



The Opening Doors for Youth Act of 2017

Opportunity and At-Risk Youth

Nearly 5 million young people ages 16 to 24 are disconnected from both school and work.

- Disconnected youth are three times more likely than other youth to have a disability, twice as likely to live below the federal poverty threshold, and significantly more likely to live in racially segregated neighborhoods.
- Disconnected young women and girls are three times more likely to have a child, and young people involved in the juvenile justice system or aging out of the foster care system are at high risk of disconnection.

Disconnection during this critical period can leave young people without the entry-level work experience and post-secondary credentials they need to succeed in the workforce. Disconnection also imposes significant costs on affected young people, their communities, and the overall economy. According to the 2012 report, [The Economic Value of Opportunity Youth](#), these young people will, on average, earn \$392,070 less than the typical worker will over their lifetimes. According to a recent report from [Measure of America](#), in 2013, youth disconnection resulted in \$26.8 billion in public expenditures, including spending on health care, public assistance, and incarceration.

Disconnected young people are also commonly referred to as “opportunity youth” because of the tremendous potential they possess. Young people from high-poverty, low-opportunity communities may need a range of supports to overcome barriers to reengaging in school or training and stay on the path to a good job.

The Opening Doors for Youth Act of 2017 (ODFY)

This legislation expands opportunities for our nation’s at-risk and opportunity youth by putting youth to work and supporting community efforts to keep youth connected to school and training.

ODFY connects at-risk and opportunity youth with employment opportunities by:

- Authorizing \$1.5 billion in formula grants for subsidized **summer jobs** for in- and out-of-school youth ages 14 to 24. This program will help in-school youth remain connected to the education system and avoid involvement in the criminal and juvenile justice system.
- Authorizing \$2 billion in formula grants for partially subsidized **year-round jobs** for youth ages 16 to 24 who are out of school and work. This program provides opportunity youth with the extended entry-level work experiences and work-readiness skills that are vital to improved employment outcomes.

ODFY helps communities develop opportunities for youth to successfully transition from school to work by:

- Authorizing \$2 billion in competitive grants to transform communities with high rates of youth disconnection into **communities of opportunity**. Local community partnerships will use funds to establish or expand community-based systems that provide at-risk and opportunity youth with comprehensive pathways to remain connected or reconnect to education and training systems, as well as the supportive services needed to overcome individual barriers to reconnection.