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**The Social Security
Administration's Youth
Transition Demonstration
Projects: Analysis Plan
for Interim Reports**

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Social Security Administration (SSA) initiated the Youth Transition Demonstration (YTD) evaluation to develop and rigorously evaluate promising strategies to help youth with disabilities become as economically self-sufficient as possible as they transition from school to work. Hallmark features of the YTD evaluation include (1) strong, policy-relevant demonstration projects that serve large numbers of youth with disabilities; and (2) a rigorous evaluation design based on random assignment.

The YTD evaluation provides SSA with a valuable opportunity to identify program components and strategies that can show successful employment and earnings outcomes for youth. The demonstration is doing this by supporting and testing six YTD demonstration projects across the nation. In partnership with SSA, the YTD evaluation is being led by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR), a nonpartisan firm that conducts policy research and surveys. MPR has assembled a multidisciplinary team, including key partner organizations MDRC and TransCen, Inc., to design and conduct the evaluation and to provide technical assistance to the projects as they develop and implement their YTD interventions.

This document describes our plans for the analysis to support the interim reports for each of the six demonstration projects selected for rigorous evaluation. These reports will provide impact estimates based on the analysis of data from the evaluation's 12-month follow-up survey as well as SSA benefits data. The reports will also present findings from the process analysis of information gathered from a variety of sources including comprehensive site visits, project documents, and data from the evaluation's management information system Efforts-to-Outcomes (ETO). The interim reports will be site-specific, submitted to SSA 18 months after random assignment. We will deliver the reports on the Colorado and Erie projects in October 2009 and the report on the CUNY project in February 2010. We estimate that we will deliver the interim reports on the newer random assignment projects (Miami-Dade, West Virginia, and Montgomery County) in March 2012.

The interim reports will be followed by letter reports covering estimates of impacts 24 months after random assignment, based on administrative data only. The evaluation's comprehensive final report, to be delivered to SSA in 2014, will include impact analysis from the 36-month follow-up survey and up to 48 months of administrative data. In a single,

stand-alone document, the final report will describe the project interventions, the evaluation design, the key research findings, and the implications of the YTD evaluation for policies affecting youth with disabilities.

This analysis plan for the interim reports is a planning document describing the intended analysis. It draws directly from the design report where more details on the analysis approach as well as research questions and related issues are discussed (Rangarajan et al. 2009). It also draws on an earlier report describing in detail the data collection plans for the evaluation (Rangarajan et al. 2007) and should not be construed as a commitment to report specific items. We may find that the data do not support some of the proposed analysis or that a revised analysis would be more appropriate. We may find that additional analyses beyond those described here are appropriate and supported by the data. Furthermore, for simplicity, in this document we provide many examples of tables to show our findings. However, the interim report will include many figures, graphs, and charts to display findings in a manner that is easy to digest.

This analysis plan is organized using the structure envisioned for the interim reports. Chapter I provides an introduction to the YTD initiative and the evaluation. Chapter II describes our analytical approach, data sources, samples and analysis to support the methodological and analytic decisions. Chapter III presents plans for the process analysis of program implementation and service utilization. In Chapters IV through VII, we describe plans for the impact analyses. Supplementary analyses and technical discussions are presented in the appendix. The interim reports will begin with an introduction to the specific project site and conclude with a summary of the main findings and lessons learned.

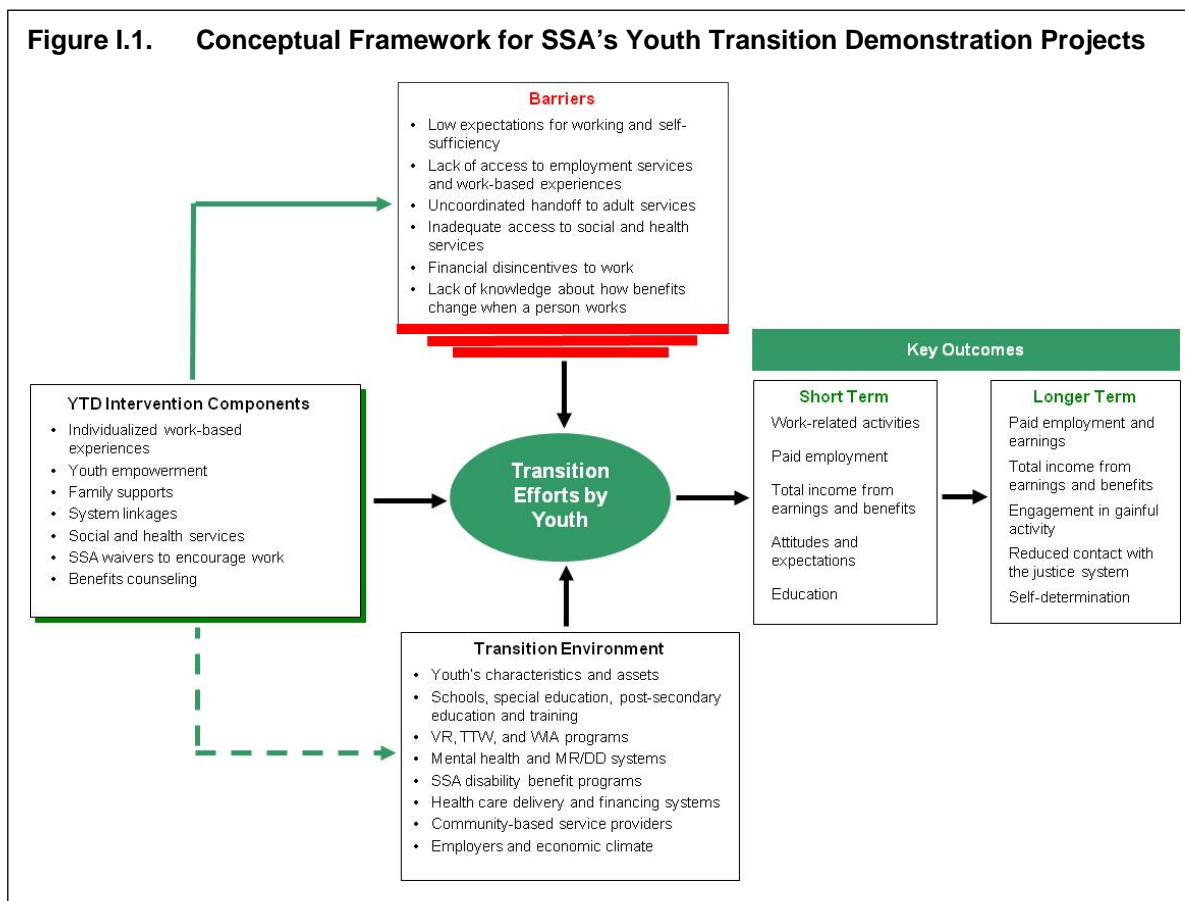
As an introduction to the analysis plan, the next two sections describe the conceptual framework and evaluation for the YTD initiative generally, across all project sites. Each interim report will discuss the framework and intervention in the context of the specific project site addressed in the report.

A. THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK UNDERLYING THE YTD INITIATIVE

Our approach to the YTD evaluation is grounded in our understanding of the existing literature, as well as the system of support and services for youth with disabilities. Figure I.1 presents a conceptual model for understanding the potential role of the YTD interventions in helping targeted youth have successful transition outcomes.

Youth with disabilities face many barriers that can affect the success of their transition to adulthood. Some of these barriers exist due to the specific nature of a youth's disability and health conditions, while others arise from a poor fit between the youth and his or her environment. As presented in the conceptual model, one such barrier relates to societal and individual perceptions of disability. These perceptions lead to low individual and societal expectations about working and self sufficiency, which in turn can lead to marginalization, isolation, and diminished expectations about a youth's abilities among family members,

Figure I.1. Conceptual Framework for SSA's Youth Transition Demonstration Projects



teachers, and employers. Scarcities of employment services, poor access to the employment services that do exist, and few opportunities for work-based experiences are additional barriers for youth with disabilities. Furthermore, youth with disabilities may have to deal with school support systems that have significant gaps in services and are missing critical linkages to adult services. This lack of support leads to an uncoordinated handoff to adult services. Inadequate access to social and health services may require that youth with disabilities divert time and resources from other activities to overcome environmental barriers. The possibility that youth could jeopardize benefits by increasing employment or earnings may create a financial disincentive to work despite the incentives provided by SSA. In addition, lack of knowledge about how work experiences, benefits, and SSA incentives interact leads to low utilization of the incentives among beneficiaries. Together, these barriers can lead to significant challenges in successfully navigating the transition to adulthood.

The YTD projects are intended to address these barriers by providing services and financial incentives directly to youth with disabilities and their families. The key components of the projects—the services and incentives—are listed in the conceptual model, and are described briefly below.

- **Individualized work-based experiences** address several barriers, including low expectations, lack of access to employment services and work-based experiences, and disincentives to work.
- **Youth empowerment** and **family supports** are designed to help youth make more informed choices and are expected to address the issue of low expectations.
- Services that facilitate **system linkages** are expected to help address some of the current gaps in the handoff of youth to the adult services and to make the transition seem more seamless from the perspective of the youth and his or her family.
- Referral to, or provision of, a comprehensive array of **social and health services**—commonly referred to as “case management” or “transition coordination”—can help youth address a wide range of mental and physical health issues, social skill deficits, and personal and family challenges. These services facilitate their success in the classroom, in the community, and on the job.
- **SSA waivers for YTD** will allow youth to retain disability benefits and health insurance in the short term while they work or participate in work-based experiences. This will encourage them to explore whether they can achieve higher levels of economic success through employment rather than relying exclusively on SSA disability programs.
- **Benefits counseling**, a strong component of each YTD project, will inform youth and their families about standard SSA work incentives, and YTD waivers to avoid any confusion regarding benefit-related issues. This should help the youth make better employment choices for the future.

The YTD intervention components are designed to serve youth directly and help them address the barriers described above. These components are delivered in the existing transition environment, and the projects, to varying degrees, leverage the services available in their communities. Because system change is not a goal of this initiative, the design and delivery of YTD services occur in the context of the existing service system. The services available in the community may influence the service delivery approach. Furthermore, the YTD projects may be able to break down some of the artificial institutional barriers that youth face, thereby leading the system to function as if the components were better integrated.

With the success of these interventions, we would expect to observe better outcomes for youth who are participants of the YTD projects than for those who have access only to the status quo services and incentives that the existing system provides. In the short term, the interventions will help youth to gain experience in both work-related activities and paid employment; have a higher income from an increase in earnings, as well as benefits due to

the SSA waivers; improve attitudes and expectations about the future; and achieve greater engagement in education (for those projects with a focus on education activities). In the longer term, it is anticipated that the YTD interventions will have enduring impacts on participating youth, ultimately leading them to secure and maintain paid, competitive employment, increase their earnings and income, engage in more valuable activities, reduce contact with the criminal justice system, and conduct themselves with a greater degree of self-determination.

B. THE YTD EVALUATION

SSA envisioned the YTD evaluation as a strong and successful demonstration. One aspect of this study involves identifying and nurturing YTD interventions that are not only grounded in best practices but also have promising program models that can be tested. It also includes a comprehensive multisite evaluation based on a rigorous random assignment design with large sample sizes and diverse outcome measures.

The selection and development of promising YTD interventions began by defining the components of strong program models. We then identified and selecting projects that currently deliver (or, with enhancement, could deliver) interventions based on those components. The three critical components of this process were: (1) careful analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of potential YTD projects, (2) determination of what new components or changes in existing components were needed, and (3) delivery of technical assistance (TA) to the projects to help them implement strong interventions that can be rigorously evaluated.

The YTD evaluation has identified six strong projects to be part of the national impact study. The selection process for the projects took place in two phases. In 2006, SSA selected three of the seven original organizations for random assignment implementation. SSA chose these three based on the recommendations of the evaluation team because SSA provided funding in 2003 to develop and implement YTD projects (Colorado, Erie, and CUNY). Also in 2006, the evaluation team conducted a nationwide search for potential new YTD projects that were either operating strong transition programs or had the capacity to do so, and could also participate in the national impact study. That search resulted in five projects being selected in fall 2006 to run pilot programs in 2007. Based on the recommendations of the evaluation team, in November 2007 SSA selected three of these projects to fully implement their interventions and participate in the national impact study (Miami-Dade, Montgomery County, and West Virginia).

Key features of the evaluation include:

- ***Use of a rigorous random assignment design.*** Youth are assigned at random to a treatment group or a control group. Youth in the treatment group may receive YTD services as well as the SSA waivers, while youth in the control group may receive only those services available in their communities independent of the YTD initiative. Given this experimental design, it will be

possible to confidently attribute differences in outcomes between the two groups to the effects of the YTD interventions.

- ***Large multisite study.*** SSA specified that the impact study include six projects in different locations with strong interventions that can be rigorously evaluated. All the projects focus on work-based experiences and benefits counseling. In addition, all treatment group youth in the projects benefit from the SSA waivers. The projects also include the other key components identified in the YTD conceptual model; however, they may place different levels of emphasis on those components and, more importantly, may take different approaches to delivering services related to each of the components. The projects may also target slightly different populations, within the broad parameters specified by SSA. This multisite study will provide valuable lessons for future replication and for scaling up because of these differences in service delivery approaches and target population.
- ***Large sample sizes and enrollments compared with many programs that serve youth with disabilities.*** The evaluation sample for each project will include approximately 880 youth enrolled in the study over a two- to three-year period, with about 480 of those randomly assigned to the treatment group. These sample sizes are large compared with most existing programs that serve youth with disabilities. Before being selected into the impact study, projects had to demonstrate that they had the potential to meet these enrollment goals. This demonstration will also provide valuable lessons for future evaluation of how existing smaller projects can scale up to serve larger numbers of youth with disabilities.
- ***Data collected for treatment and control youth from a variety of sources.*** Outcomes will be measured through both administrative and survey data collected on youth in the treatment and control groups over a three- to four-year follow-up period. Outcomes include a variety of measures that are important to SSA and to outside groups. Detailed information is gathered on services that youth receive as part of the YTD evaluation, as well as other qualitative and program cost data.
- ***Comprehensive evaluation.*** The impact study is a key component of the comprehensive YTD evaluation that also includes a process analysis, a cost analysis, and a benefit-cost analysis. The impact analysis will examine the effects the YTD programs have on employment, earnings, income, educational attainment, and other measures of well-being among the transition-age youth enrolled in the evaluation. The process analysis is documenting the nature of each YTD project, including how the services were delivered, the extent to which the services were used, and the implementation successes and challenges. The cost analysis will provide a comprehensive documentation of the costs of implementing the YTD projects. The benefit-cost analysis will assess whether the projects' benefits outweigh their costs from the perspectives of a variety of

stakeholders, including SSA, the federal government, the YTD participants, and society as a whole.

- ***Strong external advisory group representing various perspectives.*** The YTD evaluation has an external advisory group that meets annually with SSA and the evaluation team. The advisory group consists of nine individuals from diverse backgrounds and includes experts in evaluation design and measures, school-to-work transition, and the provision of services to youth with disabilities. These individuals are employed by universities, independent research organizations, human services providers, and federal agencies other than SSA. The advisory group members, along with SSA staff, provide the evaluation team with sound advice on the evaluation, program design, and related topics.

C. TARGET POPULATION AND RECRUITING YOUTH FOR THE NATIONAL IMPACT STUDY

In this initiative, SSA has targeted youth between ages 14 through 25 who are either receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (DI), or Childhood Disability Benefits (CDB), or who are at risk for receiving such benefits. Within these broad parameters, each individual YTD project is free to target a specific population that is consistent with its intervention design and is expected to yield an adequate sample size for the evaluation.

