TO: ALL STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
ALL STATE EMPLOYMENT SECURITY AGENCIES
ALL STATE WORKER ADJUSTMENT LIAISON
ALL ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER SYSTEM LEADS

FROM: LENITA JACOBS-SIMMONS
Deputy Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship

1. Purpose. To announce the recognition of the Youth Development Practitioner Occupation and the development of a Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship.

2. Background. The enactment of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the launching of the Youth Opportunities Movement provide a unique opportunity to strongly impact the youth workforce development system. WIA’s emphasis upon youth development along with its authorization of the new Youth Opportunity Grants (YOGs), a $250 million investment, represents an unparalleled alignment of resources committed to youth programming. We anticipate that the roll out of the YOGs alone will result in approximately 1,500 front-line staff positions nationwide.

Success in delivering the extensive services outlined by WIA depends not only on the quality of program design, but on the delivery of services to youth by front-line staff. WIA legislates a different approach to serving young people. The law places youth development principles at the heart of serving youth. The strategy requires comprehensive services and moves from short term interventions to a systematic, consolidated approach geared towards long-term workforce preparation. Because youth services operate at the local level and are implemented by front-line youth workers, the role of youth workers is critical. Youth workers develop relationships with young people and provide crucial expertise and support to youth as they transition to adulthood and careers.

While WIA is the driving force behind our movement to create a youth worker occupation and apprenticeship, we see broad applicability for working with young people regardless of the funding source. Our vision over time is that this will be embraced.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESCISSIONS</th>
<th>EXPIRATION DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>Continuing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
throughout the field of youth work and will encourage more young adults
to pursue youth work as a career. The long-term success
of the youth workforce development system requires a human capital
strategy. We are seeking to upgrade the field of youth work through
accreditation, training opportunities, apprenticeship and certification.

3. **Registered Apprenticeship.** The vision of occupation recognition
and apprenticeship for youth workers is to maximize our investment in
young people, youth programming and the workforce development system
through quality training opportunities for youth workers who deliver
comprehensive services to young people. There are two major goals for
achieving occupation recognition and apprenticeship for Youth Develop-
ment Practitioners. The first seeks to strengthen the field of youth
work by providing training, mentoring and a career path for youth
workers and, consequently, improve retention in the field. Secondly,
this undertaking targets the improvement of quality for youth services
by providing training standards; increasing the number of youth worker
who receive extensive, quality training; and increasing the stability
of programs by helping to retain caring adult staff.

Registered apprenticeship provides a vehicle to meet the goals outlined
above. It provides an effective time-honored way to build a skilled,
knowledgeable and loyal workforce. The combination of structured on-
the-job training (OJT) and related technical instruction will offer
Youth Development Practitioners a recognizable career path that in-
cludes high quality training and educational opportunities, while
offering the field recognizable occupational standards. It also
provides for recognition through the issuance of a nationally recog-
nized Certificate of Completion. Please see the attached Youth Devel-
opment Practitioner Paper for an outline of benefits to employers,
youth workers and the young people participating in youth programs and
services.

4. **Process.** The strategy pursued to recognize the occupation and
develop the apprenticeship focused on creating an inclusive, far-
reaching process that utilized and acknowledged the impressive work
that already exists in the field. The process began with drafting OJT
and related instruction from curriculum and materials gathered from
individuals and groups working in the field. A focus group of practi-
tioners and advocates was convened to review the OJT and related
instruction prior to sending it out for initial comment. Forums were
then held in each of the Regions and one in Washington to discuss
apprenticeability of this occupation which included extensive input
regarding the OJT and Related Instruction. The concept of apprentice-
ship for youth workers received enthusiastic support. A broad array of
stakeholders were included at the Washington forum as well as represen-
tatives from community-based organizations. Diverse Regional focus
groups were also encouraged. From this input, the OJT and related
instruction were revised and sent out again for comment. Office of
Apprenticeship Training, Employer and Labor Services (OATELS) reviewed the final round of comments and created a final draft of the OJT and related instruction that was submitted to the Administrator of OATELS to determine apprenticeability.

5. **Next Steps.** The Department of Labor will continue to disseminate information and publicize the Youth Development Practitioner occupation and apprenticeship. We expect to issue additional guidance. OATELS will begin the process to establish National Guideline Standards.

6. **Action Required.** States are requested to disseminate this information to local areas as well as interested and potential stakeholders of the recognition of the occupation and apprenticeship of the Youth Development Practitioner.

7. **Inquiries.** Questions on this TEIN should be directed to Mary Rosenthal of the Office of Youth Services at (202) 693-3602 and Franchella Kendall of the Office of Apprenticeship, Training, Employer and Labor Services at (202) 219-5921 ext. 126.

8. **Attachments**
   1) Youth Development Practitioner Paper
   2) On the Job Training for the Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship
   3) Related Instruction for the Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship