



# The Youth Incentive Entitlement Pilot Projects

## United States

A very successful but short-lived program that provided guaranteed employment to more than 70,000 young people from economically-disadvantaged backgrounds

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### Summary

The Youth Incentive Entitlement Pilot Projects (YIEPP) was a large-scale U.S. Department of Justice program to support youth participation in the labor market and successful completion of a high school education. The program was designed to test a job guarantee program linked with school performance for low-income youth 16-19 years of age. During the program (1978-1980) 76,000 youths were employed at 17 project sites operated by CETA sponsor organizations (1). The program demonstrated the feasibility of a Job Guarantee in the United States through its ability to create meaningful employment in the short term and through its long-term improvement of employment opportunities, earning, and outcomes (2).

### Rationale

According to a final implementation report for the program, “the demonstration was based, in part, on the theory that both school completion and work experience greatly enhance the employment prospects of teenagers,” (3).

### Defining Principles

Provide a more robust social safety net, promote youth employment and educational support.

### Dates of Operation

February 1978 through August 1980 (4)

### Number of Program Participants

76,000 youths at 17 project sites operated by CETA sponsor organizations (5).

### Person-days of Employment

Average duration of participation in the program was 41 weeks (6).

### Criteria for Participation

Youths aged 16-19 from low-income households who maintained regular participation in schooling. “The program's job guarantee was the nation's first. All 16 to 19-year-olds living in one of the program's 17 project areas, whose family incomes were at or below the poverty level or who came from families receiving welfare, were eligible to participate and receive jobs,” (7).



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### Pay and Benefits

Most participants were paid the local minimum wage

### Financing

U.S. Federal Government, US Department of Justice. Total expenditure on the program, including wages and benefits, site operations and staff, and research evaluation was approximately \$240.2 million (1978-1980). The average cost per participant was \$2,000 (8).

### Implementation

Administered by the US Department of Justice, the program linked criteria for performance in school to employment in YIEPP program partner organizations. Over half of the worksites sponsors were private businesses with a 100% wage subsidy. A majority of the program sponsors were established CETA “prime sponsors.” School systems were sometimes sponsors (9).

### Types of Work

A majority of jobs were clerical (27%), building maintenance (26%), and community recreation aides (15%) (10).

### Notable Features

This program had a youth focus with an emphasis on protecting school enrollment, it is a large-scale demonstration of program execution, and experimental data was collected for the duration of the program.

### Challenges

The school-enrollment incentive was not strong enough to bring youth who had dropped out back into the school system (11). While the vast majority did, several sites did not meet the standards of “job creation, job placement, eligibility verification, and monitoring,” emphasizing the importance of “careful oversight and clear program guidelines,” (12).



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### Citations

- (1) G Farkas; D A Smith; E W Stromsdorfer; G Trask; R Jerrett. (1982). Impacts From the Youth Incentive Entitlement Pilot Projects Participation, Work, and Schooling Over the Full Program Period. [https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/impacts-youth-incentive-entitlement-pilot-projects-participation#:~:text=The%20Youth%20Incentive%20Entitlement%20Pilot%20Projects%20\(YIEPP\)%2C%20designed%20to,offered%20a%20job%20under%20the](https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/impacts-youth-incentive-entitlement-pilot-projects-participation#:~:text=The%20Youth%20Incentive%20Entitlement%20Pilot%20Projects%20(YIEPP)%2C%20designed%20to,offered%20a%20job%20under%20the)
- (2) Judith M. Gueron. (1984). Lessons from a Job Guarantee. MDRC. pg 20. [The Living New Deal. New Deal Timeline.](https://livingnewdeal.org/what-was-the-new-deal/timeline/)
- (3) W. A. Diaz; J Ball; C Wolfhagen. (1982). Linking School and Work. <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/linking-school-and-work-disadvantaged-youths-yiepp-youth-incentive>
- (4) Judith M. Gueron. (1984). Lessons from a Job Guarantee. MDRC.
- (5) Judith M. Gueron. (1984). Lessons from a Job Guarantee. MDRC.
- (6) G Farkas; D A Smith; E W Stromsdorfer; G Trask; R Jerrett. (1982). Impacts From the Youth Incentive Entitlement Pilot Projects Participation, Work, and Schooling Over the Full Program Period.
- (7) W. A. Diaz; J Ball; C Wolfhagen. (1982). Linking School and Work.
- (8) Judith M. Gueron. (1984). Lessons from a Job Guarantee. MDRC.
- (9) Judith M. Gueron. (1984). Lessons from a Job Guarantee. MDRC.
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- (11) Judith M. Gueron. (1984). Lessons from a Job Guarantee. MDRC. pg. 9.
- (12) Judith M. Gueron. (1984). Lessons from a Job Guarantee. MDRC. pg. 22.



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