For each of the participating programs, approximately 880 youth are recruited into the study. Of those 880 youth, approximately 480 are randomly assigned to a treatment group whose members are eligible to enroll in YTD services, and the remaining youth are assigned to a control group; they are ineligible to enroll in YTD services, but may receive other transition services available in the community. Each project is responsible for enrolling and providing project services to at least 400 of the 480 youth randomly assigned to the treatment group.

The sampling frames for five of the six YTD projects participating in the random assignment impact study (all except Montgomery County) are lists of young Social Security disability benefit recipients who meet a project's specific criteria and who live in the project target area. The Montgomery County, Maryland, project is the only one with a different sampling frame from those of the other projects. Its sample frame consists of students in their last two years of high school who are attending schools in Montgomery County or have recently departed school, and have been classified as having severe emotional disturbances (SED) or some other significant mental illness.

For the five projects targeting SSA youth, MPR is responsible for conducting outreach to sample members and recruiting eligible youth into the study. MPR staff randomly sort the list frame of disability beneficiaries for a project participating in the random assignment impact study into *survey replicates* containing 10 eligible beneficiaries each. Each survey replicate is a random sample of the frame. The replicates are gradually released for baseline interviewing and informed consent, and are pursued until 880 baseline interviews and

affirmative written consents to participate in the evaluation have been obtained. The youth in the released replicates constitute the research sample for the evaluation of a YTD project. For most projects, the baseline interviewing and informed consent process is expected to last two to three years.

MPR staff conduct initial outreach, obtain verbal informed consent, conduct baseline interviews, and then randomly assign youth who provide written consent to a treatment or control group (guardian consent is required for minor youths). In the Montgomery County site, project staff do the outreach and recruitment of youth and obtain consent, while MPR collects baseline data and conduct random assignment.

D. KEY RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The interim reports will include the findings from the process and impact analysis. The primary goals of the process analysis are to document the interventions and services each YTD project provides, assess how they were implemented and their fidelity to the original proposed model, examine how they enhance services for youth with disabilities, and identify the successes and challenges associated with implementation. The process analysis will provide critical information for future replication or adaptation of the most promising projects and practices. A better understanding of such factors as the fidelity of the implementation to the proposed design, who participated in project activities, and critical programmatic challenges and successes can help explain key project impacts or differential impacts across subgroups of participants. The process analysis will contribute to informing and shaping policy because it will provide evidence of what is necessary to roll out programs similar to YTD.

The main goal of the impact analysis is to determine whether the YTD projects succeed in improving the intended outcomes, including increased participation in work-related activities, greater employment and earnings, increased income, reduced risky behavior, and improving the overall well-being of youth with disabilities. In the interim reports, the impact analysis will address short-term outcomes achieved in the first 12 months following random assignment including impacts on service utilization, school attendance, attitudes toward work, employment, income, and self-efficacy. Rigorous impact evaluation is critical to convince other agencies and stakeholders to view the research findings as definitive and to gain their cooperation in reforming services for youth with disabilities after this evaluation is completed.

CHAPTER II

ANALYTIC APPROACH AND DATA SOURCES

The interim reports will present the findings from the impact analysis and process analysis for each YTD project, covering the first year after random assignment. The impact analysis will provide the first assessment of whether the project has been successful in improving the short-term outcomes of the youth it serves. The process analysis will build on earlier descriptive reports to assess how well the project was implemented and the fidelity of the interventions to the intended design. In this chapter, we describe our analytical approach for the impact analysis and the process analysis.

A. IMPACT ANALYSIS

Rigorous assessment of the impacts of the YTD projects is a key component of the YTD evaluation (as described in the conceptual model in Figure I.1). The impact analysis will examine whether the YTD projects are effective in improving the outcomes of the youth they serve. This section describes our approach to conducting the impact analysis beginning with our analytic approach, followed by a description of the data sources, and finally examination of specific analytic considerations. These issues are described in more detail in Rangarajan et al. (2009).

1. Key Outcomes and Analytic Approach

As discussed in the conceptual framework in Chapter I, if the interventions are successful, we would expect to observe better outcomes for youth who are selected into the YTD projects than for those who have access only to the status quo services and incentives that the existing system provides. In the short term, the interventions will help youth to gain experience in work-related activities as well as paid employment; have a higher income from an increase in earnings, as well as benefits due to the SSA waivers; improve attitudes and expectations about the future; and achieve greater engagement in education (for those projects with a focus on education activities). Chapters IV through VII describe these outcomes in greater detail.

The main goal of the impact analysis is to assess the effects of the services and waivers on eligible youth who expressed interest in participating in YTD and were offered the

opportunity to do so. These estimates, referred to as *intent to treat* (ITT) impacts, includes the effects of the programs on all eligible youth who were *offered* the opportunity to participate in a YTD project. Thus, the ITT impacts reflect the effects of the intervention on all youth who accept the offer of services as well as those who expressed interest and were assigned to the treatment group but did not enroll in the project to receive services.¹

Policymakers and program operators often are also interested in knowing the impacts of a program on people who actually participated in it. The *treatment on the treated* (TOT) impacts answer the policy question: “What are the effects of a YTD project on eligible youth who consented to be in the evaluation and who actually participated in the project?” for primary outcomes, the interim reports will include calculations of the TOT impact. The appendix to this analysis plan discusses the assumptions underlying this estimate.

Our approach to the impact analysis is to generate period-specific net impacts, or treatment-control differences. Although random assignment ensures that simple comparison of mean values of outcomes will yield unbiased estimates of program impacts, we will estimate differences in regression-adjusted means. This will be conducted using analytic models (ordinary least squares) or logistic regression methods for continuous or categorical variables, respectively, that control for baseline characteristics that are believed to be correlated with the outcomes of interest. This approach may yield more precise impact estimates—that is, estimates with smaller standard errors—thereby providing greater statistical power to detect small impacts. In addition, the regression adjustment approach controls for chance differences between treatment and control group members in observable baseline characteristics that are correlated with outcome measures.²

Although it will be useful to assess the impacts of the interventions on all outcomes, we have to be careful about the problem of “multiple comparisons.” The problem is that, when a large number of statistical tests are performed, simply comparing each of the p-values to a significance standard would lead us to mistakenly find more spurious “impacts” than the underlying true effects. For example, at a 5 percent level of significance, we expect roughly 1 in 20 tests will show statistical significance by chance, even in the absence of a true effect. While corrections exist to help address this problem, the corrections often become stringent as the number of comparisons increases, and may lead to an error in the other direction, so that true underlying impacts are no longer detected.

We will address the problem of multiple comparisons by limiting the number of main outcomes we examine to those areas where we expect the programs to have the greatest impacts (we refer to these as primary outcomes) and view other impact estimates as supporting or supplementary analyses. In particular, following the approach suggested in

¹ We expect between 15-17 percent of youth in the treatment group will not enroll in the project to receive services.

² In our analysis, we will compare regression-adjusted impacts to mean impacts, discuss any discrepancies in the estimates, and investigate the potential for bias in the standard errors of the regression estimates due to imbalance in the sample (Schochet 2007). A discussion of this issue is included in the Appendix.

Schochet (2008), we will specify, *a priori*, the primary domains in which we expect to see program impacts, and specify primary outcomes to be tested in these domains. These primary outcomes will be the main hypotheses we test. Each primary outcome represents a distinct domain and we will not need to adjust standard errors across these domains. In addition, we will examine supplementary outcomes to help explain impacts on the primary outcomes.³ These supplementary analyses will provide further information about our primary outcomes. However, if there are no impacts on the primary outcomes, we will conduct the supplementary analysis but we will not draw leading conclusions about impacts that only show up in the supplementary findings. We will view these findings as exploratory and worthy of further investigation and possibly areas for future research.⁴

Based on the conceptual framework presented in Chapter I and our knowledge of the specific YTD projects, we have identified the key domains and likely primary outcomes for which impacts will be estimated. This analysis plan describes five primary outcomes to be assessed in the interim reports, as shown in Table II.1. Two of the primary outcomes relate to activities during the first year after random assignment: received any employment-

Table II.1. Primary Outcomes

Outcome	Description
Received any employment-promoting service	This measure includes career counseling, support for resume writing and job search activities, job shadowing and apprenticeships, other employment services, and SSA benefits counseling during the year following random assignment. Source: YTD 12-month survey.
Intensity of paid employment	This measure will capture the prevalence of paid employment, as well as the amount of time in paid employment, during the year after random assignment. Source: YTD 12-month survey.
Average total income (earnings and SSA benefits)	Total income is the sum of all youth earnings and SSA benefits from SSI/DI for the year following random assignment. Source: YTD 12-month survey for earnings and SSA administrative records for benefits.
Self-efficacy and expectations (composite)	This outcome combines measures of youth's sense of self-determination and measures of youth's expectations for the future. Source: YTD 12-month survey.
Ever enrolled in a high school or another educational institution after random assignment	This measure captures enrollment at academic institutions. The measure does not include job training. Source: YTD 12-month survey.

³ If the primary outcomes show impacts, we will not worry about conducting multiple comparisons adjustments for the supplementary outcomes as these are intended to explain and shed light on the primary outcome.

⁴ If the primary outcome does not show a statistically significant impact but the supplementary outcomes show a compelling pattern of significant impacts, we will interpret this as strong evidence of an impact.

promoting service and intensity of paid employment. The third primary outcome is average total income (earnings and SSA benefits), during the year. The fourth primary outcome is a composite measure of self-efficacy and expectations at the time of the 12-month follow-up survey. We include an additional primary outcome, ever enrolled in a high school or another educational institution after random assignment, for YTD projects that emphasize education-related services (notably Montgomery County and Erie).

Before estimating impacts, we will investigate the appropriateness of each outcome measure for the specific project site by considering the findings of the process analysis. Furthermore, these outcomes are described at a broad level in the subsequent chapters of this analysis plan. We will work with the raw data to create appropriate variables that are supported by the data. For example, before estimating the impact of YTD interventions on the distribution of earnings, we will first examine the distribution of earnings for treatment and control groups (combined) to determine a relevant categorization of the earnings distribution. This initial exploration may result in a revision of the outcome measures described in the subsequent chapters.

To estimate the regression-adjusted impacts, we will identify a core set of control variables to be included in models. The control variables will pertain to the period at or before random assignment. For simplicity, we will likely use one set of control variables to estimate impacts for all outcome measures. The control variables will include: (1) variables for which the treatment and control groups have significantly different mean values; (2) variables that are believed, or known, to have strong behavioral relationships with the outcome measures; (3) variables related to the enrollment cohort or the timing of random assignment; and (4) variables that could be used to target intervention services to youth for whom they would have the greatest impacts to facilitate subgroup analysis.

2. Data Sources and Sample

The analysis of the interim project impacts will rely on two sources of data: (1) the baseline and 12-month follow-up surveys being conducted as part of the YTD evaluation, and (2) administrative benefits data from SSA records. In this section, we briefly discuss these data sources. A more detailed discussion of these data sources is provided in the evaluation's data collection and survey plan (Rangarajan et al. 2007).

The baseline survey is being conducted as part of the evaluation's sample intake process. These data provide demographic characteristics and personal and family background information for youth who consent to participate in the study (treatment and control groups). The baseline data will be used to assess that random assignment was well implemented and that we have two equivalent groups at baseline. The baseline survey will also be the principal source of the control variables that will be included in regression models to improve the precision of impact estimates. It will also be a source of criteria for defining subgroups.

The first follow-up survey of YTD evaluation enrollees is conducted 12 months after random assignment. This survey gathers information on outcomes that may be affected by

the YTD interventions, such as receipt of work-related services, attitudes toward work, employment, and understanding of SSA work incentives, use of SSA work incentives, and measures reflecting self-determination and youth attitudes and expectations. In the 12-month follow-up survey, we gather information on key outcomes such as employment and receipt of services since the time of the baseline interview as well as information specific to the time of the follow-up interview on a variety of outcomes, such as living arrangements and educational attainment.

The primary sample for our impact analysis will be all youth who completed the 12-month follow-up survey. For some outcomes, we may also use a relevant subset of the sample defined by baseline characteristics. For example, to analyze impacts on completion of high school, we will estimate impacts for all youth, as well as for the sample of youth who had not completed high school at baseline. The construction of outcome variables and any subsamples for analysis will be discussed in Chapters IV through VII as we present impact analysis for each main domain of analysis.

In addition to surveys, the interim reports will rely on data from SSA administrative files. Impacts on SSA benefits and use of work incentives will be a critical outcome for the analysis. In addition, data from SSA records will be used to supplement the baseline survey as a source of enrollee characteristics to use as control variables in YTD impacts. Finally, SSA benefits impacts for the 12 months after random assignment will be used for evaluation of any nonresponse bias.

For disability benefits information from SSA records, we will use the “Ticket Research Files” (TRF) generated by MPR for evaluation of the SSA “Ticket to Work” program. The TRF includes information on primary disabling condition, receipt of any disability benefits, the type of benefits received, and the monthly dollar amount of benefits received. The TRF also has information on work participation and use of work-related incentives.⁵

3. Analytic Considerations

Prior to conducting the impact analysis, we will investigate several analytic considerations which include the following: examining the extent to which the research sample is similar or differs from the eligible target population; whether the randomized treatment and control groups are equivalent at baseline; the extent of nonresponse to the 12-month follow-up surveys; the representativeness of the 12-month survey sample to the full study sample; and whether the sample will support subgroup analysis.

The interim reports will briefly describe the enrollment process, evaluation consent rates, and survey response rates. The approach to sample recruitment in five of the six YTD projects involves releasing random samples of youth from SSA lists that meet the projects’

⁵ For the interim reports on the Erie and Colorado sites, we have arranged for a special augmentation of the TRF08 to include benefit data through March 2009 (one year following the last random assignment). Similar arrangements will be made as necessary for interim reports for other YTD sites.

criteria for the target population. In these projects, we will use administrative data to compare the characteristics of youth who enrolled in the evaluation with youth who were targeted for YTD services but who did not enroll. We will use the baseline survey and administrative data to compare characteristics of respondents and nonrespondents to the 12-month follow-up survey (see the appendix for details).

Before conducting the impact analysis, we will compare the baseline characteristics of the treatment and control groups. Even with random assignment, we expect to find some differences in baseline characteristics due to chance. We will use a table similar to Table II.2 to describe the baseline characteristics of the treatment and control groups. The table may differ somewhat across the YTD projects. For each YTD project, we will examine the distribution and data quality of baseline characteristics in order to determine the most relevant breakdown of characteristics to be reported in the table. We will aim to use a standard set of variables, whenever appropriate, to enhance the comparability across the sites.

The small sample size per project (880 youth per project) makes estimating project-specific subgroup impacts for multiple subgroups challenging. Furthermore, to be responsive to the multiple comparisons problem, it is important to identify upfront key subgroups that we will use to estimate impacts and to minimize the number of key subgroups for which we will estimate impacts as part of the primary analyses. Based on these considerations, the two main subgroups that we propose to examine in our analyses are: (1) youth under 18 or age 18 and older at the time of random assignment; and (2) in-school versus out-of-school status at baseline. We will examine impacts using the more appropriate of those subgroups, depending on the YTD project, its goals, and its target population. There are reasons to view these as the critical subgroups. For example, we might expect to see different impacts on income and work incentives and benefits for youth under 18 or age 18 or older as a result of the age 18 continuing disability review waiver. Similarly, we might expect to see larger impacts on employment on older or out-of-school youth as opposed to younger or in-school youth.

The subgroup indicators will be constructed from data pertaining to the period at or prior to random assignment, and will be obtained through the baseline survey or SSA administrative records. We will use a table similar to Table II.3 to describe the sample sizes of relevant subgroups. If sample sizes permit, we will examine impacts for other subgroups as part of the supplementary analyses for subgroups that help in interpreting the main impact estimates (e.g., duration on the beneficiary rolls). The subgroups may differ by YTD project. For example, it may be possible to distinguish beneficiaries versus “at-risk” youth for the Montgomery County project. To ensure adequate statistical power to detect impacts in these and other potential subgroup analyses, we will conduct the analyses for an individual YTD project only if we can define subgroup pairs for which the sample split is between 40/60 and 60/40; otherwise, we will avoid conducting the analyses. The appendix to this analysis plan describes other subgroups we might examine related to research methodology (e.g., enrollment cohort).

Table II.2. Baseline Characteristics of the Research Sample (Percentages, Unless Noted)

	Full Sample	Treatment Group	Control Group	Difference	p-Value
Demographic Characteristics					
Female					
Age (in years)					
14-17					
18-21					
22-24					
Average age (in years)					
Race/ethnicity					
Hispanic					
Non-Hispanic white					
Non-Hispanic black					
Non-Hispanic other					
Primarily speaks English at home					
Education and Training					
Type of school attending at baseline					
Regular high school					
Special high school					
Other school					
Not attending school at baseline					
Highest grade completed					
9th grade or less					
10th or 11th grade					
12th grade					
College or technical school					
Other					
Has diploma, GED, or certificate of completion					
Received job training in past year					
Health and Disability					
Self-reported health status					
Excellent					
Very good/good					
Fair/poor					
Primary disabling condition					
Mental illness					
Cognitive/developmental disability					
Learning disability/ADD					
Physical disability					
Speech, hearing, visual impairment					
Age at SSI program entry					
Under 10					
10-13					
14-18					
Over 18					
Assistance Required					
Reading, hearing, speaking, or walking aids					
Help with personal care					
Living Arrangement and Household Composition					
Living arrangement					
House/apartment with parent(s)					
House/apartment with other relatives					
House/apartment with friends/roommates					
Supervised group home/dormitory					
Other					

	Full Sample	Treatment Group	Control Group	Difference	p-Value
Number of people in household (mean)					
Lives with others who have disabilities					
Work-Related Experience					
Worked as a volunteer in past year					
Worked for pay					
In past year					
In past month					
Expectations for Next Five Years					
Will live independently from parents (with or without help)					
Will continue education					
Will finish high school					
Will work for pay					
Parental Characteristics					
Mother graduated from high school					
Mother is employed					
Socioeconomic Background					
Household income in past year					
Less than \$25,000					
\$25,000 - \$49,999					
\$50,000 or more					
Household receives TANF/family assistance					
Household receives food stamps					
Other Characteristics					
Type of disability benefit					
SSI only					
SSDI only					
SSI/SSDI concurrent					
Random assignment cohort					
Year 1 cohort					
Year 2 cohort					
Year 3 cohort (if appropriate)					
Location within a YTD project's service delivery area					
Site 1					
Site 2					
etc.					

Sample Size

Source: YTD baseline surveys, conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., and SSA administrative data.

*/**/**Treatment-control difference is statistically significant at the .10/.05/.01 level, using a two-tailed test.

To estimate subgroup impacts, we will modify the multivariate model to include the interaction of the treatment status indicator with specific subgroup indicator variables. For each subgroup, we will conduct tests of significance to determine the statistical significance of the subgroup impact estimate, and also test whether the impact estimates across the subgroups are significantly different from each other.

Table II.3. Sample Size by Subgroup

	Number	Percentage of Sample
Age		
Under age 18 at baseline		
Age 18 or over at baseline		
School Attendance		
In school at baseline		
Not in school at baseline		
Total		

Source: YTD baseline survey conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

B. PROCESS ANALYSIS

The process analysis will document the interventions and services each YTD project provides, assess how they were implemented and their fidelity to the original proposed model, examine how they enhance services for youth with disabilities, and identify the successes and challenges associated with implementation. This section describes our approach to conducting the process analysis beginning with our analytic approach and followed by a description of the data sources. The process analysis will also draw on findings from on project-specific early assessment reports that covered the initial six months of project operations and the cross-site project profiles report that describes each project's intended intervention (Martinez et al. 2008).

1. Key Topics and Analytic Approach

The YTD process analysis will focus on five key topics: (1) the local context and service environment, (2) description of the intended intervention, (3) assessment of program implementation, (4) extent of service utilization, and (5) a discussion of implementation successes and challenges. Below we briefly summarize these topics, and summarize our approach to conducting the process analysis. More details on these topics are included in the evaluation design report.

First, we will examine the local context and service environment. A project's service environment includes the resources that youth in the target population may have access to in the local area, as well as the economic milieu for these youth to find jobs. This contextual information can be helpful in identifying the service gaps a project may fill and in developing a sense of the environment youth would have faced in the absence of the YTD program.

Second, the YTD project and intended intervention will be described. This analysis will include a basic description of the planned intervention, and will give us a context for comparing the services that a project intended to provide with what it actually provides. The analysis will also highlight which of the core YTD project components are featured more strongly in the proposed set of services and which are featured less strongly, and it will help

us understand why projects made their decisions. It will also describe the project partners and operating structure, how responsibilities are shared, and the organizational and management structure of the project, including staffing levels and staff roles and responsibilities.

Third, we will assess the project implementation and fidelity to the model. Each YTD project formulates a detailed plan to deliver services at the outset; however, the actual service delivery approach may vary as the project gains experience about needs of the youth it serves and identifies different approaches that may work better in engaging the youth in services. Thus, a careful assessment of program implementation and the fidelity to the intended intervention will be a critical component of the process analysis. The analysis will include an assessment of recruitment, enrollment, and service delivery strategies.

Fourth, we will analyze three aspects of service utilization and participant satisfaction: (1) participation in project services, (2) use of YTD waivers, and (3) participants' satisfaction with services. More details on this analysis are included in Chapter III.

Fifth, lessons related to implementation successes and challenges will be drawn by synthesizing the results from the qualitative and quantitative analyses discussed above. In particular, we will note aspects of each intervention that were more or less successful and examine how these successes and challenges affected the project's ability to provide effective services to participants. These lessons will help inform the impact findings and will provide useful information for future replications or adaptations of the interventions.

Using the data sources described below, the process study will carefully address the key research topics. Our approach to the process analysis will be theory driven and will rely on the conceptual framework for YTD described in Chapter I. The analysis will examine whether the projects' designs included all of the core components in the conceptual framework, and whether there was emphasis placed on specific components. We will examine the extent to which the projects were able to deliver services related to these components, as well as the successes and challenges they faced in so doing. We will also rely on ETO data, which will make it easier to compare projects. The use of more than one perspective to verify responses (often referred to as triangulations) will be a key element of our process study. To verify and analyze key questions, we will factor in the perspectives of two separate data sources. These sources may include two agencies (for example, project staff and school district staff), staff at different levels, or information provided by staff during site visits and information that they entered into ETO while they were delivering services. These different perspectives should give us a good understanding of key implementation issues. For each of the key questions, we will rely on multiple sources for information. To draw credible conclusions, we will assess the extent to which these sources support each other and instances in which they do not.

2. Data Sources and Sample

For the interim reports, we will tap a wide range of qualitative and quantitative data to inform the process analysis. Central to the process analysis will be data collected during two

comprehensive, multi-day field visits. During these visits, we will conduct semistructured interviews with senior management, project managers, staff, and other key stakeholders, such as staff from vocational rehabilitation agencies and school districts. The interviews will cover such topics as project management and relationships with other providers, service delivery strategies, project staffing, project costs, and other related items. Interviews will be documented using a template developed for the YTD process analysis, and the data will be stored, managed, and analyzed using qualitative data analysis software. We will also conduct focus groups with youth participants and, in some cases, their parents. Information collected during earlier visits, such as early assessment visits conducted about six months after the start of random assignment or visits related to the provision of technical assistance, will be incorporated into our analysis.

Various documents developed by or for the participating sites will also be examined by the evaluation team to feed into the process analysis. This includes initial proposals or concept papers, cooperative agreements and memorandums of understanding, and progress reports developed and submitted by each participating site to SSA.

Quantitative data will also be an important source of information for the process analysis. Particularly important will be the ETO data. Each YTD project enters information into ETO related to the provision of services to, or on behalf of, enrolled youth. Staff members also record their outreach efforts related to enrolling youth into YTD services. The interim reports will examine ETO enrollment activities and service provision for 15 months following random assignment. We will use these data to address critical questions related to enrollment efforts, participant take-up of project services, the type and level of service, and other service delivery issues. ETO will be the key data source for assessing the intensity of service utilization. As part of the process analysis, we will also assess project staffs' use of ETO, and address the strengths and limitations of ETO for tracking services. There is variability in the use of specific ETO data elements across the YTD sites. The interim reports will provide site-specific operational definitions of these data elements and our assessments of the use of ETO by site staff.

The sample for analysis of service utilization will be all treatment group youth. We will have 15 months of ETO data available for all youth at the time we draft the interim reports. For example, for Erie and Colorado, we plan to use ETO data through June 2009. We will have longer follow-up periods for youth who enrolled early into project services and will conduct some additional analyses using the longer follow-up period for these youth.

We will also use data from the baseline survey to provide information on the characteristics of the youth the projects intend to serve, allowing us to develop good descriptions of the target population, as well as the youth who actually enroll and receive services. We will compare the baseline characteristics of treatment group youth who participate in YTD with treatment group youth who do not participate, using the baseline survey and SSA administrative data on earnings and benefits. In addition, we will estimate a multivariate model of high intensity participation to examine which baseline characteristics are most correlated with high levels of participation. Data from the 12-month follow-up

survey will provide information on participants' satisfaction with project services as well as on treatment group members' knowledge of YTD waivers.

The process analysis will rely mainly on ETO for describing service utilization among youth in the treatment group. In contrast, the impact analysis on service utilization will use comparable data from the 12-month follow-up for treatment and control group youths in the surveys. Data from the 12-month follow-up survey will not directly be comparable to the ETO data, for a number of reasons. For example, the ETO data are entered by program staff at the time of service delivery whereas the follow-up data rely on youths' recall of services used, and we expect to find discrepancies between the reports in ETO data and the survey data. We will conduct analysis of differences in service utilization measures between ETO data and 12-month follow-up survey data. We will describe any differences in measured service utilization between these sources and discuss the causes and implications of any differences.

CHAPTER III

PROCESS ANALYSIS

Each participating YTD site developed a framework for the intervention services it would provide. Generally, the components were identified to fill gaps in available services targeted to youth with disabilities and were considered to be important in facilitating the transition of youth into the world of work and/or post-secondary education. In developing interventions, projects were encouraged to include components that aligned with the core components identified in the YTD conceptual model (see Chapter I).

This chapter discusses our plans for the process analysis. We will start by providing an overview of the local environment in which the program is operating and describe the sponsoring organization. Then, we will present a description of the YTD model as conceptualized. This will be followed by a discussion of the project's approach to marketing the YTD intervention and enrolling youth into program services. We will then present our findings related to implementation of the intervention, service utilization, and participant satisfaction with YTD services. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of implementation lessons and challenges.

A. LOCAL CONTEXT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Each YTD project is being implemented in an existing service environment with myriad service delivery systems and service providers. These systems link to each other in ways that preceded YTD. For example, connections may have existed between the vocational rehabilitation agency and the school system. Some YTD project sites might have well-developed links across service providers, while others do not. In addition, each YTD site is operating in an environment with economic and social characteristics that may interact with the services being provided to facilitate, or perhaps challenge, the success of the participating youth. For example, local unemployment rates or the type of major industries present in an area may help or hinder the YTD program's efforts to move youth into the labor market.

Our analysis of local context will describe the environment in which the YTD project exists. We will also note any significant changes in the service environment that took place over the course of the evaluation. The analysis presented will include observation and findings from our site visits, as well as some analysis data from published sources such as census data or measures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Table III.1 provides an example of how the latter information will be summarized and presented. It presents contextual information such as the population size, household income, education levels, and unemployment levels for the county (or metropolitan area) in which the YTD project operates. It then presents this information for the state, so that comparisons can be made between the county-level information and the state-level information. For broader context, statistics for the United States as a whole will be presented.

We will also describe the non-YTD services available in the community. Not only is this information vital to understanding what gaps the YTD program services are filling, but it also provides background for understanding the service and employment context for youth in the control group (that is, it provides a sense of the counterfactual in the random assignment evaluation). Non-YTD services for youth with disabilities will be identified by YTD program staff during site visits and by youth in the follow-up survey. We will also conduct interviews with some of these service providers to gain an understanding of the type of services that are available and how they differ from YTD services.

Table III.1. Characteristics of the YTD Project's Service and Employment Environment

	MSA/County	State	United States
Demographic and Economic Characteristics			
Population (thousands)			
Median annual household income (\$)			
Residents below the federal poverty level (%)			
Language other than English spoken at home (%)			
High school graduate (% , over age 25)			
Bachelor's degree or higher (% , over age 25)			
Unemployment rate			
SSA Benefits and Beneficiary Characteristics			
SSI benefit level (including state supplement, \$)			
Number of beneficiaries (age 14-25)			
SSI only			
SSDI only			
SSI/SSDI concurrent			
Beneficiaries by impairment (age 14-25, %)			
Systems disorder			
Mental retardation			
Mental and behavioral disorders			
Other disabilities			

Source: Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and other sources.

Notes: The notes will include a definition of the metropolitan statistical area (MSA).

B. OVERVIEW OF THE SPONSORING ORGANIZATION AND PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

At each site, the YTD intervention is being led by a sponsoring organization. In many cases there are other organizations involved in the intervention as well. In our report we will provide background information on the sponsoring organization, including information on the management and staffing structure. The organization's mission will be described, highlighting any consistencies or inconsistencies with YTD. We will also provide descriptions of the organization's prior experience with populations similar to those served by YTD as well as descriptions of relevant partnerships. Any formal partnerships established to facilitate the delivery of YTD services will be described including a description of how the organizations work together to effectively provide services to youth. Links to systems important to YTD will be highlighted, such as relationships with vocational rehabilitation or education. In addition, existing relationships with local SSA offices will be described.

C. THE YTD INTERVENTION AS PROPOSED

In our analysis, we will describe the sponsoring organization's proposed intervention, including services that were expected to be offered.¹ It will be based on a review of documents related to the early stages of the intervention, such as the project's original proposal and cooperative agreements and/or memorandum of understanding developed with the site.

In general, lead organizations developed their YTD interventions to fill a gap in available services in the community. This analysis will explain the genesis of the intervention, reasons the sponsoring organization developed the intervention, and the motivation behind certain components such as the chosen target population. It will describe the planned program components and explain how participants were expected to flow through service components. We will also present the project's staffing structure, staffing levels, and anticipated staff qualifications.

D. PROGRAM OUTREACH AND ENROLLMENT INTO PROJECT SERVICES

This portion of the analysis will focus on the project's approach to outreach and enrolling youth into services, and the characteristics of youth who enrolled in project services.

1. Enrolling Youth into YTD Services

Program staff responsibilities included outreach to youth to engage them in project activities. Youth who were randomly assigned to the treatment group had already agreed to join YTD services, but it was up to the program staff to actually enroll them in services. To

¹ Readers of the interim reports will be referred to specific chapters of the YTD "Profiles Report" (Martinez et al. 2008) for a more detailed discussion of the proposed intervention.

do so, the program staff usually conducted an initial interview, and often asked youth to sign a form indicating they would participate in project services. Those who did not enroll into project services were also not eligible for the YTD waivers. Our analysis will describe the approaches taken by project staff to enroll youth into project services. Some projects had dedicated staff who focused on enrollment, while in others any or all staff might have participated in enrolling youth into the project services.

We will also describe the level of effort it took for staff to successfully enroll youth into YTD services. Table III.2 provides an example of the type of analysis we may conduct to assess outreach efforts. The table presents information on the level of staff efforts, including the number of outreach attempts and the average time spent both per contact and per youth across all outreach contacts. In order to make sure we do not overstate the “efforts” involved in brief contacts, mailings and messages left for youth, we will develop a definition of a substantial contact which picks up contacts where more time was spent trying to reach youth. In addition, we will present the total amount of time it took to enroll youth

Table III.2. Staff Efforts to Enroll Treatment Group Youth into YTD Services

	All	Participants	Nonparticipants	Difference	p-Value
Staff Enrollment Efforts					
Total number of outreach contacts					
Average number of outreach contacts per youth					
Average time spent per contact (minutes)					
Time spent per youth (%)					
Less than 1 hour					
1 hour to less than 3 hours					
3 hours to less than 6 hours					
More than 6 hours					
Average time spent (hours)					
Number of Days to Enroll Youth					
Number of days from date of random assignment to the first attempted contact (%)					
Less than 3 days					
3 to 9 days					
More than 9 days					
Average days to first attempted contact					
Number of days from first attempted contact to enrollment into services (%)					
Less than 3 days					N/A
3 to 9 days					N/A
More than 9 days					N/A
Average days from first attempt to enrollment					N/A
Sample Size					

Source: YTD program ETO management information system.

Note: Sample includes youth randomly assigned to the treatment group between (start date for specific project) and (final date for specific project).

into program services. Our analysis will be conducted for all youth, and separately for those who enrolled (participants) and those who did not (nonparticipants) to assess if effort expended varies by enrollment status.

Additional analysis will be conducted to determine the reasons for nonparticipation (e.g. refusals, loss to follow-up, etc.) and to determine whether the average number of days from date of random assignment to enrollment into services varied across quarters of follow-up.

2. Characteristics of Participants and Nonparticipants

We will describe the characteristics of participants and nonparticipants using data from the baseline survey and SSA administrative data (Table III.3).

E. IMPLEMENTATION AND SERVICE UTILIZATION

This analysis will describe the YTD services as implemented and service utilization. We will examine participation in services, intensity of service utilization, and participation patterns over time. We will also estimate models to understand which youths participate in services and which type of service. Finally we will describe participation across various youth characteristics, and youth satisfaction with YTD services.

1. Use of YTD Services

This analysis will describe the services as implemented and the use of those services by treatment group youth who enrolled into project services. We begin with analysis of overall services and then turn to the five main service components: person-centered planning, employment, education, benefits, and case management. Taken together, these findings will not only provide an in-depth description of service use patterns, but also help to inform the impact analysis described in later chapters.

We will develop descriptions of the services that were implemented, relying mainly on interviews with project staff. We will also describe the waiver implementation process and the use of ETO as a case management tool. Differences between the intended intervention and the program as it was implemented will be highlighted. Reasons for any deviations will be discussed and possible implications will be presented.

We will analyze participation in services using ETO data. Information will be presented on participation rates, the average number and frequency of contacts, time spent with enrollees, and the mode of contact (e.g., face-to-face, telephone, or other). In some cases, services may have been delivered via group workshops rather than one-on-one. When this occurs, participation in group activities will be included in the analysis and in tables presented below. We will also present qualitative information on service utilization from our discussions with project staff.

Table III.3. Baseline Characteristics of the Treatment Group by Participation Status (Percentages, Unless Noted)

	Treatment Youth		Difference	p-Value
	All	Participant		
Demographic Characteristics				
Female				
Age (in years)				
14-17				
18-21				
22-24				
Average age (mean years)				
Race/ethnicity				
Hispanic				
Non-Hispanic white				
Non-Hispanic black				
Non-Hispanic other				
Speaks primarily English at home				
Education and Training				
Type of school attending at baseline				
Regular high school				
Special high school				
Other school				
Not attending school at baseline				
Highest grade completed				
9th grade or less				
10th or 11th grade				
12th grade				
College or technical school				
Other				
Has diploma, GED, or certificate of completion				
Received job training in past year				
Health and Disability				
Self-reported health status				
Excellent				
Very good/good				
Fair/poor				
Primary disabling condition				
Mental illness				
Cognitive/developmental disability				
Learning disability/ADD				
Physical disability				
Speech, hearing, visual impairment				
Age at SSI program entry				
Under 10				
10-13				
14-18				
Over 18				
Assistance Required				
Reading, hearing, speaking, or walking aids				
Help with personal care				
Living Arrangement and Household Composition				
Living arrangement				
House/apartment with both parents				
House/apartment with single parent				

	Treatment Youth		Difference	p-Value
	All	Participant		
House/apartment with other relatives				
House/apartment with friends/roommates				
Supervised group home/dormitory				
Other				
Number of people in household (mean)				
Lives with others who have disabilities				
Work-Related Experience and Earnings				
Worked as a volunteer in past year				
Worked for pay				
In past year				
In past month				
Annual earnings				
First year before year of random assignment				
Expectations for Next Five Years				
Will live independently from parents (with or without help)				
Will continue education				
Will finish high school				
Will work for pay				
Parental Characteristics				
Mother graduated from high school				
Mother is employed				
Socioeconomic Background				
Household income in past year				
Less than \$25,000				
\$25,000 - \$49,999				
\$50,000 or more				
Household receives TANF/family assistance				
Household receives food stamps				
Other Characteristics				
Type of disability benefit				
SSI only				
SSDI only				
SSI/SSDI concurrent				
Random assignment cohort				
Year 1 cohort				
Year 2 cohort				
Year 3 cohort				
Location within a YTD project's service delivery area				
Site 1				
Site 2				
etc.				

Sample Size

Source: YTD baseline survey conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., SSA administrative data.

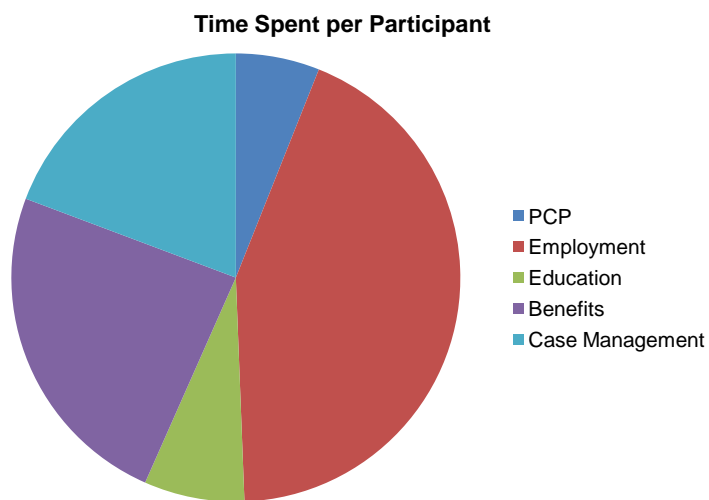
*/**/***/Difference is statistically significant at the .10/.05/.01 level, using a two-tailed test.

The tables in the remainder of this section provide examples of how we will present quantitative ETO service utilization data. As described above, our analysis will also rely on qualitative data from interviews with project staff, and this analysis will be integrated into the findings from the quantitative analysis, discussed below. For overall service utilization and for each main service component, we show an illustrative table that combines participation and intensity of service utilization.² The kinds of information we may present include how quickly youth were contacted, the intensity of service contacts, as well as the mode of the contact (Table III.4). In addition, a distribution of the total time spent per youth across broad program components may be presented (see Figure III.1 for an example).

Table III.4. Overall Participation in Key YTD Services

	YTD Participants
Use of Services (%)	
Any service use	
Person-centered planning	
Benefits counseling	
Discussion and use of waivers	
Employment-related services	
Education-related services	
Case management services	
Timing of Service Use	
Number of days between enrollment and first service contact (%)	
1 or less	
2 to 7	
More than 7	
Average number of days between enrollment and first service contact	
Intensity of Service Use	
Number of contacts (%)	
0	
1-7	
8-14	
15 or more	
Average number of contacts per participant	
Number of hours (%)	
0	
Less than 1	
1-7	
8-14	
15 or more	
Average time spent per participant (hours)	
Type of Contact (%)	
Face-to-face	
Telephone	
Other	
Sample Size	
Source: YTD program ETO management information system.	

² While we describe our proposed analysis and reporting in this manner in the analysis plan, the interim report may focus on overall participation and participation in key components, and have a separate section on intensity of service utilization.

Figure III.1. Distribution of Time Spent Across Program Components (Percentages)

Source: YTD program ETO management information system.

Each YTD project generally includes some form of self-determination or discovery process that allows youth to develop transition goals (Table III.5); a process often facilitated by program staff. Though there are project-specific titles for this goal-setting process, it is generically known as person-centered planning (PCP). This section will describe the delivery of person-centered planning services, and the timing for when these services were provided. The time spent on these services, as well as the setting in which these services were provided will also be reported.

Benefits counseling is a major component of each of the YTD projects, particularly given the waivers provided. This counseling is essential in ensuring that YTD youth understand the waivers and the SSA work incentives. This section will describe the delivery of benefits counseling. In addition, it will include a description of the process used to implement the YTD waivers, such as how program staff communicated with SSA on issues related to waiver activation. Tables III.6 and III.7 describe the types of analyses we will conduct to learn more about the extent to which youth received benefits and waiver counseling and their use of the YTD waivers. The specific services that will be included in Table III.6 may vary by site. For example, the table will include services such as “financial/benefits literacy education” and “assistance with overpayments” for sites where these were aspects of the service delivery model.

Table III.5. Receipt of Person-Centered Planning Services

	YTD Participants
Use of Service (%)	
Any person-centered planning	
Timing of Service Use	
Number of days between enrollment and first service contact (%)	
1 or less	
2 to 7	
More than 7	
Average number of days between enrollment and first service contact	
Intensity of Service Use	
Number of contacts (%)	
0	
1-7	
8-14	
15 or more	
Average number of contacts per participant	
Number of hours (%)	
0	
Less than 1	
1-7	
8-14	
15 or more	
Average time spent per participant (hours)	
Type of Contact (%)	
Face-to-face	
Telephone	
Other	
Sample Size	

Source: YTD program ETO management information system.

Table III.6. Receipt of Benefits Counseling Services

	YTD Participants
Use of Services (%)	
Any benefits planning service	
General overview ^a	
Benefits analysis ^b	
Benefits assessment conducted	
Other benefits analysis	
Other ^c	
Any waiver/work incentive discussion	
Any YTD waiver discussion	
Non-YTD SSA work incentives discussion ^d	
Other benefits-related discussion ^e	
Timing of Service Use	
Number of days between enrollment and first service contact (%)	
1 or less	
2 to 7	
More than 7	
(Average number of days between enrollment and first service contact)	
Intensity of Service Use	
Number of contacts (%)	
0	
1-7	
8-14	
15 or more	
(Average number of contacts per participant)	
Number of hours (%)	
0	
Less than 1	
1-7	
8-14	
15 or more	
(Average time spent per participant, in hours)	
Type of Contact (%)	
Face-to-face	
Telephone	
Other	

Sample Size

Source: YTD program ETO management information system.

Notes: Benefits planning service categories were reclassified into three categories in fall 2008. The mapping of the previous categories to the new categories is as follows:

^a“General overview” includes “information and referral.”

^b“Benefits analysis” includes “benefits management” and “problem solving and advocacy.”

^c“Other” includes “financial/benefits literacy education” and “assistance with overpayments.”

^dIncludes: IRWE, blind work expense, PASS (non-waiver), property essential to self-support, SEIE (non-waiver), 1619(b), subsidy, extended period of eligibility (EPE), Ticket to Work Program, and SSI postsecondary tuition waiver.

^eIncludes: extended Medicare, subsidized housing, food stamps, TANF, workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, veterans' benefit, earned Income tax credit, access to health care, and other benefits.

Table III.7. Receipt of SSA YTD Waiver Discussions and Use of YTD Waivers

	YTD Participants
Use of Services (%)	
Any YTD waiver discussions	
\$3 for \$4 EIE waiver	
Individualized Development Account (IDA) waiver	
PASS waiver	
CDR or Age 18 Med Redetermination waiver	
SEIE waiver	
Timing of Service Use	
Number of days between enrollment and first service contact (%)	
1 or less	
2 to 7	
More than 7	
Average number of days between enrollment and first service contact	
Intensity of Service Use	
Number of contacts (%)	
0	
1-7	
8-14	
15 or more	
Average number of contacts per participant	
Number of hours (%)	
0	
Less than 1	
1-7	
8-14	
15 or more	
Average time spent per participant (hours)	
Type of Contact (%)	
Face-to-face	
Telephone	
Other	
Use of YTD Waivers (%)	
Any YTD waiver use	
\$3 for \$4 EIE waiver	
Individualized Development Account (IDA) waiver	
PASS waiver	
CDR or Age 18 Med Redetermination waiver	
SEIE waiver	
Sample Size	

Source: YTD program ETO management information system.

Notes: EIE is the earned income exclusion. PASS is the plan for achieving self-support. CDR is the continuing disability review. SEIE is the student earned income exclusion.

The provision of employment services is a central feature of all YTD projects. The ETO system allowed staff to enter detailed information about the type of employment service being provided. We will describe three broad categories of employment services detailed to youth: *pre-employment services*, such as career preparation, resume writing, and pre-employment training; *direct employment services*, such as job development and job placement; and *post-employment services*, such as job coaching and other retention services. Where appropriate, the text will highlight more specific types of employment services that fall within the broader categories described above. Table III.8 is an example of the type of analyses we will conduct in interim reports.

Though some YTD projects viewed the provision of education-related services as ancillary to their central mission, each YTD project delivered some form of it. We will conduct analysis and present findings associated with the receipt of education-focused

Table III.8. Receipt of Employment-Related Services

	YTD Participants
Use of Services (%)	
Any employment-related service	
Type of employment-related service	
Pre-employment service	
Direct employment service	
Post-employment service	
Timing of Service Use	
Number of days between enrollment and first service contact (%)	
1 or less	
2 to 7	
More than 7	
(Average number of days between enrollment and first service contact)	
Intensity of Service Use	
Number of contacts (%)	
0	
1-7	
8-14	
15 or more	
(Average number of contacts per participant)	
Number of hours (%)	
0	
Less than 1	
1-7	
8-14	
15 or more	
(Average time spent per participant, in hours)	
Type of Contact (%)	
Face-to-face	
Telephone	
Other	
Sample Size	

Source: YTD program ETO management information system.

services. Table III.9 presents some of the education-related service elements that may be explored. Note that some categories may be consolidated during the analysis phase. We may decide to limit the sample included in this part of the analysis. Furthermore, we may present findings separately for in-school and out-of-school youth, by whether or not the youth has completed high school at baseline, or by the age of the youth.

Table III.9. Receipt of Education-Related Services

	YTD Participants		
	YTD Participants	In School at Baseline	Out of School at Baseline
Use of Services (%)			
Any education-related service			
Primary focus of education services			
Current education placement			
Future (or new) placement			
Type of education services			
Related to educational situation or placement (overall)			
General education counseling or academic advisement			
Registration/enrollment assistance			
Preparing for/attending IEPs or transition meetings			
Accessing financial aid			
Assistance with accommodations or student support services			
Retention activities			
Other			
Enrolled in New Education Program Since Random Assignment (%)			
Timing of Service Use			
Average number of days between enrollment and first service contact			
Intensity of Service Use			
Number of contacts (%)			
0			
1-3			
4-6			
7 or more			
(Average number of contacts per participant)			
Number of hours (%)			
0			
Less than 1			
1-3			
4-6			
7 or more			
(Average time spent per participant, in hours)			
Type of Contact (%)			
Face-to-face			
Telephone			
Other			
Sample Size			

Source: YTD program ETO management information system.

Regardless of the available supports, it is not uncommon for youth in transition to require additional services to address an unexpected challenge. YTD project staff provide case management services to address such challenges and, when appropriate, referrals for ancillary services. This analysis will present findings related to receipt of case management services. It includes a look at the range of case management services that were provided to youth and the types of referrals that were made. Table III.10 is an example of the type of findings related to case management services that may be presented in the interim reports. The text will discuss differences in contact time and effort for different types of services.

Table III.10. Receipt of Case Management and Support Services or Referrals

	YTD Participants
Use of Services (%)	
Any case management and support services	
Type of service	
General check-in	
Family support	
Transportation	
Case review	
Life skills	
Vocational rehabilitation	
Housing services	
Mental health	
Legal information	
Juvenile justice	
Timing of Service Use	
Average number of days between enrollment and first service contact	
Intensity of Service Use	
Number of contacts (%)	
0	
1-3	
4-6	
7 or more	
Average number of contacts per participant	
Number of hours (%)	
0	
Less than 1	
1-3	
4-6	
7 or more	
Average time spent per participant (hours)	
Type of Contact (%)	
Face-to-face	
Telephone	
Other	
Referrals to Other Service Providers (%)	
Any referral to other service providers	
Type of referral	
Division of Rehabilitation Services	
(Project site-specific referrals here)	
Other	

Sample Size

Source: YTD program ETO management information system.

Note: Some subcategories of case management-related services may be consolidated during the analysis phase.

In some cases, YTD programs utilized group workshops as a means of delivering some types of services. In such cases, a description of those workshops will be included in the interim report. Table III.11 provides an example of the type of analysis related to group workshop attendance that will be presented in the report.

2. Participation Patterns Over Time

We will conduct and present analysis related to service use over time. Table III.12 provides an example of the types of analysis we will conduct. Our analysis will focus on the 15-month follow-up period that will be available for all YTD participants. We will examine whether service receipt increases or decreases over time, and how this varies by type of service. We will also tabulate the average hours of services received by YTD participants in each quarter since program enrollment.

All projects are enrolling youth over a 2- to 3-year period. It is possible that service delivery may vary by participant cohort either because the caseloads of youth that staff serve increased over time, or because staff change their approach to service delivery as they learn from their experiences. We will stratify the participant sample into an early and a late cohort to determine whether there were changes in service delivery patterns over the course of the evaluation period (see Table III.13).

The projects typically plan to serve youth for approximately 18 months to 24 months. Of course, some youth may get “disenrolled” or dismissed from program services because they move or simply did not want any more services. Project staff are supposed to track such disenrollment status in ETO. We will conduct analysis on their status and attempt to assess reasons for disengaging and at what time this occurs (Table III.14). We will also conduct analysis to assess which youth disengage for different types of reasons. There is some site variation in terms of how consistently program staff utilized dismissal categories, so a final determination about the inclusion of this type of analysis will be made during the data processing and analysis phase. For each site, the table will show the most prevalent reasons for dismissal from the program.

Table III.11. Group Workshop Attendance

	YTD Participants
Use of Services (%)	
Any group workshop attendance	
7-10 workshops	
4-6 workshops	
1-3 workshops	
Sample Size	

Source: YTD program ETO management information system.

Table III.12. Use of YTD Services Over Time

YTD Service	YTD Participants	
	Percentage Participating	Average Hours Received Services
Any Service		
Ever participated		
Participated Q1		
Participated Q2		
Participated Q3		
Participated Q4		
Participated Q5		
Employment Service		
Ever participated		
Participated Q1		
Participated Q2		
Participated Q3		
Participated Q4		
Participated Q5		
Education Service		
Ever participated		
Participated Q1		
Participated Q2		
Participated Q3		
Participated Q4		
Participated Q5		
Benefits Planning		
Ever participated		
Participated Q1		
Participated Q2		
Participated Q3		
Participated Q4		
Participated Q5		

Sample Size

Source: YTD program ETO management information system.

Notes: Participation is reported by quarter after random assignment. For example, "Q1" refers to the first quarter after random assignment. Definitions of early and late cohorts will be determined during the analysis phase.

Table III.13. Use of YTD Services by Cohort (Percentages)

YTD Service	YTD Participants		Difference	p-Value
	Early Cohort	Late Cohort		
Any Service				
Ever participated				
Participated Q1				
Participated Q2				
Participated Q3				
Participated Q4				
Participated Q5				
Employment Service				
Ever participated				
Participated Q1				
Participated Q2				
Participated Q3				
Participated Q4				
Participated Q5				
Education Service				
Ever participated				
Participated Q1				
Participated Q2				
Participated Q3				
Participated Q4				
Participated Q5				
Benefits Planning				
Ever participated				
Participated Q1				
Participated Q2				
Participated Q3				
Participated Q4				
Participated Q5				

Sample Size

Source: YTD program ETO management information system.

Notes: Participation is reported by quarter after random assignment. For example, "Q1" refers to the first quarter after random assignment. Definitions of early and late cohorts will be determined during the analysis phase.

Table III.14. Status of Treatment Group at End of Follow-up Period

	YTD Participants
Enrollment (%)	
Never enrolled	
Ever enrolled	
Actively engaged	
In follow-along ^a	
Inactive	
Successfully completed ^b	
Dismissed from program	
Moved out of program jurisdiction	
Withdrew voluntarily	
Other dismissal from program ^c	
Other	
Time Over Which Received Services (among those who enrolled, %)	
Less than 1 week	
1 week to less than 1 month	
1 month to less than 3 months	
3 months to less than 6 months	
6 or more months	
(Average number of months)	

Sample Size

Source: YTD program ETO management information system.

Notes: The follow-up period ends 15 months after random assignment. During the analysis phase, decisions will be made about which categories to include in the table.

^a“In follow-along” vs. “Inactive” are site-specific designations. Therefore, definitions for these two categories will vary by YTD site.

^b“Successfully completed” includes youth who met their education goal, took a job, or otherwise were considered to complete the program successfully.

^c“Other dismissal from program” includes the following reasons why youth did not successfully complete the program: withdrew voluntarily, failed to comply with program requirements, family concerns, moved out of program jurisdiction, lost contact, health reasons, deceased, incarcerated, placed in foster care, and other.

3. Youth Satisfaction with YTD Services

We will include an analysis of participant satisfaction with YTD services using data from two sources. First, findings from the 12-month survey will be presented for treatment group youth who enrolled in YTD project services, as illustrated in Table III.15. Second, findings from the participant focus groups conducted during the second round of comprehensive field visits will be integrated and analyzed.

F. MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS OF INTENSIVE PARTICIPATION

Some youth will participate intensively in the projects while others will not engage much in project activities. We will attempt to examine which baseline characteristics predict whether a youth will be a high intensity participant in YTD services (Table III.16). We will also explore whether there are differences in the use of specific services or in timing of services by subgroups (as defined by characteristics in Table III.16). The characteristics in Table III.16 are examples of characteristics we will include in the analysis. The table will report results for characteristics that are expected to have a strong correlation with high intensity participation and those that have a statistically significant relationship. A footnote will list the conceptually less important and statistically insignificant variables that were included in the model.

Table III.15. Satisfaction with YTD Services (Percentages)

	YTD Participants
The YTD project has been “Somewhat Helpful” or “Very Helpful” with the following:	
Acquiring a job- or work-related knowledge and skills	
Working effectively with others	
Developing clearer career goals	
Developing a sense of confidence in abilities	
Participant’s overall experience with YTD	
Very good	
Good	
Fair	
Poor	
Don’t know or refused to respond	
Sample Size	
Source:	YTD 12-month follow-up survey.
Notes:	Sample includes treatment group youth who participated in YTD services.

Table III.16. Predicted Probability of Being a High Intensity Participant by Youth Characteristics at Baseline (Percentages)

Characteristic	Predicted Probability
Male	
Female	
Age at Random Assignment	
Age range 1	
Age range 2	
Age range 3	
Race/Ethnicity	
Hispanic	
Non-Hispanic white	
Non-Hispanic black	
Non-Hispanic other	
Primary Disabling Condition (SSA-reported)	
Mental illness	
Cognitive/developmental disability	
Learning disability/ADD	
Physical disability	
Speech, hearing, visual impairment	
Type of Benefit at Random Assignment	
SSI (alone or in conjunction with another)	
Other benefit type	
Non-beneficiary	
Self-Reported Health Status at Random Assignment	
Excellent/Very good	
Good/Fair	
Poor	
Health Insurance at Random Assignment	
Any public health insurance	
Private health insurance only	
No health insurance	
School Status at Random Assignment	
Not in school	
In high school	
In post-secondary educational institution	
Work-Related Experience and Earnings (prior to random assignment)	
Worked as a volunteer in past year	
Worked for pay	
In the past year	
In the past month	
Total earnings in past year	
Sample Size	

Source: Analysis of ETO data, baseline survey data, and SSA administrative data.

Notes: The definition of “high intensity participation” will be determined during the analysis phase based on ETO data.

*/**/**Characteristic is a statistically significant predictor at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

G. IMPLEMENTATION LESSONS AND CHALLENGES

Based on the process analysis, we discuss implementation successes and challenges, highlighting any lessons learned. This information will prove useful for policymakers and program administrators interested in implementing programs similar to YTD.

CHAPTER IV

IMPACTS ON SERVICE UTILIZATION

All of the YTD projects have a central goal of improving employment outcomes for youth. Before examining impacts on employment outcomes, we first consider whether the YTD program increased receipt of employment-promoting services. The YTD projects offer several types of employment services including job counseling among other related approaches to improve the attitudes youth have toward work and their own employability. YTD projects also provide benefits counseling that fosters the use of the SSA waivers that allow youth to retain benefits while they work. In addition, most YTD projects seek to provide youth with early work-related experiences, which may range from visits to job sites to paid competitive employment.

In Chapter III, we examined services received by treatment group members based on records kept by the YTD projects. In this chapter, we explain how the impact analysis will use youth and family reports from the follow-up survey to determine whether treatment group members receive more and different services than control group members. As discussed in Chapter II, we do not expect data on service utilization from ETO used in the process analysis to match the data on services utilization from the 12-month follow-up survey. We will conduct some analysis on the information reported from the two data sources noting any findings or potential reasoning for these discrepancies. These results will be reported in an appendix or elsewhere as appropriate.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the impact analysis of use of employment-enhancing services. We then examine service receipt by type of provider and the intensity of service utilization. Our service utilization measures cover the period between random assignment and the 12-month follow-up survey.

A. UTILIZATION OF EMPLOYMENT-PROMOTING SERVICES

The primary outcome measure we will analyze in the service utilization domain is the youth's receipt of any employment-promoting services. This will be a composite measure of the receipt of SSA benefits counseling and employment-focused services or activities, including career counseling, support for resume writing and job search activities, job

shadowing and apprenticeships/internships, and other employment-focused services (such as basic skills training, computer classes, problem-solving, and social skills training.)

Table IV.1 provides an example of analysis related to utilization of employment-promoting services. In addition to the primary outcome, the table shows several potential supplementary outcomes. Examples of measures that will be used to test supplementary hypotheses related to the service-utilization domain include the percentage of youth receiving each type of employment service. In addition, we will examine whether youth received services related to benefits counseling, life skills training, education, training, financial literacy, and health care needs.

Table IV.1. Utilization of Employment-Promoting Services and Nonemployment Services (Percentages)

	Treatment Group	Control Group	Impact	p-Value
Primary Outcome				
Received any employment-promoting service				
Supplementary Outcomes				
Received Employment-Promoting Services				
Career counseling				
Support for resume writing and job search activities				
Job shadowing, apprenticeship/ internship				
Other employment-focused services (basic skills training, computer classes, problem solving, and social skills training)				
Counseling on SSA benefits and work incentives				
Received Other (Nonemployment) Services				
Any nonemployment service				
Discussion about youth's general interest, life, and future plans				
Life skills training				
Help getting into a school or training program				
Help with accommodations				
Referrals to another agency				
Transportation services				
Health services				
Case management				
Financial literacy				
Other nonemployment services				
Overall Service Receipt				
Received any employment or nonemployment service				

Sample Size

Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up surveys and SSA administrative records.

Notes: The sample includes all youth who completed the 12-month follow-up survey. All outcome variables are measured in the 12-month survey. Values in this table are adjusted using multivariate regression methods. Explanatory variables are measured prior to random assignment using the baseline survey and SSA administrative records data. All estimates are calculated using sample weights to account for interview nonresponse. Survey item nonresponse for a specific outcome may cause the sample size for the corresponding analysis to be smaller than indicated at the bottom of the table.

*/**/***Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

As discussed in Chapter II, the supplementary analysis will provide further information about our primary outcomes and point to possible areas for future research. However, we will not plan to lead with the supplementary findings if there are no impacts on the main outcomes, and we will view these findings as exploratory.

Prior to conducting the analysis, we will examine the quality and distribution of the outcome variables (for the treatment and control groups, combined). Based on this preliminary analysis, we may revise the outcome measures reported in the table. In addition, if our process analysis points to differences in YTD program implementation, we may choose to report outcomes for different service categories.

B. SERVICE RECEIPT FROM DIFFERENT TYPES OF SERVICE PROVIDERS

The YTD projects seek to facilitate system linkages and referrals to other service providers. Supplementary analysis of engagement with different types of service providers will be conducted. Table IV.2 provides an example of how we may report this supplementary analysis. As with earlier analysis, we will conduct preliminary investigations to determine the actual outcomes to be reported in the table and the table may be somewhat different across YTD projects.

Table IV.2. Service Receipt by Type of Provider (Percentages)

	Treatment Group	Control Group	Impact	p-Value
Supplementary Outcomes				
Type of Service Provider				
YTD project				
Vocational rehabilitation agency				
One-stop/ workforce development center				
Other providers serving primarily people with disabilities				
Health services providers				
All other providers				

Sample Size

Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up surveys and SSA administrative records.

Note: See notes to Table IV.1.

*/**/** Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

C. INTENSITY OF SERVICE UTILIZATION AND UNMET SERVICE NEEDS

We will present findings from additional supplementary analysis on the intensity of service utilization in terms of number of providers, number of contacts, and length of time receiving services. We will also examine a measure of unmet service needs as reported by youth or parents.¹

Table IV.3 provides an example of how we may report this supplementary analysis. As with earlier analysis, we will conduct preliminary investigations to determine the actual

Table IV.3. Intensity of Service Utilization and Unmet Service Needs

	Treatment Group	Control Group	Impact	p-Value
Supplementary Outcomes				
Intensity of Participation				
Number of providers (%)				
Average number of providers				
Length of time over which received services (months, %)				
Average number of months of service receipt				
Total number of contacts with providers (%)				
Average number of contacts with providers				
Total duration of contacts (hours)				
Average number of hours of service				
Unmet Service Needs (%)				
Any unmet service needs				
Type of unmet service needs				
Understanding SSA benefits				
Other type of unmet need				
Sample Size				

Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up surveys and SSA administrative records.

Note: See notes to Table IV.1.

*/**/***/****Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

¹ Specifically, the survey asks if the youth “needed any (other) help or services preparing for work or school” that was not received.

outcomes to be reported in the table. We will also conduct analysis to examine the patterns of service utilization over time; that is, for example, the percentage of treatment and control group youth receiving services in each month after random assignment. For these measures, we are likely to graphically display the mean treatment and control values over time.

D. ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS

To the extent that we identify differences in service utilization among treatment and control group youth, we will conduct additional analysis to help understand and interpret those findings. For example, for youth who stopped receiving services from a provider, we will examine the reasoning for why the youth reported discontinuing the receipt of these services.

Such additional descriptive analysis should not be interpreted as an impact analysis. For these analyses, the sample will frequently be limited to nonrandom, selected subgroups such as youth who stopped receiving services or those with unmet needs. Because the process that determines selection into the subgroup may differ between the treatment and control groups, the differences between the groups cannot be interpreted as impacts.

