



Department of Vocational Services

# The Lasting Impact of Summer Work

Syntiro WDS Webinar  
May 11, 2017

# What We Know - Paid Work Experience Matters

- ▶ From the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth) – Practice Brief: *Engaging Youth in Work Experiences* (Sept. 2011)
  - “Families who learn about and begin the career development process with their youth early will be **better prepared** to support them in choosing and building a bright future.”
  - “Students who participated in work-based learning were **more likely to attend college or go to work** compared to their peers (Jobs for the Future, 2007).”
  - “One of the most important findings from the research shows that work experiences for youth with disabilities during high school (paid or unpaid) help them **acquire jobs at higher wages** after they graduate (Colley & Jamison, 1998).”
  - “In addition, research studies suggest that work-based learning may **increase school attendance, decrease dropout rates**, reduce school suspensions, and increase school engagement (Medrich, Calderon, & Hoachlander, 2002)”

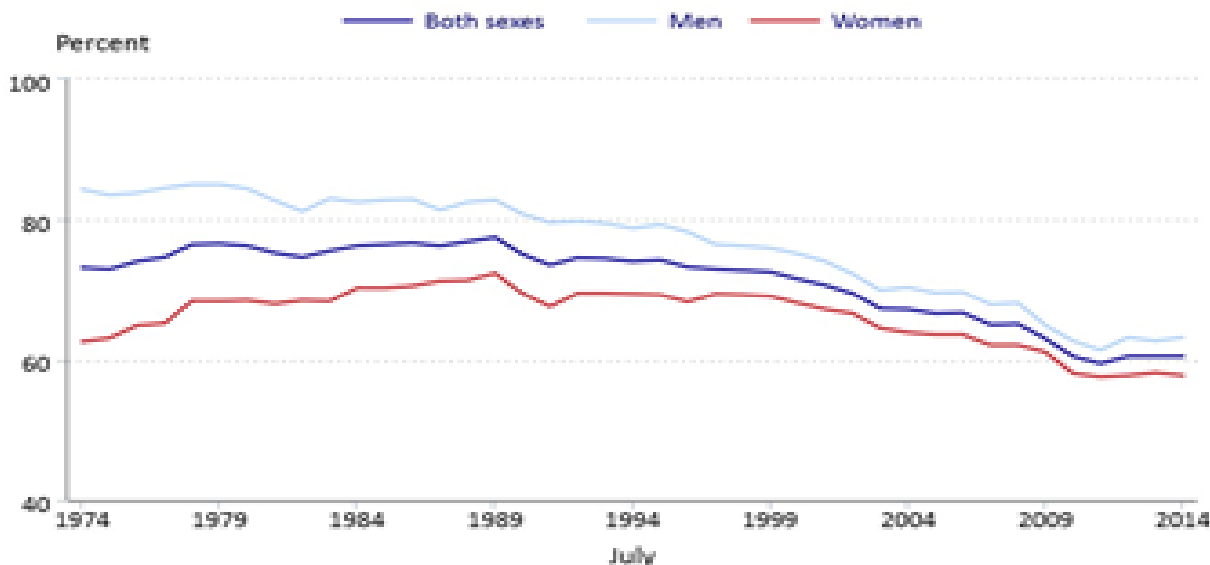
# But Summer Youth Employment Has Decreased...

## Youth Unemployment Challenge

Workforce<sup>e3</sup>One

Find resources for Workforce System Success  
[www.workforceone.org](http://www.workforceone.org)

Youth Summer Labor Force Participation Rates Dropped Sharply Over Last 40 Years



Labor force participation rates of 16- to 24-year-olds in July, by sex, not seasonally adjusted, 1974–2014

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

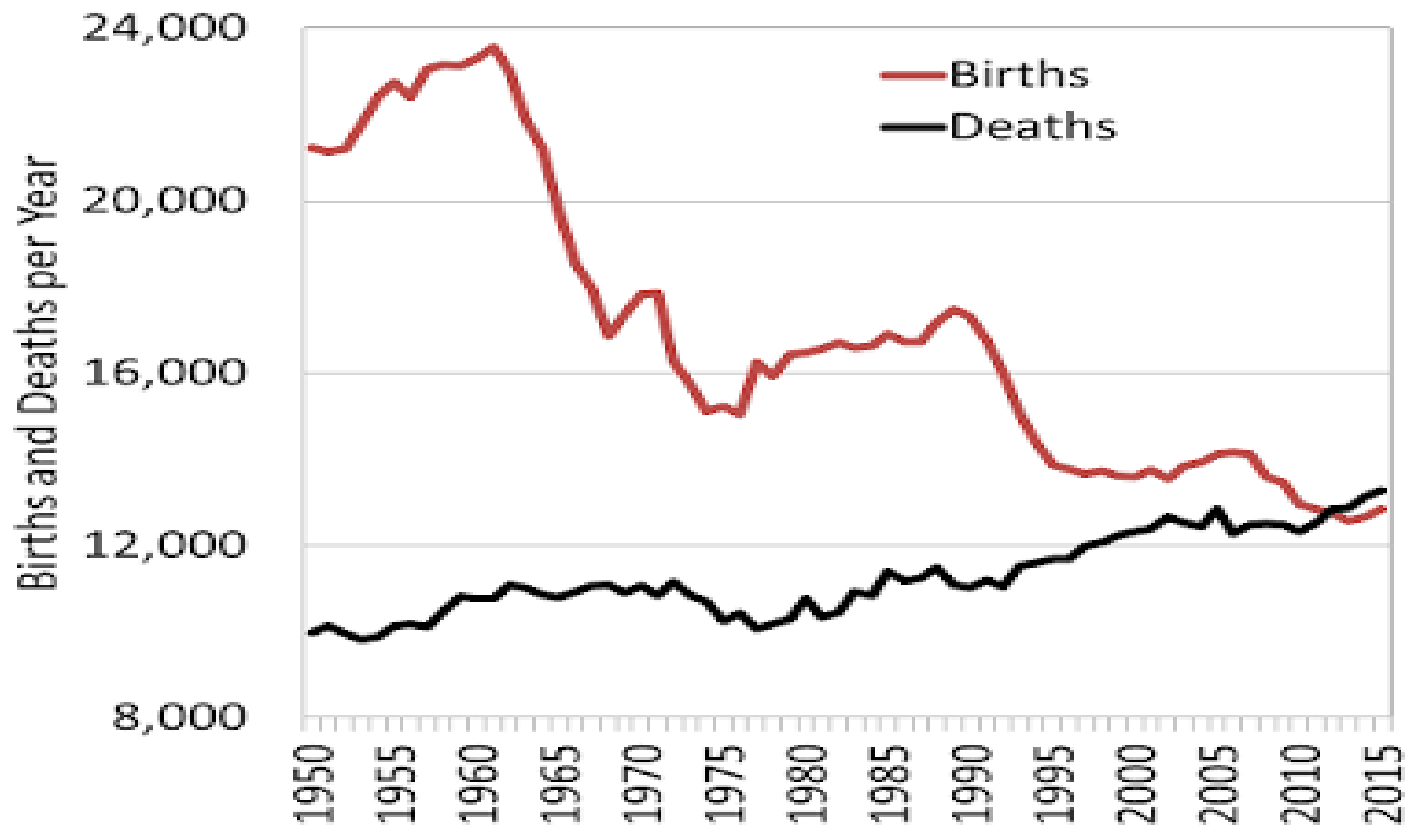


EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

# A Changing Picture in Maine

(Center for Workforce Research & Information, 2016)



# The Employment First Philosophy

- “Employment First, (is) a framework for systems change that is centered on the premise that **all** citizens, including individuals with significant disabilities, are capable of full participation in integrated employment and community life.”
  - US Department of Labor

# What is Summer Work?

- ▶ Any summer job?
- ▶ A first step on a career pathway?
- ▶ A work-based learning experience?
- ▶ An exploratory activity?

Start with the desired end goal in mind!



