

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR WORK AND LEARNING

Approach to Justice-Impacted Populations

Overview

FHI 360's National Institute for Work and Learning (NIWL) partners with federal, state, local, and Tribal governments, the private sector, and civil society to improve the education and employment outcomes of young adults, ages 18 through 24, during and after involvement in the U.S. criminal justice system.

Collaboration NIWL's human-centered design approach to a supportive reentry education framework brings together opportunities and resources from across systems, driven by the needs of justice-involved individuals. We base this approach on 50 years building bridges between education and employment systems and more than a decade providing comprehensive technical assistance (TA) to correctional and reentry education and training stakeholders. We have an established track record of success supporting education providers, workforce trainers, and their local partners in refining program models, identifying and overcoming key barriers, and distilling lessons learned. Our TA specialists in justice, adult education, and workforce and community development work collaboratively with our experienced research and evaluation team to make a measurable, collective impact.



Director Lisa Johnson Presenting at OJJDP Coordinating Council

Comprehensive Support NIWL provides a suite of tools and resources to support our partners' success with returning community members: peer learning and exchange opportunities with other communities; an inventory of site assets; shared resources, training opportunities, and meeting facilitation; a common data management system to track program outcomes and the long-term impact of our programs; and more.

- **Workforce Development.** NIWL guides organizations that prepare and educate a highly skilled workforce for the 21st century global economy. We provide career seekers with tools to strengthen their skills and prepare employers to receive interns, apprentices, and employees.
- **Justice-Impacted Populations.** NIWL increases access to education and work for young people and adults impacted by the justice system.
- **Community Convenings.** We invite all Community of Practice members from each of our locations to in-person professional development, learning, and networking experiences.
- **Research and evaluation.** NIWL enables our partners to use data for decision making and to deploy evidence-driven strategies to achieve their goals.



Menu of Services We provide the following services to our partners, and we are able to tailor our services to fit specific program needs.

Technical Assistance

Following industry best practices, we identify needs and assets; set goals and design program models; select evidence-based strategies to respond to needs; plan for implementation; deliver evidence-based training and technical assistance (T/TA); and evaluate programs. We have used this approach successfully across dozens of communities, including the nine U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)-funded reentry programs in the Compass Rose Collaborative (CRC), through which we provide T/TA and disseminate innovative and evidence-based strategies and management tools for reentry providers and populations. Our overall approach to T/TA is based on the individualized needs assessment and asset-mapping processes, with the goal of filling gaps and amplifying career and technology education within facilities.

Pre-apprenticeship

This 40-hour work readiness training sets a strong base for young people who are preparing for the workforce. NIWL tailors the curriculum to facility needs, provides a training of trainers, shares best practices, and provides access to the pre-apprenticeship curriculum so that staff can teach the curriculum to young people and provide them with micro-credentials for demonstrating competency in the various work readiness areas.



Participant in SE Arkansas works with workforce development professional. Image by FHI 360/Jessica Scranton

Registered Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship (YDPA)

NIWL has a cadre of trainers that provide a 165-hour Registered Apprenticeship curriculum to existing youth serving staff and potential new staff who are interested in pursuing a youth-serving field (e.g., case manager, mentor, coach, recreation specialist, etc.). The YDPA curriculum and framework created by FHI 360 is registered and approved through the U.S. DOL. Participant apprentices earn credentials issued by U.S. DOL, which also certifies them as apprentices upon full completion of the classroom coursework and On-the-Job training components. NIWL will also provide best practices training to staff on cultivating relationships with employer partners so that young people can move into the On-the-Job training portions of the curriculum upon release.

Career Awareness Starter Kit

FHI 360's Career Starter Kit is a five-part eModule series designed for learners who are looking to build skills and knowledge as they seek to start or level up



in their career journeys. Learners will build their own resume and cover letter; discover their strengths, interests, and skills as well as related career opportunities; practice professionally marketing themselves both online and in an interview; and learn how to effectively conduct a job search. After completing all five eModules, learners will earn the “Career Starter” digital badge, which can be used to showcase what they have learned on their resumé and LinkedIn.

Resume Coaching Using Motivational Interviewing

NIWL provides T/TA to staff within a facility on strategies to work with young people in a collaborative, human-centered way as they develop their resumes with the motivation to make positive life changes.

Career and College Exploration

We provide tools and training to facility staff on best practices to support young people in exploring education and career options that fit their skills, interests, and the local labor market.

Trauma-Informed Training

Only available to partners of FHI 360, this innovative training offers a strengths-based framework grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma. This training emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety for everyone, and promotes strategies to create opportunities for people who have experienced trauma to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment.

This e-training will build the capacity of the staff to best serve young people who have been impacted by trauma, increasing their ability to work with them collaboratively. This e-training will include virtual T/TA from NIWL to generate fruitful discussion, next steps, and gauge implementation.

Motivational interviewing is a counseling method that helps people resolve ambivalent feelings and insecurities to find the internal motivation they need to change their behavior. It is a practical, empathetic, and short-term process that takes into consideration how difficult it is to make life changes.

About FHI 360: FHI 360 is a global organization that mobilizes research, resources and relationships so people everywhere have access to the opportunities they need to lead full and healthy lives. With collaborations in over 60 countries, we work directly with local leaders to improve health and well-being, respond to humanitarian crises and strengthen community resilience. We share data-driven insights and scalable tools so communities can effectively address complex challenges, respond to shocks and achieve thriving futures.

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