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CHAPTER V

IMPACTS ON EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND EARNINGS

By providing expanded services and waiving certain disability program rules, YTD projects seek to encourage youth to work and/or continue their education. If effective, the short-term impacts of the interventions should be reflected in continued progress in education for youth participating in YTD projects that emphasize education, as well as increased work-related experiences, more paid employment, and greater earnings resulting from increased employment. In this chapter, we first examine YTD impacts on educational progress. We then turn to impacts on employment, intensity of employment, earnings, and job characteristics.

A. EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

Some YTD projects (notably the Montgomery County and Erie projects) serve school-age youth, and progress in education is one of the important short-term outcomes for some youth. In particular, staying in school, completing high school, and enrolling in post-secondary education would be key programmatic objectives for the youth they serve. Because all youth in the Montgomery County project are juniors and seniors in high school at the time of recruitment and enrollment, a key goal of that project is to ensure that youth successfully graduate from high school. Similarly, the Erie project focuses on education-related services for youth who are in school, or who want further education. Particularly in these projects, we will examine the impacts of the interventions on education outcomes as a key domain. For other projects, estimating impacts on outcomes in the education domain will be part of the supplementary analysis.

The primary outcome measure in the education domain will be a measure of enrollment in high school or other educational institution in the first year after random assignment. *A priori*, based on our conceptual framework (Figure I.1), we expect that the YTD interventions will have positive short-term impacts on this outcome, especially for younger youth and for those in school at baseline. Supplementary outcomes in this domain will include participation in different types of schools (including postsecondary education), amount of time spent in school, and educational attainment.

Table V.1 provides an example of how we may report this supplementary analysis. As with earlier analysis, we will conduct preliminary investigations to determine the actual outcomes to be reported in the table. The sample for the analysis in Table V.1 will include all youth who completed the follow-up survey. However, as we begin the analysis, we will examine the distribution of youth by age and school status to consider additional analysis on a subset of the sample based on characteristics at baseline, such as youth who had not completed high school at random assignment.

Table V.1. Educational Progress (Percentages, Unless Noted)

	Treatment Group	Control Group	Impact	p-Value
Primary Outcome				
Ever enrolled in a high school or another educational institution after random assignment				
Supplementary Outcomes				
Type of School Attended (mutually exclusive categories)				
Not attending school				
Regular high school				
Special high school for the disabled or home school				
Post-secondary institutions (4-year college/university, 2-year college, vocational, technical/trade school)				
Educational Activity Intensity				
Number of months in school				
None				
Less than one				
One to five				
Six or more				
Average number of months in school				
Educational Attainment				
Less than high school				
High school/GED/certificate				
Post-secondary degree/certificate				

Sample Size

Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up surveys and SSA administrative records.

Note: See notes to Table IV.1.

*/**/*** Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

B. ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

In addition to the analysis of impacts on educational outcomes outlined above, we will conduct additional descriptive analysis of outcomes related to individualized educational programs (IEPs) and transition plans for youth in high school based on the 12-month follow-up survey. For youth who have an IEP or transition plan, we will describe the extent of their choice about the goals in their plans, their involvement in decisions about those plans, how challenging the goals were, and how useful the transition plan was in preparing them for life after high school.

For the same reason described earlier for the additional analysis of service utilization, the findings from this additional analysis should not be interpreted as impact estimates. They are primarily intended to provide context for our impact analyses. In this analysis, the sample will be limited to nonrandom, selected subgroups such as youth who have IEPs or transition plans. Because the process that determines selection into the subgroup may differ between the treatment and control groups, the differences between the groups cannot be interpreted as impacts. Nonetheless, such analysis can help shed light on some additional questions of interest, such as whether the projects may have provided different types of services to treatment group youth than what is generally offered in the community.

C. EMPLOYMENT

We will examine the short-term impacts on employment as a key domain, since all of the YTD projects have a central goal of finding paid employment for youth, particularly for older, out-of-school youth. The primary outcome in this domain will be a measure of the “intensity” of paid employment during the year after random assignment. Rather than simply examining any employment, we will construct a measure of the intensity of paid employment because it captures both the incidence of paid employment as well as the amount of time that youth were involved in paid employment. There are a number of ways we may measure intensity of paid employment—for instance, the fraction of months employed during the year prior to the 12 month survey or the average hours worked per week during this period. As we begin our analysis, we will examine data from the 12-month follow-up survey (for treatment and control groups, combined) to identify the measure which is most suitable for the youth in our sample taking into account data quality and other considerations.

In addition, to help explain impacts on the primary employment outcome, we will conduct supplementary analysis of outcomes including intensity of employment in any (paid or unpaid) job, monthly employment rates in paid and unpaid jobs during the year after random assignment, and number of jobs held during the year after random assignment (see Table V.2). Figures V.1 and V.2 provide examples of how we might present analysis on the time patterns of employment during the first year after random assignment. We will develop monthly measures of employment by constructing timelines of employment using the 12-month survey based on youth reports of the start and end date for each job. The difference between treatment and control means for any time period in the figure is a graphical

Table V.2. Employment and Number of Jobs

	Treatment Group	Control Group	Impact	p-Value
Primary Outcome				
Intensity of paid employment ^a				
Supplementary Outcomes				
Employment Status at the Time of the Follow-up Survey				
Employed in paid job				
Employed in unpaid job				
Not employed, looking for work				
Out of the labor force				
Intensity of Employment During First Year After Random Assignment				
Intensity of employment in any (paid or unpaid) job				
Intensity of employment in unpaid job only				
Employment During the First Year After Random Assignment (%)				
Ever employed in any (paid or unpaid) job				
Ever employed in a paid job				
Ever employed in an unpaid job (but not in any paid job)				
Number of Jobs Held During the First Year After Random Assignment				
Number of jobs (paid and unpaid, %)				
0				
1-2				
3 or more				
Average number of jobs (paid and unpaid)				
Average number of jobs (paid)				
Average number of jobs (unpaid)				
Sample Size				

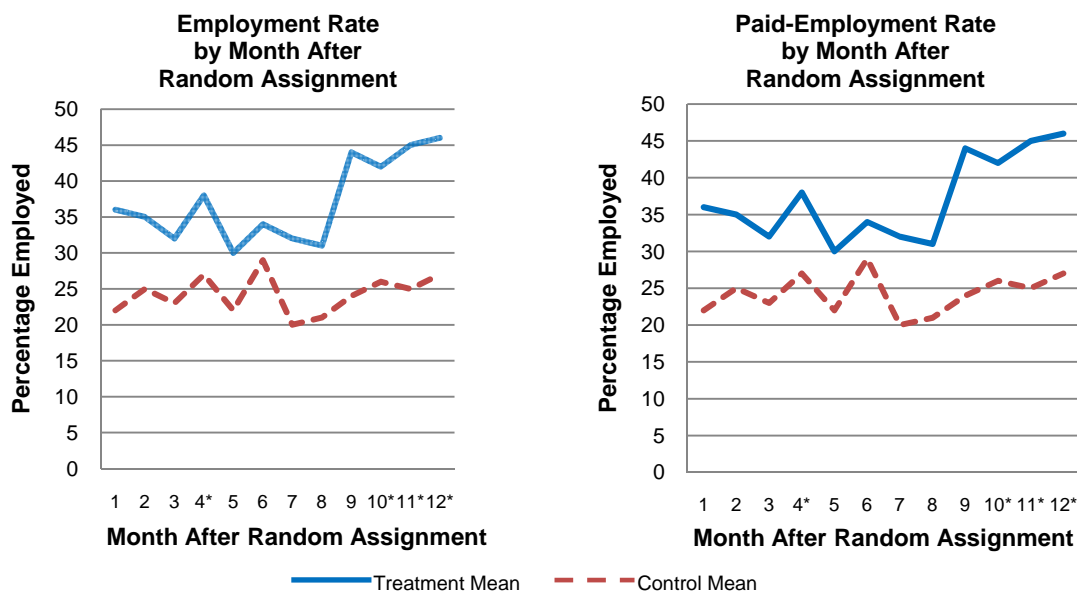
Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up surveys and SSA administrative records.

Note: See notes to Table IV.1.

^aIntensity of employment will be defined to capture the prevalence of paid employment, as well as the amount of time in paid employment, during the first year after random assignment.

*/**/***Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

Figure V.1. Employment Rate by Month After Random Assignment



Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up surveys and SSA administrative records.

Note: See notes to Table IV.1.

*/**/** Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

Figure V.2. Percent Ever Employed by Month After Random Assignment



Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up surveys and SSA administrative records.

Note: See notes to Table IV.1.

*/**/** Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

representation of the impact estimate. We will examine paid employment and all employment (paid and unpaid). We will also examine whether youth appear to progress from unpaid to paid employment over time.

For the employment-related analysis in this section and the remainder of this chapter, constructs in the example tables and figures include all youth who completed the follow-up survey. As we begin the analysis, we will examine the distribution of youth by age and employment status at baseline to consider subgroup analysis on a subset of the sample based on characteristics at baseline. For example, we will examine employment impacts for the subgroup of youth who had never been employed at baseline.

D. HOURS WORKED AND EARNINGS

As supplementary analyses in the employment domain, we will also examine impacts on hours worked and earnings during the year following random assignment. Examples of key measures of these outcomes are presented in Table V.3 and Figures V.3 and V.4.

Table V.3. Earnings and Hours Worked (Percentages, Unless Otherwise Noted)

	Treatment Group	Control Group	Impact	p-Value
Supplementary Outcomes				
Total Earnings During First Year After Random Assignment (all jobs)				
Never employed				
\$1 to \$ 500				
\$501 to \$1,000				
\$1,001 to \$5,000				
More than \$5,000				
Average total earnings (\$)				
Earnings Per Month During First Year After Random Assignment (all jobs)				
Never employed				
\$1 to \$ 50				
\$51 to \$300				
More than \$300				
Average earnings per month (\$)				
Total Hours Worked in All Jobs During First Year After Random Assignment				
Never employed				
1 to 80 hours				
81 to 160 hours				

	Treatment Group	Control Group	Impact	p-Value
161 to 320 hours				
321 to 800 hours				
More than 800 hours				
Average total hours (in all jobs)				
Hours Worked per Week in All Jobs During First Year After Random Assignment				
All paid and unpaid jobs				
Never employed				
1 to 20 hours				
21 to 35 hours				
More than 35 hours				
Average hours (in all paid and unpaid jobs)				
All paid jobs				
Never had paid employment				
1 to 20 hours				
21 to 35 hours				
More than 35 hours				
Average hours (in all paid jobs)				
All unpaid jobs				
Never had unpaid employment				
1 to 20 hours				
21 to 35 hours				
More than 35 hours				
Average hours (in all unpaid jobs)				
Hours Worked per Week in Primary Job at 12 Months after Random Assignment^a				
Paid job				
Not working for pay				
1 to 20 hours				
21 to 35 hours				
More than 35 hours				
Average hours (in paid job)				
Unpaid job				
Not working in unpaid job				
1 to 20 hours				
21 to 35 hours				
More than 35 hours				
Average hours (in unpaid job)				

Sample Size

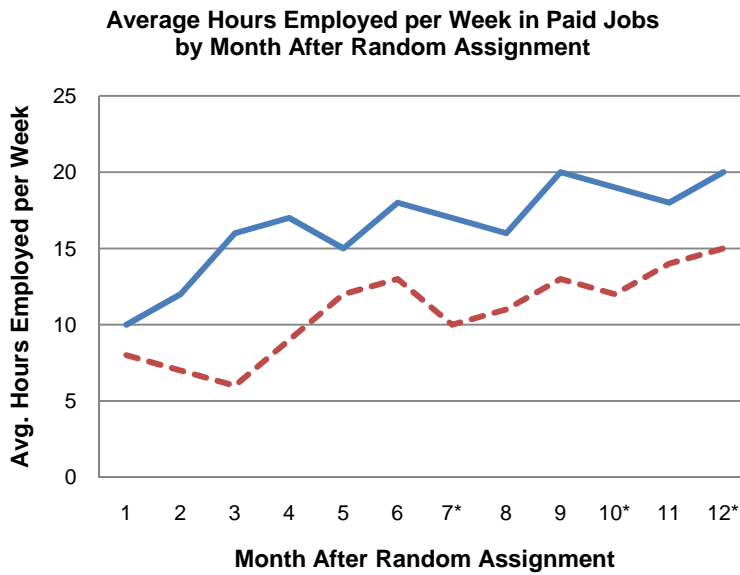
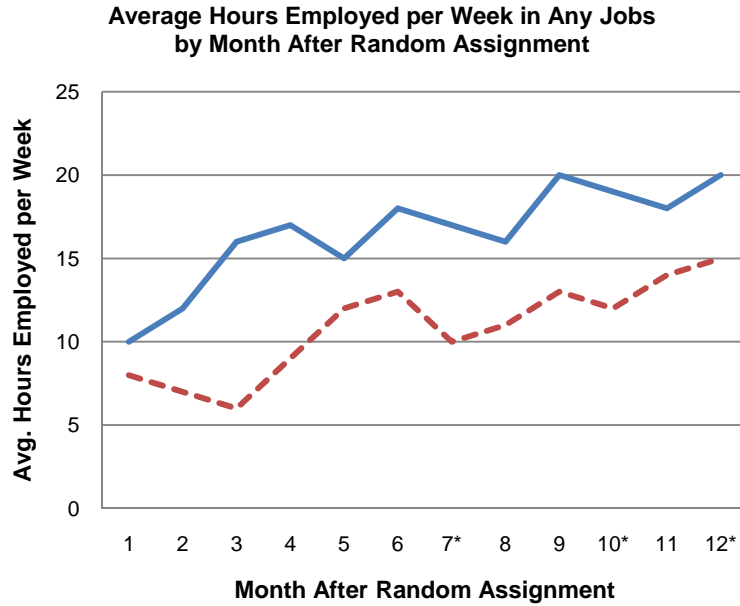
Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up surveys and SSA administrative records.

Notes: See notes to Table IV.1.

^aThe primary job at 12 months after random assignment is the job with the highest earnings.