# Why Does Summer Work Matter?


- ▶ Finding a job when you're older is harder if you haven't worked during your teenage years.

Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Program (2016)

- ▶ “The studies found that on average, early youth unemployment has serious negative effects on income”

Adrienne L. Fernandes-Alcantara, *Congressional Research Service* (2012)

# Benefits of Summer Work

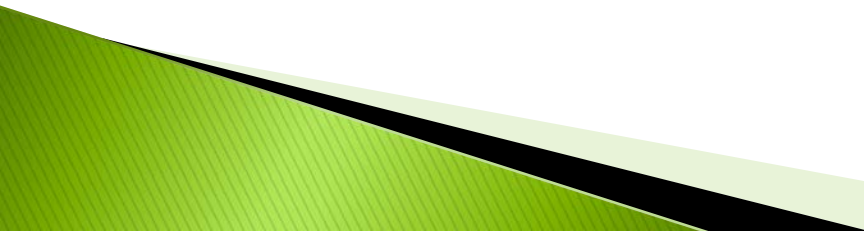
- ▶ Paycheck
  - ▶ Skill development
  - ▶ Social skill development – “Soft skills”
  - ▶ Networking
  - ▶ Strengths identification
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# Examples

The Power of Summer Work

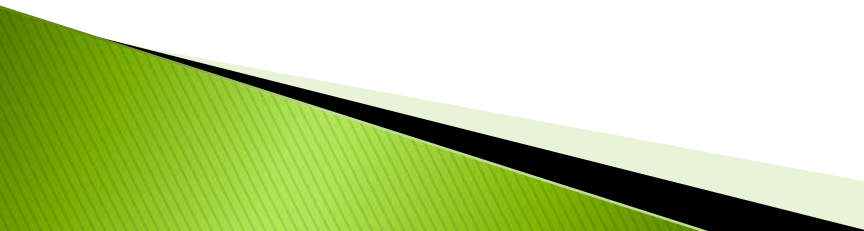
# Summer Teen Employment Program (STEP)

- ▶ Maine Medical Center's Department of Vocational Services has run a summer youth employment program since the 1980's
  - ▶ Flat tuition rate paid by schools, VR, parents
  - ▶ Jobs are competitive, paid positions lasting 7 weeks - most students work 24 hours/week
  - ▶ Job match based on skills and stated interest; entry-level
  - ▶ Jobs are at MMC campuses and other community-based employers (e.g. landscapers, bookstores, restaurant, etc.)
  - ▶ Bi-weekly soft skills / peer support workshops
  - ▶ Formal written evaluation
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# STEP Videos

- ▶ Overview
  - <https://youtu.be/aOZiSBwVKwA>
- ▶ Marina's Story
  - <https://youtu.be/ztE0fiVDvzQ>
- ▶ These videos and two other participant stories can be found at: <https://destinationoccupation.com/maine-medical-center/>

# Summer Work Experience

- ▶ **We-Do Summer Work Experience Program**
  - ▶ **Lake Region Vocational Center**
  
  - ▶ 7 students with disabilities from Diversified Occupations
  - ▶ 5 week paid experience in the community
  - ▶ Weekly soft skills workshop with AlphaOne Peer Mentors
  
  - ▶ From an employer: *“Thank you for starting this program up. There are a lot of students that would not have a chance without this program. “Jenny” was and is a wonderful person. She will go far with the right direction.”*
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# Next Steps...

- ▶ Start Planning Early
- ▶ Recruit summer job coaches
  - Teachers
  - Ed Techs
  - College students
  - Retirees
- ▶ Discussion about specific clients with VR
- ▶ Early planning
- ▶ Alignment with ESY
- ▶ Planning for transportation
- ▶ Ed Techs as summer job coaches
- ▶ Messaging to families and youth

CRP's

Schools

# Contact Information

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- ▶ Contact your local DVR office: <http://www.maine.gov/rehab/offices.shtml>
- ▶ Or call 207-623-6799/ for assistance finding an office near you

Maine Department of Labor provides Equal Opportunity in employment and programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available to individuals with disabilities upon request

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