [www.yobaltimore.org](http://www.yobaltimore.org) or [www.oedworks.com](http://www.oedworks.com).

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