*/**/**Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

Figure V.3. Average Hours Employed per Week in Any Jobs and/or Paid Jobs by Month After Random Assignment



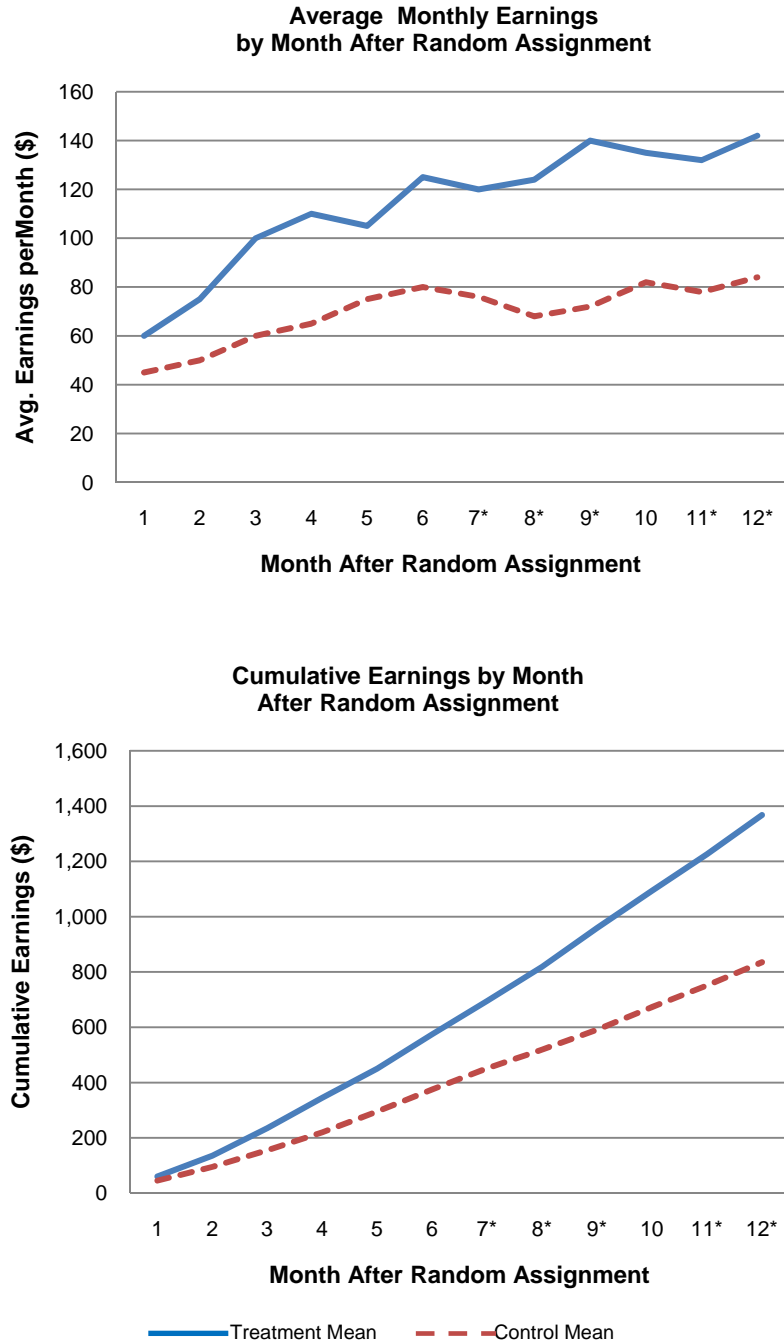
— Treatment Mean - - - Control Mean

Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up surveys and SSA administrative records.

Note: See notes to Table IV.1.

*/**/***Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

Figure V.4. Average Monthly Earnings and Cumulative Earnings by Month After Random Assignment



Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up surveys and SSA administrative records.

Note: See notes to Table IV.1.

*/**/** Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

Figures V.3 and V.4 provide examples of how we may present the analysis on the time patterns of hours of work and earnings during the first year after random assignment. We will develop monthly measures of hours of work and earnings by constructing timelines using the 12-month survey data based on the start and end date for each job, as reported by the youth. The difference between treatment and control means for any time period in the figure is a graphical representation of the impact estimate. For hours of employment, we will examine paid employment and all employment (paid and unpaid).

E. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PRIMARY JOB

The YTD projects are seeking to encourage employment but are also concerned with the type and quality of the jobs that youth obtain. We will examine impacts on the characteristics of the primary job held 12 months after random assignment or, for youth not employed at that time, the most recent job held.¹ The types of job characteristics we may investigate, as shown in example Table V.4, include the number of months on the job, usual hours worked, hourly wage, health benefits, and occupation. Other characteristics such as whether accommodations were provided in the job will also be evaluated. In addition, we will conduct this analysis using the full sample, as well as for the sample of youth who held jobs. Examining impacts on their outcome for the full sample provides an indication of whether the projects led the treatment youth to attain better jobs overall than control group youth. However, there is also value in examining the job characteristics of youth who were employed. We will assess whether employed treatment group youth were in different types of jobs than employed control group youth as these are important goals of the projects. Hence, we will also present conditional estimates for job characteristics such as hourly wages, benefits, occupation, and job accommodations. Appropriate caveats about not interpreting these estimates as program “impacts” will be added.

F. ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYMENT AND JOB SEARCH

To provide context for the findings related to employment impacts, we will conduct additional analysis and present descriptive information on how the youth found jobs, reason for leaving a job, and job satisfaction. Furthermore, for youth who are not involved in any gainful activity (i.e., education or employment), we will examine the reasons they are not employed, whether they are currently searching for a job, and the type of job search activity. As noted earlier, the descriptive analyses are intended to provide context should not be interpreted as impacts of the program.

¹ For youth with more than one job, the primary job will be the job with the highest earnings.

Table V.4. Job Tenure, Hours of Work, Hourly Wage, Benefits, and Occupation for Primary Job

	Treatment Group	Control Group	Difference	p-Value
Supplementary Outcomes				
Number of months on the job (%)				
Never worked				
Some, but less than 1				
1 to 3				
More than 3				
Average number of months on the job				
Usual hours worked per week (%)				
Never worked				
1-20 hours				
21-35 hours				
36 or more hours				
Average hours worked (per week)				
Employed in job paying hourly wages				
Never employed				
Less than \$7				
\$7 or more				
Employed in job paying job benefits				
Never employed				
Employed without health benefits				
Employed with health benefits				
Occupation				
Never employed				
Occupation category 1				
Occupation category 2				
Occupation category 3				
Occupation category 4				
Other occupation				

Sample Size

Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up surveys and SSA administrative records.

Notes: See notes to Table IV.1.

*/**/***Differences are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

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CHAPTER VI

IMPACTS ON YOUTH INCOME AND RELATED OUTCOMES

An important indicator of the success of the YTD interventions, especially from the perspectives of the participating youth and their families, is whether they result in higher incomes, defined as earnings plus benefits. If the interventions are successful in increasing earnings, then they are very likely to increase income. The SSA waivers will supplement the income of youth who use them. Thus, one of the key domains to examine will be youth income. In addition to analyzing youth income, we will conduct supplementary analysis on knowledge of SSA benefits and use of SSA work incentives. For the youth's household, we will examine income, health insurance, and receipt of public benefits.

A. YOUTH INCOME AND SSA BENEFITS

The primary outcome in the youth income domain will be youths' total income from earnings and benefits during the first year after random assignment. The outcome will be constructed by combining earnings information reported in the 12-month follow-up interviews with information on SSA benefits from administrative records.¹

As supplementary analyses, we will look at impacts on earnings and benefits separately, the fraction of income from earnings and benefits, and SSA benefit status. We will also examine whether treatment group members receive more SSA benefits. In the short term, the SSA waivers offered as part of the YTD project should lead youth in the treatment group to be more likely than youth in the control group to participate in disability benefit programs in the initial years following random assignment. In particular, the continuing disability review (CDR) or age 18 medical redetermination waiver allows treatment group youth enrolled in a YTD project to continue to receive SSA benefits, regardless of the outcome of the review. Findings from these analyses will be presented in tables as well as in graphs (see examples in Table VI.1 and Figures VI.1 and VI.2).

¹ As noted in Chapter II, we have arranged for TRF data that cover the entire year following random assignment. For example, for Eric and Colorado, we will have monthly benefits data through March 2009.

Our sample will include all youth who completed the follow-up survey. As we begin the analysis, we will examine the distribution of youth by age and education status to consider additional analysis on a subset of the sample based on characteristics at baseline, such as youth who were age 18 or older at random assignment, or whether or not the youth had completed high school.

Table VI.1. Impacts on Youth Income and SSA Benefit Receipt

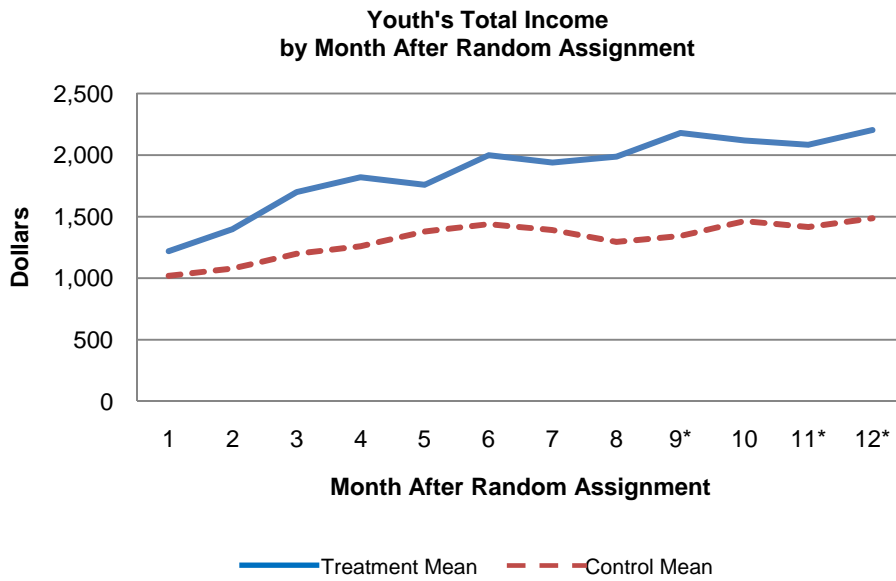
	Treatment Group	Control Group	Impact	p-Value
Primary Outcome				
Average total income (earnings and SSA benefits, \$)				
Supplementary Outcomes				
Youth Income				
Level of annual income (%)				
Less than \$5,000				
\$5,000 to \$10,000				
More than \$10,000				
Average annual income (\$)				
Average fraction of income from earnings				
Receipt of SSA Benefits				
Any SSA benefits (SSI, DI, or CDB; %)				
Annual Benefit Amount				
Level of benefits (%)				
None				
\$1 to less than \$2,000				
\$2,000 to \$5,000				
More than \$5,000				
Average benefit amount (\$)				
Sample Size				

Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up surveys and SSA administrative records.

Notes: See notes to Table IV.1. Earnings are measured in the 12-month follow-up survey. SSA benefits are measured from administrative records.

*/**/***Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

Figure VI.1. Youth's Total Income by Month After Random Assignment

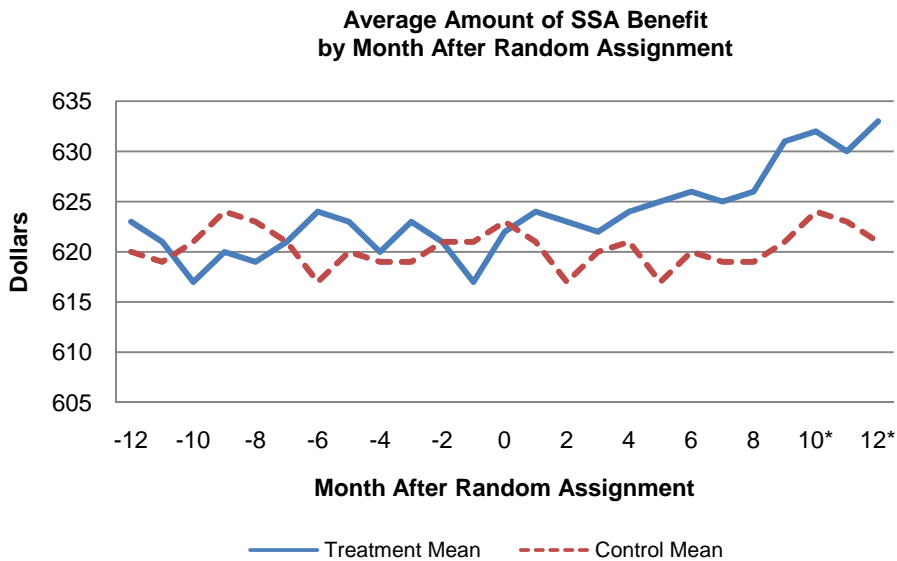


Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up surveys and SSA administrative records.

Notes: See notes to Table IV.1. Earnings are measured in the 12-month follow-up survey. SSA benefits are measured from administrative records.

*/**/***Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

Figure VI.2. Amount of SSA Benefit by Month After Random Assignment



Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up surveys and SSA administrative records.

Notes: See notes to Table IV.1. Earnings are measured in the 12-month follow-up survey. SSA benefits are measured from administrative records.

*/**/***Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

B. KNOWLEDGE OF SSA WORK INCENTIVES

The intensive benefits counseling, combined with the additional SSA waivers for YTD participants, is expected to increase awareness of SSA work incentives by treatment group members relative to control group members. As supplementary outcomes, we will examine impacts on youths' knowledge of SSA work incentives such as the EIE, SEIE and PASS, among others. We will also look at the youths' report of sources of information regarding work and SSA benefits.² Table VI.2 illustrates examples of outcome measures related to these supplementary analyses.

Table VI.2. Knowledge of SSA Work Incentives

	Treatment Group	Control Group	Impact	p-Value
Supplementary Outcomes				
Knowledge of SSA Work Incentives				
Understands the relationship between work and SSA benefits				
Ever heard of PASS				
Ever heard of EIE				
Ever heard of SEIE				
Ever heard of CDR/Age-18 medical redetermination				
Ever heard of IDA				
Ever heard of continued Medicaid eligibility				
Sources of information on work and SSA benefits				
Benefits planner/BPAO/WIPA				
Internet				
Friends and family				
One-stop/work force dev. center				
Social Security office				
Social Security website				
Vocational rehabilitation agency				
YTD project				
Other				

Sample Size

Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up surveys and SSA administrative records.

Notes: See notes to Table IV.1. PASS is the plan for achieving self-support. EIE is the earned income exclusion. SEIE is the student earned income exclusion. CDR is the continuing disability review. IDA is the individual development account. BPAO is benefits planning, assistance, and outreach. WIPA is work incentives planning and assistance.

*/**/** Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

² The 12-month survey asks youth, "If you wanted information about how working would affect your Social Security benefits, where would you get that information?"

C. USE OF SSA WORK INCENTIVES

Youth enrolled in YTD projects can benefit from up to five SSA waivers for YTD participants. Since each of these waivers corresponds to a standard SSA work incentive, we can examine the impact of the YTD program on the use of specific work incentives. Because of intensive benefits counseling available to the treatment group members, and also because the YTD waivers are more generous than the standard work incentives, *a priori*, we expect that youth in the treatment group are more likely to utilize the work incentives. This supplementary analysis will be conducted using data from the SSA administrative records. Results from the analyses will be presented in a table similar to Table VI.3.

D. HOUSEHOLD INCOME, HEALTH INSURANCE, AND OTHER PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Finally, as part of the supplementary analyses in the youth income domain, we will look at the total household income reported on the 12-month follow-up survey, health insurance coverage, and use of public assistance (namely, TANF and food stamps). The findings will be presented in a table similar to Table VI.4 and will help us understand the household economic environment for youth in the treatment group compared to those in the control group.

Table VI.3. Use of SSA Work Incentives

	Treatment Group	Control Group	Impact	p-Value
Supplementary Outcomes				
Use of SSA Work Incentives				
Used any SSA work incentive				
Used a PASS				
Used a GEIE				
Used a SEIE				
Used a IDA				
Used a CDR/section-301 waiver				

Sample Size

Sources: Baseline survey and SSA administrative records.

Notes: See notes to Table IV.1. All outcome measures are from SSA administrative records. See notes to Table VI.2 for definitions of acronyms.

*/**/****Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

Table VI.4. Impacts on Household Income, Health Insurance, and Other Public Assistance (Percentages Unless Noted)

	Treatment Group	Control Group	Impact	p-Value
Supplementary Outcomes				
Total household income				
Less than \$10,000				
\$10,000 to less than \$25,000				
\$25,000 to less than \$50,000				
\$50,000 or more				
Average household income (\$)				
Health Insurance				
Covered by public health insurance				
Covered by private health insurance				
Covered by both public and private health insurance				
Receipt of Public Assistance				
Household receives food stamps				
Household receives TANF				

Sample Size

Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up survey and SSA administrative records.

Note: See notes to Table IV.1.

*/**/** Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

CHAPTER VII

IMPACTS ON ATTITUDES AND EXPECTATIONS

An important component of YTD interventions is youth empowerment. All of the YTD projects include components on youth empowerment designed to instill in youth a belief in their ability to succeed in life. Project staff typically focus on a person-centered plan for the youth, in which the youth's interests and preferences play a role in determining his or her transition plan. Thus, in the short term, we will examine whether there are any impacts on youths' attitudes and beliefs about themselves (self-efficacy), as well as their expectations about the future. We will also examine independent activities and social interactions. Short-term impacts on these measures may be precursors to longer-term impacts on other primary outcomes.

