

# Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship

## OVERVIEW

As part of the National Institute for Work and Learning's Apprenticeship Programs, FHI 360's Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship (YDPA) partners with employers to equip them with the resources they need to train new employees and upskill existing staff. In turn, the program participants earn nationally recognized credentials from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).

Through this program, FHI 360 addresses a growing need for youth services by creating alternate entry points in the field, opening fulfilling career paths that may otherwise be unavailable for individuals with lived experience who are best suited to support their communities.

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The youth development field is of critical importance to Opportunity Youth — individuals between the ages of 16 and 24 who are disconnected from school and work. By engaging the youth through efforts such as after school programs and skills training, youth development practitioners enable these youth to engage with



*Apprentices in Lake County, IL, at their kickoff training.  
Photo by FHI 360's Daria Earley.*

their communities in healthy and productive ways. Youth development is also crucial in aiding young people coping with personal and societal challenges, supporting youth in building positive relationships, and encouraging youth voice and leadership. Youth development professionals often serve as the first responders in youth crises, but the direct service nature of this work can lead to high turnover and burnout among employees. Training through YDPA can increase effective practices for the industry to improve youth outcomes and offers employers a job retention strategy, as it builds apprentices' resilience and self-care.

Given that the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects 13% growth in the Youth Development field from 2023 to 2033, FHI 360's YDPA program will strengthen this industry by creating a career pipeline that allows apprentices who've benefitted from this field to support others like themselves and strengthens the skills of the employees already working in youth development. Through FHI 360-developed training and materials, the program will teach apprentices the following skills through a combination of 2,000 hours of on-the-job learning and 165 hours of coursework:

- Positive Youth Development Principles & Relationships
- Coaching, Planning & Support
- Group Facilitation
- Career Pathways
- Career Case Management
- Leveraging Technology
- Understanding How Youth Organizations Work
- Professional Development
- Self-Care

Upon completion, apprentices earn a DOL credential as a Youth Development Apprentice. Potential post-apprenticeship career paths include but are not limited to youth service intake counseling, outreach work, after-school programming management, and justice reentry.

**“Going through this experience helps you to think beyond what's presented to you, which in this field is often needed.” – Angel T., YDPA Participant**

## EMPLOYER BENEFITS

Registered Apprenticeship Programs offer many benefits for employers. The U.S. Department of Labor has found that employers utilizing apprenticeship programs:

- Hire, train, and retain more highly skilled, entry-level workers (with apprentice retention rates at 90%).
- Improve productivity and profitability through efficient application of employee skills to employer needs.
- Can adapt to and address specific needs of employees through customizable training options.

FHI 360 works with community and education partners to provide related training instruction and supports supervisors and mentors. Employers recruit, supervise, pay, provide training release time and mentor apprentices, with apprentices getting a midpoint pay increase and a position as a standard employee at the apprenticeship's conclusion.

## CONTACT

For more information on YDPA and FHI 360 NIWL's apprenticeship efforts, please contact [apprenticeship@fhi360.org](mailto:apprenticeship@fhi360.org)

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About NIWL: FHI 360's National Institute for Work and Learning (NIWL) advances solutions in education and workforce systems. We focus on two key drivers of individual well-being - education and employment - to improve lives. NIWL seeks to strengthen the capacity of public and private organizations, providing information, resources, and support needed to make decisions, strengthen programs, and improve outcomes for individuals.

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