A. SELF-EFFICACY AND EXPECTATIONS

The primary outcome for this domain will be a composite measure of self-efficacy and expectations about the future (Table VII.1).¹ We will construct the composite measure from a number of questions in the 12-month follow-up survey. First, for self-efficacy and expectations related items, we will conduct factor analysis to identify an appropriate set of factors that group together with a high degree of reliability. We will then weight up or aggregate these factors to generate a single composite primary outcome.² The supplemental analysis will examine impacts on the separate indices and youths' expectations for educational achievement, substantial employment, and independent living.

¹ We will use a single, composite measure as our primary outcome to address the multiple comparisons problem discussed in Chapter II.

² The interim reports will include an appendix on factor analysis that will describe the purpose, method, and results.

Table VII.1. Self-Efficacy and Expectations About the Future (Percentages, Unless Noted)

Outcome	Treatment Group	Control Group	Impact	p-Value
Primary Outcome				
Self-efficacy and expectations (composite)				
Supplementary Outcomes				
Measure(s) of Self-efficacy				
Strong, positive self-efficacy				
Moderate, positive self-efficacy				
Low, positive self-efficacy				
Expectations for Future				
Strong, positive expectations				
Moderate, positive expectations				
Low, positive expectations				
Expectations About Employment in the Next 5 Years				
Already works full time				
Plans to start or continue working				
No plans for getting a job or continuing work				
Expectations About Independent Living in the Next 5 Years				
Plans to live on own (with or without help)				
Plans to live with parents or guardians				
Expectations About Education in the Next 5 Years				
Plans to go further in school				
No plans for school				

Sample Size

Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up survey and SSA administrative records.

Note: See notes to Table IV.1. See text for a discussion of the measures of self-efficacy and expectations.

*/**/****Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

B. INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES AND SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

Greater self-determination and self-efficacy are expected to lead to more independence and decision-making and potentially to higher levels of social interaction (Table VII.2). We will conduct supplementary analysis on measures of independent activities and decision making as well as on measures of social interactions.

Table VII.2. Independent Activities, Decision Making, and Social Interactions (Percentages)

	Treatment Group	Control Group	Impact	p-Value
Supplementary Outcomes				
Independent Activities and Decision Making				
Decide to spend own money				
Most or some of the time				
None of the time				
Pick clothes to wear				
Most or some of the time				
None of the time				
Make snacks or sandwiches				
Most or some of the time				
None of the time				
Ride public transportation alone				
Most or some of the time				
None of the time				
Decide how to spend free time				
Most or some of the time				
None of the time				
Social Interactions				
Get together with friends				
Often or sometimes				
Hardly ever or never				
Does not have friends				

Sample Size

Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up survey and SSA administrative records.

Note: See notes to Table IV.1.

*/**/** Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

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APPENDIX

ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS AND TECHNICAL DISCUSSION

The appendix discusses in greater detail some of the analytic issues raised in the analysis plans. More details on these issues are contained in the YTD design report (Rangarajan et al 2009). We expect to have technical appendices in the interim reports that describe the findings of the technical or methodological issues, as well as supplementary tables or analysis we may not report in the main body of the text.

A. ENROLLMENT IN THE EVALUATION

The evaluation's design for outreach to youth and their assignment to treatment and control groups ensures that its findings will be both internally valid and generalizable to the full population of YTD-eligible youth on the disability rolls in five of the six random assignment sites. The random assignment design ensures for internal validity.¹ The recruitment process, which draws youth from SSA lists and enrolls them to the evaluation sample eligible to receive services, offers an opportunity to generalize findings. In particular, this approach provides an estimate of the proportion of likely participants among all eligible youth. The impact estimates will be combined with the known size of the population of YTD-eligible youth in a site and the estimated proportion of those youth who are willing to participate in a YTD project to obtain estimates of the aggregate impacts of the full rollout of YTD to all eligible youth in the project service area.²

¹ Montgomery County is the one random assignment site where youth are not being recruited into the evaluation from the SSA beneficiary rolls. In that site, the evaluation's findings will not be generalizable to youth on the rolls, but rather to the population of juniors and seniors in Montgomery County schools who are classified as having severe emotional disturbances or having other significant mental illness.

² Study estimates will be generalizable to the full population of YTD-eligible youth in these sites on the assumption that a full rollout would use an approach to outreach and recruitment similar to that being used in this study.

B. ESTIMATING TOT IMPACTS

We will estimate TOT impacts by dividing the IIT impacts by the proportion of treatment group members who actually participate (as proposed by Bloom 1984). This approach requires three assumptions that are not necessary when estimating IIT impacts, the most notable of which is that nonparticipants experience zero impact from the intervention. This assumption may not entirely hold because the projects do conduct some outreach activities when they attempt to enroll nonparticipants. For example, project staff spent an average of 1.3 hours in Colorado and 2.2 hours at CUNY communicating, or attempting to communicate, with each treatment group member who did not enroll. While it is not the purpose of these contacts to deliver services, some minimal services might be delivered during them. However, the impacts of any such services are expected to be negligible compared with the impacts of the much more intensive services received by the YTD participants.

The other two assumptions underlying the Bloom approach are likely to be valid for our evaluation (1) the nonparticipants would not have participated in the intervention if they had been assigned to the control group, and (2) the control group counterparts to the nonparticipants experience no effect from going through random assignment.

C. COMPARISON OF MEAN DIFFERENCES AND REGRESSION-ADJUSTED MEAN DIFFERENCES

We will test two methods to estimate the impacts of the YTD intervention: (1) the difference in simple means approach and (2) the difference in regression-adjusted means approach. While sample means generate unbiased impacts, the regression-adjusted approach may yield more precise estimates—that is, estimates with smaller standard errors—thereby providing greater statistical power to detect small impacts.

There has been some recent concern that using OLS multivariate regression models may not always be justified in impact estimates, even if control variables with significant power to explain variation in the outcome measures are available (Freedman 2006). Freedman’s argument is that multivariate models, under some circumstances, may lead to biases in the standard error of the impact estimates. Schochet (2007) examined data from several large-scale random assignment evaluations and found that, in practice, conducting regression adjustments did not lead to biases in the standard errors of the impact estimates. In general, as long as there is a fairly even split in the sample between the treatment and control groups, the regression-adjusted estimates do not lead to biases in the standard errors of the impact estimates. The YTD research samples are only slightly unbalanced (6:5), so we do not expect this to introduce significant issues with respect to the OLS standard errors.

We expect to present regression-adjusted impact estimates in the body of the report because they typically are more precise than difference in simple means impact estimates. We will compare results from the two methods for all primary outcomes and present the findings in a methodological appendix, using the format shown in Table A.1. However,

Table A.1. Difference in Simple Means Versus Difference in Regression-Adjusted Means for Primary Outcomes

	Simple Mean Difference	p-Value	Adjusted Mean Difference	p-Value
Received any employment promoting service (%)				
Ever enrolled in high school or another educational institution after random assignment (%)				
Intensity of paid employment during first year after random assignment				
Youth's total income (earnings & SSA benefits) during the first year after random assignment (\$)				
Self-efficacy and expectations (composite measure)				

Sample Size

Sources: Baseline and 12-month follow-up survey and SSA administrative records.

Note: See notes to Table IV.1. All outcome variables were measured in the 12-month survey except SSA benefits which were measured in the SSA administrative records. Standard errors for simple means were adjusted for heteroskedasticity resulting from differences in sample size between the control and treatment groups.

*/**/**** Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

before we commit to this approach, we must confirm that: (a) the regression model has sufficient explanatory power that the standard errors of the regression-adjusted estimates are actually smaller than the standard errors of the difference in simple means estimates; and (b) the standard errors of the regression-adjusted estimates are free of the bias of the type described by Freedman (2006) and Schochet (2007). We will also investigate whether the difference in simple means estimates would be vulnerable to bias from random differences between the treatment and control groups in critical baseline characteristics (i.e., a “bad draw” from random assignment). Once we determine the basic estimation methodology, we will use it consistently throughout the report; we will not switch between the two methodologies.

D. CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH WHO ENROLLED IN THE EVALUATION

Although we attempt to contact a random sample of youth, only about one in four youth we attempt to contact is actually recruited into the study and randomly assigned into the treatment or control group (Table A.2). Those not randomly assigned, and thus not in the study, include youth (1) whom we were unable to reach, (2) whom we reached but who were not interested in participating and did not complete a baseline interview, (3) who

Table A.2. Characteristics by Enrollment in Evaluation

Characteristic	Enrolled	Not Enrolled	Difference	p-Value
Mean age (years)				
Employed in most recent year (%)				
Employed at the time of the sample release (%)				
Mean annual earnings, most recent year (\$)				
Source of benefits in most recent year (%)				
SSI only				
SSI combined with SSDI or CDB				
SSDI only				
CDB only				
Primary disabling condition				
Mental illness				
Cognitive/developmental disability				
Learning disability/ADD				
Physical disability				
Other				
Benefit amount at 12-month follow-up (mean)				

Sample Size

Source: SSA administrative data.

*/**/**Differences are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

completed a baseline interview but did not send a signed consent form back, and (4) who sent a signed consent form back but indicated that they did not want to participate in the study. We will use SSA administrative data to compare the characteristics of those who were recruited into the study with those who were not, to better understand the characteristics of study participants compared with characteristics of the project's full target population. These will include such items as type of disability benefit, age at first receipt of disability benefits, and disabling condition. Although the SSA files provide only limited characteristics, these comparisons will be critical from a policy perspective and will provide information on whether the projects are able to enroll a broad group of disability beneficiaries, or just a distinctive subset of them.

Our analysis will include records data for all youth drawn from the initial sampling frame. The analysis in the table examines the differences between youth who enrolled in the evaluation and those who did not. A small but substantial share of youth who orally consented to participate in the evaluation and completed the baseline survey did not subsequently enroll in the evaluation (by providing written consent). We will compare the sample completing the baseline survey to the initial sampling frame and to those who enrolled in the evaluation.

E. NONRESPONSE TO THE 12-MONTH FOLLOW-UP

For the 12-month follow-up survey, if respondents differ systematically from nonrespondents, and we do not account for the differences, then the estimated impacts of the YTD projects could be biased. We will assess whether respondents are systematically different from nonrespondents by comparing these sample groups with respect to their baseline characteristics (see Table A.3). Because we have administrative data on outcomes of interest, we can also examine how respondents differ in terms of benefit receipt and benefit amounts (see Table A.4). This analysis will allow us to assess whether nonrespondents experienced any changes over time which may have influenced their becoming nonrespondents. In addition, for outcomes measured with administrative data, we will assess whether impacts vary by response versus nonresponse to the 12-month survey (see Table A.5). In our analysis, we will adjust for survey nonresponse to make respondent cases more representative of the original sample.

F. SUBGROUPS BASED ON RESEARCH CATEGORIES

If sample sizes permit, we will explore the fidelity of the evaluation by examining whether the intervention impacts varied across different categories of youth defined by research categories: enrollment cohort, duration on SSA disability benefits, elapsed time from baseline survey to informed consent to participate, and elapsed time from random-assignment to completion of the 12-month follow-up survey. In addition, we may use site-specific subgroups, such as northern/southern region in Colorado. A basic criterion for a subgroup analysis will be a sample split between the two subgroups of between 40/60 and 60/40. Table A.6 provides an example of how we will assess sample size. If we find differences in impacts across these subgroups, we will examine the causes and the likely consequences for our findings.

Table A.3. Baseline Characteristics for Respondents and Nonrespondents (Percentages, Unless Noted)

	Full Sample	Treatment Group	Control Group	Difference	p-Value
Demographic Characteristics					
Female					
Age (in years)					
14-17					
18-21					
22-24					
Average age (mean years)					
Race/ethnicity					
Hispanic					
Non-Hispanic white					
Non-Hispanic black					
Non-Hispanic other					
Speaks primarily English at home					
Education and Training					
Type of school attending at baseline					
Regular high school					
Special high school					
Other school					
Not attending school at baseline					
Highest grade completed					
9th grade or less					
10th or 11th grade					
12th grade					
College or technical school					
Other					
Has diploma, GED, or certificate of completion					
Received job training in past year					
Health and Disability					
Self-reported health status					
Excellent					
Very good/good					
Fair/poor					
Primary disabling condition					
Mental illness					
Cognitive/developmental disability					
Learning disability/ADD					
Physical disability					
Speech, hearing, visual impairment					
Age at SSI program entry					
Under 10					
10-13					
14-18					
Over 18					
Assistance Required					
Reading, hearing, speaking, or walking aids					
Help with personal care					

	Full Sample	Treatment Group	Control Group	Difference	p-Value
Living Arrangement and Household Composition					
Living arrangement					
House/apartment with both parents					
House/apartment with single parent					
House/apartment with other relatives					
House/apartment with friends/roommates					
Supervised group home/dormitory					
Other					
Number of people in household (mean)					
Lives with others who have disabilities					
Work-Related Experience and Earnings					
Worked as a volunteer in past year					
Worked for pay					
In past year					
In past month					
Annual earnings					
First year before year of random assignment					
Expectations for Next Five Years					
Will live independently from parents (with or without help)					
Will continue education					
Will finish high school					
Will work for pay					
Parental Characteristics					
Mother graduated from high school					
Mother is employed					
Socioeconomic Background					
Household income in past year					
Less than \$25,000					
\$25,000 - \$49,999					
\$50,000 or more					
Household receives TANF/family assistance					
Household receives food stamps					
Other Characteristics					
Type of disability benefit					
SSI only					
SSDI only					
SSI/SSDI concurrent					
Random assignment cohort					
Year 1 cohort					
Year 2 cohort					
Year 3 cohort					
Location within a YTD project's service delivery area					
Site 1					
Site 2					
etc.					
Sample Size					

Source: YTD baseline survey, SSA administrative data.

*/**/***/Difference is statistically significant at the .10/.05/.01 level, using a two-tailed test.

Table A.4. SSA Benefit Receipt for Respondents and Nonrespondents

	Respondent	Nonrespondent	Difference	p-Value
Receipt of SSA Benefits (%)				
Any SSA benefits (SSI, DI, or CDB)				
Benefit Amount (\$)				
Amount of SSA benefits				
Sample Size				

Source: SSA administrative data.

Notes: These benefits outcomes will be measured for the calendar year prior to the interim report. SSA data on earnings-related outcomes will not be available for analysis in the interim reports.

*/**/***/Difference is statistically significant at the .10/.05/.01 level, using a two-tailed test.

Table A.5. Impacts on Benefit Receipt, by Respondent and Nonrespondent Status

	Respondents				Nonrespondents			
	Treatment Group	Control Group	Impact	p-Value	Treatment Group	Control Group	Impact	p-Value
Receipt of SSA Benefits (%)								
Any SSA benefits (SSI, DI, or CDB)								
Benefit Amount (\$)								
Amount of SSA benefits								
Sample Size								

Sources: Baseline survey and SSA administrative records.

Notes: See notes to Table IV.1. All outcome measures are from SSA administrative records.

*/**/***/Impact estimates are significantly different from zero at the 0.10/0.05/0.01 level in two-tailed t-test.

Table A.6 Sample Size by Subgroup

	Number	Percentage of Sample
Enrollment Cohort		
Enrolled in first 6 months		
Enrolled after 6 months		
Duration on SSA Benefits		
Received benefits for most of previous 3 years		
Received benefits for less than 3 years		
Time Between Baseline Survey and Consent		
Less than 30 days between baseline and consent		
30 days or more between baseline and consent		
Time Between Random Assignment and 12-month Follow-up		
13 months or less		
14 months or more		
Total		

Source: YTD baseline survey.

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